



TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY
Board of Zoning and Appeals
January 06, 2020 5:30 PM
Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Melody Sleeper called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Chairwoman Melody Sleeper
Committee Member Justin Bell
Committee Member Vivian Foston
Committee Member Drew Johnson
Committee Member Dwyot Thornton

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Committee Member Johnson, seconded by Committee Member Thornton, to approve the agenda. All approved by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. 10-7-19 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Committee Member Johnson, seconded by Committee Member Thornton, to approve the 10-7-19 meeting minutes.

PUBLIC FORUM

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

2. Ashland City Pharmacy Sign Appeal

Mr. Chase Hunnell stepped forward and stated the code has made it difficult to obtain a sign at their location on North Main Street and the pole signs are extremely expensive. City Planner Mr. Rick Gregory stated if this was a preexisting sign there could be a hardship variance granted; however, this particular case does not meet the criteria for the hardship variance. Mr. Hunnell stated the sign he is requesting is an addition to what is already there and is not outside the parameter of what is already at the location. Committee Member Thornton questioned if there is a way to put a sign on top of what is already there. Mr. McClain explained the current signs would not meet the criteria in the sign ordinance and Mr. Hunnell is requesting to add a sign above the existing sign of another business. Mr. Thornton stated the existing sign is grandfathered in because it installed prior to the ordinance taking effect. Mr. McClain stated yes, it was an existing sign prior to passing the sign ordinance. Mr. Gregory stated the issue is with the height of the sign being requested. He further explained with the proposed sign it will be over the allowable limit. Committee Member Mr. Drew Johnson questioned why was it put in the ordinance to now allow the extra two feet that is over the limit. Mr. Gregory explained it was done in order to set a standard. Mr. Thornton stated he understood the older sign not meeting the ordinance, but questioned if it can be done if they allow two additional feet. Mr. Thornton stated he can't see what it would hurt to help this business owner especially since they charge a sales tax and bring in revenue for the city. A motion was made by Committee Member Thornton, seconded by Committee Member Johnson, to allow a three by six sign variance for Ashland City Pharmacy. Voting Yea: Committee Member Bell, Committee Member Foston, Committee Member Johnson, Committee Member Thornton Voting Nay: Chairwoman Sleeper.

3. Midnight Lounge Sign Ordinance Appeal

Mr. Johnson asked if Mr. Gregory could explain the recommendation. Mr. Gregory stated they would need to show a hardship for this to be a hardship variance. Mr. McClain stated he wasn't sure why the owner was not present tonight and they knew about the meeting, but they have one sign already and were wanting another so he can't say if they changed their mind. Mr. Johnson stated since they didn't come tonight that makes the decision pretty cut and dry. A motion was made by Committee Member Johnson, seconded by Committee Member Thornton, to deny to variance on the sign appeal for Midnight Lounge. Voting Yea: Chairwoman Sleeper, Committee Member Bell, Committee Member Foston, Committee Member Johnson, Committee Member Thornton.

4. Annual Training

Mr. Bret Smith stepped forward and allowed the committee members to step down and take a quick break in order to allow time in order for them to get comfortable in the audience so everyone can view the slide show. Mr. Smith explained the difference in the invasive species of trees in the American Nursery Standards. He explained that boards should look at horizontal landscapes in buffers versus closures in landscaping plans. Mr. Smith explained that in Middle Tennessee we are limited as to what will grow in the area. Mr. Jay Easter explained the quality standards in Florida. The strong central leader is what allows the growth of a strong central tree. A three-inch caliber tree may not be the same in qualitative distance. Although it isn't what was envisioned it meets the stand of the American Nursery Standards because it meets the standard set in the ANS. Mr. Smith questioned if the landscape architect goes out and inspects currently. Mr. McClain stated it would be a good idea to require that but, we do have verbiage that allows us to hold a landscaping bond which will not hold up the certificate of occupancy. Mr. Smith explained TDOT has a Landscape Design Guideline that is available on their website that will help to describe the shapes of plants. He further explained the various shapes and some of the pros and cons to using them. Committee Member Walker asked why TDOT will not allow us to put flowering plants in the right of way, but they allow these elaborate plans for the exchanges. Mr. Smith stated sometimes it just depends on the question you asked and who you asked. He further suggested to reach out to Mr. Mike McClainihan and further it will require a maintenance agreement. The other thing to look at is the speed of the road and the breakaway. Mr. Smith stated the crepe myrtles are actually a great plant for the medians because they are drought resistant and tend to grow back. Mr. Smith stated landscape calculations should be easy. He showed an example of what a difficult calculation looks like and further commented that the new Hampton Inn development landscape architect did a good job on the calculations to make it easy to understand. Mr. Smith explained allowing existing trees toward requirements and why this is a good idea. Mr. Smith explained why it is important to define where the water, sewer, and electric will need to be in a new design so that it makes it easier for the landscape design to make an elegant design on the front end. Planning Committee Member Stratton stated he would like to address residential landscaping at the next meeting.

OTHER.

None.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Committee Member Thornton, seconded by Committee Member Foston, to adjourn. All approved by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.


CHAIRWOMAN MELODY SLEEPER


CITY RECORDER KELLIE REED, CMFO, CMG

