

Present: Chairperson Jensen; Vice-chair Ostrowski; Members: Abboud, Borowski, Peddie, Ruprich, Stempien, Westerlund

Absent: Freedman

Also Present: Village Manager, Chris Wilson
Planning Consultant, Brian Borden

Chairperson Jensen called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

APPROVE/AMEND AGENDA

The agenda was accepted as published.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF A PLANNING BOARD MEETING HELD AUGUST 24, 2011

A correction was made on page 4 to delete the sentence after the motion beginning “It was clarified”.

Motion by Borowski, second by Ostrowski, that the minutes of a regular Planning Board meeting held on August 24, 2011 be approved as amended.

Motion passed (8 – 0).

UPDATE FROM LSL PLANNING CONSULTANTS REGARDING POTENTIAL SIGN ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

Planning consultant Brian Borden led the Board members in a review of proposed revisions to the general provisions and district regulations sections of the Village Sign Ordinance. There was a thorough discussion of the draft revisions. Modifications were made based on an examination of a number of circumstances involving signage in the community.

Board members discussed maximum allowable height and area for ground signs, which can be a monument sign or a pylon/pole sign. It was suggested that ordinance regulations differentiate between these types of ground signs. There is a mixture of businesses on the corridor, some of which are highly traffic serving and favor a pole sign while other businesses prefer a more traditional monument sign. There was a consensus to set a 6 ft. maximum height for a monument sign; the ordinance would allow a 12 ft. maximum height with a minimum 8 ft. clearance for a pole sign.

The Board reviewed proposed changes to regulations for total sign area per business. The ordinance currently allows a sign area of 120 square feet per business. Borden anticipated a Board discussion on business vs. building vs. premises. There may be a need to further define a building or a business in order to determine the signage allowed for a multiple tenant building. A new paragraph may be drafted to address multi-tenant buildings as well as a definition of multi-tenant.

It was suggested to limit the total wall sign area per business to 80 square feet. A provision could be added to allow an increase of 20 sq. ft. per additional tenant in a building. Regulations for ground sign area were proposed to separately address monument and pole signs. A scenario that was discussed was a corner business with sufficient frontage on two major streets to warrant a second monument sign.

Consideration was given to the urgency of revising sections of the sign ordinance summarily with the realization that the ordinance may change after drafting the Southfield Road overlay district. Borden envisions that the overlay district will have its own sign regulations once it is defined. The draft ordinance revisions are a first step towards improving and modifying the current sign ordinance. The Village is not at a point where it knows what the overlay district will look like.

Borden summarized that he has direction from the Board on the maximum sign height and area numbers and also maximum signage per building with the idea that the numbers can increase incrementally for additional businesses within a building. Other issues will be to work on the definition sections and on consistency.

Wilson asked if the Planning Board would be amenable to adding ordinance language prohibiting signs held by humans in the road right-of-way. There was agreement to prohibit these types of sign displays.

CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF SOUTHFIELD ROAD CORRIDOR

Southfield Road business owners were invited to a meeting with Village leaders at the municipal building on Monday, September 26 to discuss options and strategies to improve the commercial district and to encourage businesses to remain and locate in this area. The idea was to reach out to business and property owners for information and problem solving.

Westerlund reported that there were only a few tenants who attended the meeting. He related their concerns that the boulevard may reduce traffic to their establishments and construction delays could effect business. It was suggested that the Village create a vision and an aesthetic that would generate a sense of arrival for the Beverly Hills center within the boulevard scheme. Westerlund suggested some consistency in terms of lighting poles or landscaping.

The tenants present at the meeting talked about the types of businesses they would like to have adjacent to them. There was agreement that the character of the business district should be a consideration. Westerlund thought that the Village should take the local businesses into account and make sure that their interests are protected.

Wilson anticipated that the Road Commission will want to work with the Village to eliminate a few of the curb cuts on Southfield Road if the boulevard plan moves forward. The Road Commission will be looking at this from a safety standpoint only. Wilson hopes that there will be a resolution that considers both safety and accessibility to local businesses.

It was mentioned that Planning Board members Ostrowski, Westerlund, Stempien and Ruprich are meeting informally twice a month to further discuss the Southfield Road Corridor plan. An assignment is delegated to each of the individuals to research, report, and receive input from the Planning Board.

In response to an inquiry, Wilson said that a temporary subcommittee formed to address a special purpose is not subject to the Open Meetings Act requirements. This four member group does not represent a quorum nor is it a decision making body.

CONSIDER RESCHEDULING NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER PLANNING BOARD MEETINGS

MOTION by Borowski, second by Jensen, to reschedule the 2011 November and December Planning Board meetings to Wednesday, November 9 and Wednesday, December 7.

Motion passed (8 – 0).

PLANNING BOARD COMMENTS

Borowski commented that work on rewriting zoning ordinances is always a tedious process. The Board did important work tonight on this difficult task.

Abboud suggested that the Board should be grateful when a business in the Village undertakes improvements because it ultimately draws a better clientele.

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS

Wilson commented that Board member Peddie brought up the issue of garage sales in the Village. He agreed that this is a topic that should be addressed by the Board because there are people who are practically running small businesses out of their driveways. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

The Zoning Board of Appeals has requested that the Planning Board address ordinance language that deals with seasonal outside sales at Village businesses so that these recurring requests can be handled administratively. The ZBA would like the Planning Board to set parameters on what kind of outside sales are allowed.

Wilson related that Council Liaison Oen sends his regrets that he could not be present tonight.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

Motion by Westerlund, second by Stempien, to adjourn the meeting at 9:32 p.m.

Motion passed (8 – 0).

David Jensen, Chair
Planning Board

Ellen E. Marshall
Village Clerk

Susan Bernard
Recording Secretary