



CITY OF OAK PARK HEIGHTS PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 12, 2015 – Oak Park Heights City Hall

I. Call to Order: Chair Kremer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Bye, Kremer, and Thurmes; City Administrator Johnson, City Planner Richards, and Commission Liaison Liljegren. Not Present: Commissioners Anthony and Nelson.

II. Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Bye, seconded by Commissioner Thurmes, moved to approve the Agenda, with the Annual Meeting moved to the end of the Agenda. Carried 3 – 0.

III. Approval of February 19, 2015 Meeting Minutes:

Commissioner Thurmes, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, moved to approve the Minutes as presented. Carried 3 - 0.

IV. Department/Commission Liaison / Other Reports: City Administrator Johnson noted that the City was holding Open House events on Saturday March 14th at 10:00 a.m. and Monday, March 16th at 7:00 p.m. to talk about the Oak Park Crossing Park concept plans. Johnson noted that the concept plans are also available for viewing on the City webpage. Brief discussion commenced regarding existing parks and their usage.

V. Visitors/Public Comment: None.

VI. Public Hearings:

- A. Continued - Raduenz Dealership Properties LLC dba Stillwater Motors – 5900 Stillwater Blvd. N.: Consider requests for Variance to sign requirements as they relate to numbers, height, and allowable square footage of sign area and sign face, to allow a 128 s.f. changeable copy sign, 50 feet in height along Hwy. 36, located at Stillwater Motors, 5900 Stillwater Blvd. N.

City Planner Richards reviewed the March 5, 2015 Planning Report, noting that the applicant provided the Commission with an additional drawing perspective for the public hearing.

Commission discussion ensued as to regulations of other cities that have automotive dealerships along their Hwy. corridors, staff recommendation that a 50 foot sign height not be allowed and that signage should be removed or incorporated so that the maximum signage for the site remains at less than 760 square feet, proposed conditions for consideration in the event the Commission votes to recommend the requested variance requests, maximum allowances for sign area and heights, review criteria utilized for staff recommendation, and the proposed sign size potentially being a distraction to motorists.

Chair Kremer opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to address the Commission.

D.J. Raduenz – Stillwater Motors introduced himself as the owner of the dealership and noted that the dealership is currently in the process of engaging the installation of the signage that has been approved by City Council.

Mr. Raduenz engaged in conversation with the Commission as to the request and process, noting that the 50 foot sign height proposed was being sought as it was the recommendation of their sign company and added that the drawing provided to the Commission was created after discussion at the February meeting and depicts a combined sign, incorporating the Collision Center signage.

Discussion ensued as to the 50 foot sign height and its intended purposes, clarifying that the purpose was to provide them with a better site line for motorists on Hwy. 36 and discussing at what point the sign proposed would actually become visible to motorists prior to reaching an exit from the highway to visit Stillwater Motors. Commissioner Kremer stated that he was not supportive of a 50 foot sign height.

Continued discussion was had as to overall signage to the site, previous approvals, current number of wall and pylon signs, combining of sign messages into fewer signs, scale of proposed sign in relation to building, time element for work – applicant would like to install in the Summer, how changeable copy sign is to be utilized - applicant indicated that it would be used for advertising with words and images, and removal of existing signage to meet allowable overall sign area and numbers.

There being no additional comment, Chair Kremer closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Thurmes, seconded by Commissioner Bye, moved to recommend City Council Approval, subject to the amended conditions within the March 5, 2015 Planning Report, specifically that:

- Variances – To allow an additional changeable copy pylon sign greater than 150 square feet, to allow for a 40 foot sign where a 30 foot sign is allowed, to allow for a changeable copy sign that will not meet the maximum changeable copy requirements, and to have the Applicant remove signage within 24 months from issuing the sign permit for the changeable copy pylon sign so that the overall square footage of signage on site shall be no more than 760 square feet.
 1. All conditions of the Conditional Use Permit and Variance for Raduenz Dealership Properties LLC approved July 26, 2005 and January 13, 2015 shall remain in effect.
 2. The proposed changeable copy sign shall not exceed 40 feet in height and 160 square feet in 160 square feet in sign face size.

3. The Applicant shall remove signage within 24 months from issuance of the sign permit for the changeable copy pylon sign so that the overall square footage of signage on site shall be no more than 760 square feet.
4. The sign specifications and methods of illumination shall be subject to review and approval of the City Planner at the time of permitting.
5. A landscape plan for the area around the new sign shall be provided to the City and shall be subject to review and approval of the City Arborist.

Carried 3 – 0.

VII. New Business: None.

VIII. Old Business: None

IX. Informational:

A. Upcoming Meetings:

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| • Tuesday, March 24, 2015 | City Council | 7:00 p.m./City Hall |
| • Tuesday, April 14, 2015 | City Council | 7:00 p.m./City Hall |
| • Thursday, April 16, 2015 | Planning Commission | 7:00 p.m./City Hall |
| • Tuesday, April 28, 2015 | City Council | 7:00 p.m./City Hall |
| • Thursday, May 14, 2015 | Planning Commission | 7:00 p.m./City Hall |

B. Council Representative

- Tuesday, March 24, 2015 – Commissioner Anthony
- Tuesday, April 14, 2015 – Commissioner Bye
- Tuesday, May 26, 2015 – Commissioner Kremer

Chair Kremer reminded the Commission that Planning Commission conversations are regulated by Minnesota's Open Meeting law. City Administrator Johnson asked Commissioners to contact him if they have a communication they would like to share with the balance of the Commission. They are welcome to email such communications to him with a request to share. Johnson reminded the Commission that City email is open to government data practice protocol.

Commissioner Thurmes questioned trash enclosure requirements and how they apply to dumpsters at the City parks. Discussion was had as to enclosure requirements, use of the dumpsters, and as to vandalism at the park areas.

Commissioner Thurmes, seconded by Commissioner Bye, moved to recommend that the Parks Department screen the trash containers at City parks. Carried 3 – 0.

X. Adjourn to Annual Meeting: Commissioner Thurmes, seconded by Commissioner Bye, moved to adjourn to Annual Meeting at 7:51 p.m. Carried 3 – 0.

XI. Call Annual Meeting to Order: Chair Kremer called the Annual Meeting to order.

A. Commissioner Terms

Chair Kremer noted that the terms of Commissioner's Anthony and Bye are set to end in May. He added that Commissioner Anthony, who is also currently Vice chair, has expressed interest in reappointment if the meeting date could be changed to Tuesday, otherwise would not be able to as a result of other commitments. Brief discussion was had as to changing the meeting day to Tuesday or other possible days and Bylaws requirement that meeting follow the first City Council meeting of each month.

Chair Kremer asked City Administrator Johnson to send communication to the Commission members to see if they were agreeable to changing the meeting day and what day, if any, would not work for them.

Chair Kremer noted that Commissioner Bye will be finishing her second full term as allowed by the Bylaws in May and that she does have the option to seek a special one-year appointment from the City Council. Kremer noted that Commissioner Bye has indicated that she would not be seeking re-appointment and expressed that he appreciated both the personal and historical perspectives she brings to the Commission, adding that he hoped she would reconsider and seek reappointment. Brief discussion ensued as to Commissioner Bye's consideration of seeking reappointment.

Commissioner Thurmes, seconded by Chair Kremer, moved to recommend City Council reappointment of Jennifer Bye to a special one-year term. Carried 2 – 0 – 1, Bye abstained.

Commissioner Bye, seconded by Commissioner Thurmes, moved to recommend City Council reappoint Robin Anthony to a second term. Carried 3 – 0.

B. Chair & Vice Chair Terms

Commissioner Thurmes, seconded by Commissioner Bye moved to continue the Annual Meeting to March to address the office of Vice Chair, if needed. Carried 3 - 0.

XII. Adjourn: Commissioner Bye, seconded by Commissioner Thurmes, moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m. Carried 3– 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Hultman
Planning & Code Enforcement