

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
PLANNING-CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMISSION
CITY OF LOWELL, MICHIGAN

For the Regular Meeting of the Planning-Citizen Advisory Commission on Monday, March 22, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Acting Chair Folsom and City Clerk Betty Morlock called the Roll.

Present: Commissioners Don Green, Jim Hall, Maryalene LaPonsie and Acting Chair Doug Folsom.

Absent: Commissioner Jahnke and Chair Noall

Also Present: City Manager David Pasquale, City Clerk Betty Morlock, Building Inspector Doug Hopkins, DPW Director Dan DesJarden, Mayor Jim Hodges and Councilmember Jeff Altoft.

IT WAS MOVED BY GREEN and seconded by HALL to excuse the absences of Commissioner Jahnke and Chair Noall.

YEA: 4. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 2. MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY GREEN and seconded by LAPONSIE to recognize Doug Folsom as Acting Chair for the March 22, 2010 meeting.

YEA: 4. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 2. MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONSIE and seconded by HALL to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 22, 2010 as corrected.

YEA: 4. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 2. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #1. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.** Commissioner LaPonsie suggested tabling Item 7B and 7C.

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONSIE and supported by GREEN to approve the agenda as amended.

YEA: 4. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 2. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #2. **PUBLIC HEARINGS.**

A. Ordinance to include temporary soft sided garages in residential districts – public hearing and recommendation to the City Council. Bob Robinson of 130 N. Center encouraged the Commission to delete the section of the proposed ordinance which states it is mandatory

to have a concrete or asphalt driveway. Other than those items, he believed this was a good ordinance.

Steve Doyle of 706 Riverside believed the construction of soft sided structures should not be permitted in any residential district in the City of Lowell. These units, which are essentially polypropylene plastic tents, are commercial and rural in nature. They are not permanent and not compatible with the small City lots.

Doyle felt allowing such structures would only lead to depreciating the value of properties. The City will only waste taxpayer dollars by having to police these structures. Doyle urged the Commission to reject any ordinance accommodating soft sided buildings in residential areas.

Chris Flezar of 417 Howard was opposed to soft sided tent style structures. A petition has been circulated and acquired almost 50 signatures stating each were against such an ordinance. He did not believe the ordinance would be good for the community or make it better. It does not increase the value of homes or make Lowell a nicer place to live.

Commissioner Green asked what is considered a hard surfaced driveway. Building Inspector Doug Hopkins responded poured concrete and asphalt are allowed. Any alternatives would have to be approved by the Commission.

Commissioner LaPonsie appreciated all the comments. She researched whether or not soft sided structures would decrease properties. She believed soft sided structures are better than having items scattered throughout the yard.

Commissioner Hall was against the ordinance. It does nothing to enhance the community. This should never have been considered in the first place.

Acting Chair Folsom agreed with LaPonsie. There are property rights and a surrounding property impact.

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONSIE and seconded by GREEN to recommend to the City Council approval of the proposed ordinance to include temporary soft sided garages in residential districts.

YEA: Commissioner Green, LaPonsie, Acting Chair Folsom.

NAY: Commissioner Hall. ABSENT: Commissioner Jahnke and Chair Noall.

MOTION CARRIED.

- B. Cherry Creek Elementary School (12675 Foreman) – installation of a radio antenna – special use permit – public hearing date. Steve Turnbull of the Lowell Area Schools has requested permission to install an antenna 24 feet in height on the roof mount of the northwest section at Cherry Creek Elementary School for the amateur radio club.

Representing Lowell Area Schools Al Eckman believed this is an excellent program for students.

City Manager Pasquale contacted School Superintendent Greg Pratt who indicated no school board action is required.

IT WAS MOVED BY GREEN and seconded by HALL to approve a special use permit for the installation of a radio antenna at Cherry Creek Elementary School as proposed.

YEA: Commissioner Green, LaPonsie, Hall and Acting Chair Folsom.

NAY: None. ABSENT: Commissioner Jahnke and Chair Noall.

MOTION CARRIED.

- C. 115 – 117 – 119 W. Main - Greg Canfield – establishment of a second floor for residential purposes – special use permit - public hearing. Greg Canfield, as part of the renovation project, wishes to contract a second floor addition at 115 – 119 West Main Street. Since the property is zoned Downtown Business District, a residential dwelling along with a commercial use requires a special use permit.

Canfield noted the plan has been designed with beams to carry the second floor.

City Clerk Betty Morlock noted Charles Myers of 1019 E. Main has indicated his support of the project.

IT WAS MOVED BY GREEN and seconded by LAPONSIE to approve the special use permit at 115 – 117 – 119 W. Main – Greg Canfield – establishment of a second floor for residential purposes.

YEA: Commissioner Green, Hall, LaPonsie and Acting Chair Folsom

NAY: None.. ABSENT: Commissioner Jahnke and Chair Noall.

MOTION CARRIED.

- D. 130 N. Center – Robert Robinson – installation of a radio antenna – special use permit – set public hearing date (3/22). Bob Robinson wished to establish a radio antenna at his residence located at 130 N. Center. He also requested permission to erect a tower which would be no higher than 70 feet. It was noted the neighbors are not against the special use. However, Self Serve Lumber does not want the antenna to hang over onto their property. Robinson said a screen would be placed around the antenna to prevent anyone from climbing it.

Commissioner Hall questioned why Robinson needed a 70 foot tower. Robinson explained he has large trees around his house.

Commissioner LaPonsie referred to the idea of an antenna being mounted to his house. Robinson did not believe it would be high enough.

LaPonsie questioned if a special use permit stays with the property for life. Pasquale responded yes.

Commissioner Hall was against such a large antenna. A smaller one may be more appropriate.

Commissioner Green supported the antenna as it would eventually blend in with the trees.

Commissioner LaPonsie had no problem with the antenna. Her only concern was it stays screened to keep kids out. She wanted this added as a condition.

Robinson explained attached to the tower is a screen which wraps around the tower itself. LaPonsie suggested he review the screen with City staff.

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONSIE and seconded by GREEN to approve the special use permit allowing a radio antenna with the requirement for minimum 6 foot chain link screening.

YEA: Commissioner Green, LaPonsie, Acting Chair Folsom

NAY: Commissioner Hall ABSENT: Commissioner Jahnke and Chair Noall

MOTION CARRIED.

Item #3. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ON GOING BUSINESS.**

- A. Use of the Masonic Lodge Building (112 Lincoln Lake) as wrestling training center – Dave Dean. Coach Dave Dean is interested in finding a location for a wrestling training center as well as housing wrestlers coming from out of town. He believed a business could be built that would consistently pull people into Lowell from outside of the area.

City Manager Pasquale mentioned Dean would need to have a commercial zoning to allow for the training center. In looking at the zoning ordinance itself, it provides indoor commercial recreation. The wrestling training center would fit under this format and be allowed by right. Additionally, Dean is looking at temporary housing. In the business district, there is provisions for rooming and boarding houses which would be allowed under a special use permit.

When considering the Central Business District, there is residential that is allowed with Commercial usage.

The old Masonic Lodge is currently zoned Public Facilities (PF) and would be required to have a General Business zoning.

Commissioner Green liked the idea. Green questioned which district a hotel/motel would fit into. Pasquale stated it can be in the Central or Business Districts.

Dean explained the building should have a minimum open square footage area of 2300 square feet. There should also be enough room for approximately 20 bunk beds. Dean hopes to have approximately 4 shower stalls, one kitchen and 2 baths.

Pasquale mentioned concerns of parking. He noted there is a vacant space north of the Masonic Lodge. Pasquale also questioned if there would be any barrier free requirements.

Item #4. **BUILDING INSPECTORS REPORT.** No comments were received.

Item #5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS CONCERNING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.** Steve Doyle of 706 Riverside Drive inquired regarding the number of emails, calls, letters were received indicating they were against the soft sided structures.

Item #6. **COMMISSIONERS REMARKS.** Commissioner Green thanked Chris Flezar, Steve Doyle and Bob Robinson for being present during these meetings. He appreciated all the input.

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONSIE to adjourn at 7:50 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

Laurie L. Noall, Chair

Betty R. Morlock, City Clerk