

**MONROE PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES—July 19, 2022**

**Present:** Rosalind Parks, Randy Camp, Sara Shropshire

**Absent:** Mike Eckles, Nate Treadaway

**Staff:** Brad Callender – City Planner  
Laura Wilson - Code Assistant

**Visitors:** Jay Barringer, David Moon, John Argo, Ryan Fritz, Rick Maxian, Jennifer Wolfe, Johanna Hensley

Call to Order by Acting Chairman Camp at 5:30 pm.

Motion to Approve the Agenda as presented:

Motion Shropshire. Second Parks  
Motion carried

Acting Chairman Camp asked for any changes, corrections or additions to the June 21, 2022 minutes.

Motion to approve

Motion Parks. Second Shropshire.  
Motion carried

Acting Chairman Camp asked for the Code Officer's Report: None

Old Business:

**The First Item of Old Business:** is Rezone Case #1086, a request to consider rezoning ±95.42 acres located at the east side of Charlotte Rowell Blvd, the north side of US Hwy 78, and the west side of N. Broad St. The property is currently zoned Planned Commercial District with a request to change it to Planned Commercial District with modifications. The applicant is Columbia Engineering on behalf of the owner, MAB Monroe LLC. The four changes the applicant is requesting are to change the building height maximum to 5 stories, allow for zero-lot line subdivision of the main shopping center building, increase minimum parking allowed with a variance option for future parking increases, and modify elevations to allow compliance with tenant branding. Staff recommends approval with two conditions.

John Argo, from MAB spoke in favor of the project:

- Two of the lots at the Pavilion are designed for hotels and the hotels that want to come to Monroe are in the 4-5 story range.
- A color change to Shops A (presented by Rick Maxian) Verizon would like to use their corporate colors; the standing seam awning will be converted to fabric, and color gray Verizon requested is already used on other locations in the Pavilion

- For the zero-lot line—the condition addressing it to the shopping center building is fine; we have an anchor tenant that wants to have its own tax parcel and we are trying to accommodate that user request. The property line would fall on the common wall between the two buildings
- Parking Changes—This pattern book was adopted in 2019, pre pandemic and the restaurant world has changed since then. The parking request is to accommodate four users (Panda Express, McAlisters, Huey Magoos, and Whataburger)
  - Jay Barringer presented on behalf of McAlisters—extra parking will be needed for customers, curbside service, delivery service, electronic car parking spaces, catering services, and employees. With the current limit of 40 parking spaces will not be able to manage the business to the level needed to stay open. We need to be self-contained on the out parcel and not have employees walking to work. We do not want to lose customers because they drive by and see the parking lot full.
  - David Moon (also with McAlisters): I was with Zaxby's for 19 years as Vice President of Operations and Training. With the focus on curbside and call-in orders you have more and more cars coming in and our concern is being able to serve our customers efficiently
  - Ryan Fritz with Columbia Engineering: We looked at a low, middle, and high parking calculation which you can see in the table included in the packet. The first red column is 1 space/3 seats plus 1/350 sq ft with a 135% max. The middle column is 1 space/3 seats plus 1/350 sq ft with a 150% max. The staff recommendation on the far right is 1 space/4 seats plus 1/400 sq ft with a 150% max. Ideally, we would like the middle to the high column. In the current Plan Book McAlisters is allowed 39 parking spaces and they are hoping for 55/60 spaces. We are trying to accommodate most of the future tenants without each one needing to come back for a variance.
  - Discussion continues about parking—Barringer and Moon agree that 55/56 spaces would be great for McAlisters
- Callender: I have worked with Ryan over the past couple months to come to a compromise of what would work best for the development and the City. The 1 for 4 seats plus the 1/400 sq ft closely aligned with their tenant requirement and as you just heard from a future tenant, they (McAlisters) would be happy with the 56 spaces provided under the 1 for 4 seats plus the 1/400 sq ft plan. It might not work for each one but if the tenant is not happy with their allotment, they can request a variance from City Council.
- Argo: While we have McAlisters here tonight, I have shown the same three tables to Panda, Huey, and Whataburger and they would prefer the 1 space/3 seats plus 1/350 sq ft with a 135% max. That column seems to be satisfactory to all four tenants and avoids a flood of variance requests. I've already lost a food and coffee over this issue. We've done code research in Loganville, Brasleton, Snellville, Walton County, and Madison. The problem is the Monroe maximum in the pattern book is less than their required minimums. We are so far behind what the rest of the area is requiring. While 4 or 5 spaces doesn't seem like a lot, it can be death to these businesses. You guys have been code flexible before to help us establish this pattern book and you could be again.
- Parks: How many employees do you expect to have on at peak times? Barringer: 25/30 people plus shift change

- Callender: There is no shared parking plan for this overall development; having to park all of your customers and employees is problematic for the overall development. Several sites in the city have transitioned to EV parking. There was no extra parking added; they simply just switched from a traditional parking space to EV.
- Parks: How many EV parking spaces are we looking at? Barringer: 2 with the possibility of more.
- Callender: The staff recommendation is a compromise between the current city regulations which are in the plan book and the what the applicant is requesting. The 1 for 3 is almost double what the current regulations are. The 1 for 4 is a middle ground number and it closely relates to what the tenants are asking for.

Acting Chairman Camp: Is that agreeable?

Argo: No that is not our recommendation. It falls short for at least 3 of the other users. We did not propose the furthest column. We were asked to include it for discussion purposes and we did. We would be fine with either of the other two columns.

Acting Chairman Camp: Anyone here to speak in opposition? None

Motion to approve with conditions

Motion Parks. Second Shropshire.  
Motion carried

**The First Item of New Business:** is COA Case #1182, a request for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow for the replacement of existing signage at 2020 W. Spring St.; the W. Spring St. branch of Bank of America. The request includes replacement of all signage on the site including wall signs, ground signs, and other directional and incidental signs. There are a total of 15 ground signs to be replaced. The focus of our ordinance applies to 5 of the signs—4 walls signs and 1 ground sign. They will be replacing the wall signs 1 for 1 and changing out the internal illumination for halo lighting. The free-standing pylon will be removed and lowered to the ground. The ground sign will also have halo illumination. Staff recommendations approval with two conditions. Jennifer Wolfe and Johanna Hensley spoke in favor of the project. Bank of American agreed to a full base monument sign in replace of the pylon sign.

Acting Chairman Camp: Anyone here to speak in opposition? None

Motion to approved with conditions

Motion Shropshire. Second Parks.  
Motion Carried

Acting Chairman Camp entertained a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn

Motion Parks. Second Shropshire.  
Meeting adjourned; 6:15pm