

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR **PLANNING COMMISSION** MEETING OF THE CITY OF GROSSE POINTE WOODS HELD ON **NOVEMBER 28, 2023**, IN THE COUNCIL-COURT ROOM OF THE ROBERT E. NOVITKE MUNICIPAL CENTER, 20025 MACK PLAZA, GROSSE POINTE WOODS, MICHIGAN.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Acting Chair Fuller.

Roll Call: Acting Chair Fuller
Commission Members: Bailey, Gilezan, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale
Absent: Fenton (on leave of absence), Gerhart, Hamborsky
Also Present: City Attorney, Tim Tomlinson
City Planner, Brigitte Wolf
Recording Secretary Miotto
Council Member Vaughn

MOTION by Vitale, seconded by Bailey, to excuse Commission Members Gerhart, and Hamborsky from attendance at tonight's meeting.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Bailey, Fuller, Gilezan, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale
NO: None
ABSENT: Fenton, Gerhart, Hamborsky

The Planning Commission, staff, and the public, Pledged Allegiance to the U. S. Flag.

MOTION by McNelis, seconded by Gilezan, that tonight's agenda be received and placed on file.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Bailey, Fuller, Gilezan, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale
NO: None
ABSENT: Fenton, Gerhart, Hamborsky

Commission Member Fuller recognized the Council Representative in attendance:

- Council Member Vaughn

MOTION by Vitale, seconded by O’Keefe, that the October 24, 2023, Planning Commission meeting minutes be approved as presented.

YES: Bailey, Fuller, Gilezan, McNelis, O’Keefe, Vitale
NO: None
ABSENT: Fenton, Gerhart, Hamborsky

Commission Member Hamborsky arrived at 7:04 pm.

The first item on the agenda was the **Sign Ordinance Review Discussion**. City Planner Wolf provided an overview of the memo which outlines the changes made thus far and the two items for consideration this evening: the time restriction on temporary signs as well as if any other lighting requirements should be made. City Attorney Tomlinson provided an update on the research he and City Planner Wolf conducted in other local communities regarding limiting the time period of temporary signs based on an event occurring or not occurring. Tomlinson indicated the Planning Commission could make that recommendation to City Council, but it still has a content-based ring to it (which is now unconstitutional). Discussion ensued around proposed time limits, and that enforcement begins upon the receipt of a complaint by the City that Code Enforcement has confirmed. A consensus of the Commission was reached to codify this existing standard operating procedure and retain the current 30-day limit, no more than twice per year. The current size limit of 32 square feet of temporary signs was discussed, with the Commission reaching a consensus to retain the 32 square feet for commercial signs and reducing the residential limit to 6 square feet per sign (which accommodates real estate signs). City Planner Wolf raised the current sign lettering restrictions (approved fonts & colors) and limiting types of fonts was not supported. It was confirmed that a registered logo/trademark is exempt from font & color restrictions.

Discussion was then directed toward the Exterior Lighting of Signs and the appropriate measurement (foot-candles versus wattage) that should be used, and what lighting should be regulated (overall illumination, restriction of halo-lighting color, use of LEDs, restricting overall site lighting versus each light, and that “backlighting” versus “external lighting” should be separate items. Measurement methods discussed were: a) avenue site; b) from single fixture; c) from back of the property; d) from the center of Mack Avenue. Measurement methods should be in the Zoning Ordinance, not the Sign Ordinance.

There is a desire to make a recommendation to City Council on the sign ordinance in time to be in effect for the 2024 election cycle. City Attorney Tomlinson will draft a red-lined version of the sign ordinance for final review in the December meeting.

MOTION by Bailey, seconded by Vitale, that the Planning Commission will table the **Sign Ordinance Review Discussion** for purposes of bringing back the modifications discussed.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Bailey, Fuller, Gilezan, Hamborsky, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale
NO: None
ABSENT: Fenton, Gerhart

The next item on the agenda was **Off-Street Parking Requirements (50-5.3) Discussion**. Fuller reiterated that there is a Public Hearing scheduled for this topic on December 12, 2023. City Planner Wolf provided an overview of the memo related to three topics: 1) **Maneuvering Aisle Width**, and it was agreed to decrease the current 25 feet width to 20 feet. 2) The need for **Compact Car Parking** standards was discussed. City Planner Wolf will research the concept of limiting the percentage of those spaces. 3) Lastly, **Semicircular Driveways** were discussed with dimensional control being taken into consideration. A consensus of the Commission was reached on the following: Semicircle radius: Recommended reduction of minimum radius from 21 feet to 20 feet; Drive width: Recommended reduction of a minimum of one-way driveway from 10-12 feet wide to 8-12 feet wide for maneuverability and practicality; Center lawn radius: Recommended eliminating the maximum of 10 feet of center lawn area radius; Radius total: retain the current overall radius of 20 feet.

MOTION by Vitale, seconded by Bailey, that the Planning Commission make the discussed changes of semi-circle radius minimum to 20 feet, drive widths be 8-12 feet, and eliminating the maximum of 10 feet on center lawn area radius.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Bailey, Fuller, Gilezan, Hamborsky, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale
NO: None
ABSENT: Fenton, Gerhart

The next item on the agenda was the **Commercial Lighting Requirements Discussion**. There was considerable discussion on this topic during today's **Sign Ordinance Review** topic (see the minutes on the first agenda item). Commission Member Vitale suggested that the Commission consider creating a standard light fixture for future parking lot projects for design consistency within the community and the existing streetscape. City Planner Wolf will look into examples.

MOTION by Bailey, seconded by Vitale, that the Planning Commission table the **Commercial Lighting Requirements Discussion** until the December meeting when examples of light measurements, sign illumination, and parking lot fixtures will be available.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Bailey, Fuller, Gilezan, Hamborsky, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale
NO: None
ABSENT: Fenton, Gerhart

The next item on the agenda was the **Building Official's Monthly Report for November 2023**. City Planner Wolf added an item that was not included on the report: The Beaute Loft is coming into the City and is still revising their site plan. Commission Member Fuller expanded on the Beaute Loft concept along with reporting construction that was going on without permits. A stop work order was issued. Discussion was had on concerns about their ability to comply with the amount of required parking. City Planner Wolf provided an explanation on how the parking is calculated when a building is "reoccupied" - whereby 50% of required parking would be needed. The City is still awaiting the final site plan. Discussion was had on how the City calculates parking requirements and whether it should be revised. Reference was made to the previously discussed shared parking agreements (Planning Commission meeting on September 26, 2023.)

Additional new items were brought up: an existing business, Churchill's, has applied for year-round outdoor dining. This will be discussed in the December meeting. There has been an application brought forth for home occupation, which we don't allow. We will discuss this next month, along with re-examining the language for mixed occupancy along Mack Avenue.

The next item on the agenda were the **Council Reports for November 13 and November 20**. Commission Member Gilezan reported that there were no items of interest to the Planning Commission on November 13. The November 20 meeting included three Zoning Board of Appeals, of particular note was the 707 N. Renaud project. All three were approved. The Front Yard Structures received support from City Council on the Little Libraries, but not on the planter boxes. City Council determined that the planter box issue is a neighborhood concern, not a city-wide concern. There is a 60-day moratorium on code enforcement with mediation taking place between the neighbors involved.

Commission member Hamborsky will attend December Council meetings.

The next item on the agenda was for information only: the **Master Plan Phase 1 Report**. City Planner Wolf confirmed that Giffels-Webster will attend the January 23, 2024, Planning Commission meeting and provided this information in preparation of that meeting.

Under **New Business**, City Planner Wolf requested approval of the 2024 Planning Commission schedule.

Motion by Baily, seconded by Vitale, that the Planning Commission approve the 2024 Planning Commission schedule.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Bailey, Fuller, Gilezan, Hamborsky, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale
NO: None
ABSENT: Fenton, Gerhart

Under **Old Business**, Council Member Vaughn brought up the 707 N. Renaud ZBA and the lack of grading plan, and if that should be a standard requirement in the future. Discussion was had that grading plans require a topographical study which is very costly to the homeowner. A consensus of the Commission was reached that if a problem arises in the future, a review can be requested by the City Engineer.

Under **Public Comment**, the following were heard:

- Margaret Potter, 1834 Allard
 - Encouraged the Commission to take handicapped parking spaces into consideration in the Off-Street Parking Requirements.
 - Health issues related to planter boxes.

Council Member Vaughn inquired on the progress of the Electrical Vehicle Charging Stations at Bank of America. They have not yet submitted their final revised plan that includes the required screening. A parking variance may be required.

MOTION by Fuller, seconded by Vitale, to adjourn at 9:42 p.m.

Motion carried by the following vote:

YES: Bailey, Fuller, Gilezan, Hamborsky, McNelis, O'Keefe, Vitale

NO: None

ABSENT: Fenton, Gerhart

Respectfully Submitted,
Gretchen Miotto
Clerk's Confidential Administrative Assistant & Recording Secretary