

STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

March 18, 2014

Called to Order at 7:30 pm in the Wiesloch Raum of City Hall.

Members present: Chairman, Keith Waltke; John Mikulenas; Eric Jones; Peter Stage; Michael Brothers; Michael Caywood; Don Eaton

Members absent: Jon Good

Staff present: Dir. Community Development, George E. Musolff; Recording Secretary, Tammy Williams

Also present: City Manager, Michael Hughes; Assistant City Manager, Andrew Kuk; Sturgis City Commissioner, Robert Hile

Minutes of the December 17, 2013 Regular Meeting approved as presented.

Chairman presented the first Agenda Item of Wood Burning Stoves/Furnaces for discussion.

Chairman Waltke opened the floor to the members of the Board for comment. Mr. Waltke explained in earlier conversation with Mr. Musolff, there had really been no problems addressed previously and asked the Board how they felt they wanted to proceed. Discussion turned to what would be best practices for the future as well as now.

Mr. Mikulenas suggested previous information regarding Canadian Guidelines and UL ratings could possibly be used as a model. Mr. Musolff explained some of the boilers could be homemade without UL or ASTM testing or ratings and not covered by building code. Mr. Musolff suggested treating portable or homemade devices as accessory structures and force mechanical inspections on the devices.

Discussion turned to what guidelines could be formed to regulate these devices and several suggestions were made including UL Ratings, aesthetics, distance, size, and what guidelines similar communities are using. Mr. Hughes addressed the Board and explained the issues the City Commission was concerned about and why they were requesting the Planning Board look at the issue. It was agreed that guidelines should be established and it was suggested that the Canadian Guidelines be used as a model and modified to fit the City's needs. Mr. Waltke asked for a motion. After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, a vote was taken, and the motion passed.

MOTION: Made by John Mikulenas and seconded by Don Eaton that City Staff be directed to develop an ordinance based on existing ordinances for similar communities and including UL ratings, aesthetics, health issues, and practices in similar communities.

Voting yes: Seven

Voting no: none

Absent: Good

Motion carried

Chairman presented the second Agenda Item of Sign Ordinance Changes

Mr. Waltke asked Mr. Hughes to be the representative and explain the reason for requesting changes to the Sign Ordinance in the Business Central (BC) District. Mr. Hughes explained there had been an observation that other communities have internally lit signs in their historical business and there had also been businesses in the BC District expressing interest in having internally lit signs. There was discussion with the Downtown Development Authority and they referred it to their Design Review Committee and invited other DDA Board members and businesses to a meeting for discussion of the topic. During research in advance of that meeting, it was discovered we were one of the few communities that didn't allow some fashion of internally lit signs. This research was conducted on what were felt as "best practice downtowns." Downtowns that are successful and upscale. One reason for communities allowing internally lit signs is perhaps the technology that has evolved allowing for more tasteful, creative ways of illuminating signs.

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Mr. Hughes then did a short highlight of changes that were being suggested. Recommendations including regulating when signs could be lit to only during business hours, types of lighting allowed, and requiring all internally lit signs go to Design Review Committee.

Mr. Eaton expressed concern about how the downtown looked in the past with internally lit signs but, also said he thought it was a great opportunity for a rebirth in the BC District. It was noted that the intensity of light is regulated with the new language as well as type of lighting. Size would be regulated by another area of the ordinance.

Mr. Musolff addressed the Board about taking this as well as amending the ordinance to expand square footage allotments for Business Highway 1 (BH-1). He and Mr. Hughes explained they felt the existing language was too restrictive regarding size since this area was designated for big box developments. The Board decided they would rather handle the size issue as a separate matter at a later date. After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, a vote was taken, and the motion passed.

MOTION: Made by John Mikulas and seconded by Eric Jones to approve the recommended Sign Ordinance Language with the removal of item 1.1006 H(4) regulating signs be lit only during business hours.

Voting yes: Six

Voting no: Eaton

Absent: Good

Motion carried

New Business

No new business was presented.

Adjourned 8:39 pm



Tammy Williams, Recording Secretary

STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

April 15, 2014

Called to Order at 7:30 pm in the Wiesloch Raum of City Hall.

Members present: Chairman, Keith Waltke; John Mikulenas; Jon Good; Peter Stage; Michael Brothers; Michael Caywood; Don Eaton

Members absent: Eric Jones

Staff present: Dir. Community Development, George E. Musolff; Recording Secretary, Tammy Williams

Also present: City Manager, Michael Hughes; Assistant City Manager, Andrew Kuk; Sturgis City Commissioner, Ina Taulbee; Sturgis City Commissioner, Mike Gay; Mayor, Ken Malone; Chuck Baber; Sturgis City Commissioner, Robert Hile; Business Owner, Ashish Patel; Business Owner, Karl Littman; WBET Radio Host, Mike Stiles; Andrew Boone; Kevin Boone; Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr & Huber, Jason Vander Kodde; Rockford Construction, Dan Leppink; Architectural Concepts, Ken Watkins; Culver's, Michael Miller

Minutes of the March 18, 2014 Regular Meeting approved as presented.

Chairman Waltke opened by asking anyone in attendance who had not signed in to please do so.

Chairman presented the Agenda Item - Special Land Use Request - 1170 S. Centerville Rd. – Fueling Center.

Chairman Waltke began by reading the Staff Report as written by Mr. Musolff. He then requested the representative for the property approach the podium. Mr. Vander Kodde and Mr. Dan Leppink, representatives, addressed the Commission and gave a brief description of the proposed site plan for a Meijer complete with the Fueling Center the Special Land Use Request is referring to. Mr. Vander Kodde explained that the site would hopefully be completed and opened by Spring of 2016.

Don Eaton Entered at 7:37 pm.

Opened to Commission

There was discussion regarding the fall zone of the existing cell tower, ingress and egress from White Street, truck traffic, whether there would be access all the way to the Wal-Mart Site.

Opened for Public Comment

None Heard

Closed to Public Comment

Opened to Commission

At this time, Chairman Waltke read the Special Land Use Criteria and responses were heard by the Commission. It was established that all of the Special Land Use Criteria were met. A Motion was made, seconded, voted on, and was carried unanimously.

MOTION: Made by Jon Good and seconded by Don Eaton to grant the Special Land Use Request as presented for a Fueling Center at 1170 S. Centerville Rd.

Voting yes: Seven

Voting no: none

Absent: Jones

Motion carried

Chairman presented the Agenda Item of Sign Ordinance Language for BH-1 District.

Mr. Waltke asked for City Staff comment and Mr. Musolff addressed the Commission to explain the request for this language change was coming because of the introduction of BH-1 and BH-2 Districts during Master Plan review. This particular language concerns only the Bh-1 Zone. Mr. Musolff explained this was the next logical step in the process since new Districts had been created. He also stated language for BH-2 would be presented at a later date.
Opened to the Commission

Mr. Good stated his opinion of the language was fewer restrictions than the current sign ordinance. Mr. Musolff agreed and pointed out there was a potential in that district for developments to be set back well off the highway frontage and that signs permitted by the current language would not be able to be seen well with traffic flow and distance.

Mr. Good suggested the issue be tabled until the next meeting due to new information presented regarding signage language for similar communities. Mr. Eaton also stated he would like more time to review the language and was concerned about how many current businesses would be allowed to increase their current signage and what the potential impact would be.

Mr. Waltke asked if all other members were in agreement. Most members were in agreement. Mr. Hughes addressed the Commission and asked to clarify a couple of items. He wanted the members to know the issue they were trying to address was more what was reasonable and not just allowing larger signs in general. He offered to supply more information if requested. He also stated they wanted to keep signage tasteful and consistent. Mr. Musolff also pointed out the proposed language would only increase total square footage on the property line by 10 square foot.

MOTION: Made by Jon Good and seconded by Don Eaton to table this issue for discussion at the next Commission Meeting.
Voting yes: Six Voting no: Mikulenas Absent: Jones Motion carried

Don Eaton Leaves 7:55 pm

Chairman presented the Agenda Item of Site Plan Review – 1170 S. Centerville Rd.

It was noted that this issue had previously been presented during the Special Land Use Request earlier in the meeting. Mr. Vander Kodde approached the podium and addressed the Commission again to make himself available for any questions. He stated there were some concerns from City Engineering and asked Mr. Musolff to address those issues with the Commission.

Mr. Musolff stated that there were concerns regarding storm water runoff and calculations were currently being worked on. He reminded the Commission that if a motion was made, they would need to remember to make that a condition for approval.

Mr. Good asked for a definition of fore bay and wondered if the bus stop was for the Circle Line. Mr. Vander Kodde supplied the definition and stated that yes, the bus stop was for the Circle Line.

Mr. Musolff continued his presentation of issues and concerns from other City Staff and summed up by stating all other issues and concerns had been addressed.

Opened for Public Comment

Ron Baker approached the podium representing tenants of the strip mall located on one of the parcels currently being considered for the project. He asked if City had given any consideration as to where these businesses would locate or when they would need to move. The Commission directed him to consult with his landlord on these issues.

Closed for Public Comment

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Opened to the Commission

A motion was made, seconded, voted on, and carried.

MOTION: Made by John Mikulenas and seconded by Pete Stage to accept the Site Plan as presented contingent upon final Staff approval of Storm Water calculations.

Voting yes: Six

Voting no: none

Absent: Jones; Eaton

Motion carried

Chairman presented the Agenda Item of Site Plan Review – Culver's Restaurant.

Mr. Walked asked for a representative for the project to step forward. Mr. Ken Watkins, Architectural Concepts, and Mr. Michael Mille, Culver's Restaurant approached the podium, gave a summary of the project being proposed, and made themselves available for questions and comments.

Mr. Mikulenas expressed a concern of traffic flow through the proposed drive through. Mr. Miller stated that since their food was cooked as it was ordered, there is not a large amount of drive through traffic at any of the current Culver's stores including stores in much larger cities. He explained that approximately 85% of all of his business is done through the dining room and it is very rare that there are more than 3 cars in a drive through at one time.

Mr. Musolff presented a summary of comments and concerns by City Staff with the most glaring being the drive and curb cut on South Orange Street and storm water calculations.

Opened for Public Comment

None heard.

Closed for Public Comment

Opened to the Commission

Mr. Good inquired about zoning issues and Mr. Musolff explained that the development was all one development and the zoning would be controlled by the BH-1 Zone. A motion was made, seconded, voted on, and carried.

MOTION: Made by Michael Caywood and seconded by John Mikulenas to accept the Site Plan as presented contingent upon final Staff approval of storm water calculations and curb cuts.

Voting yes: Six

Voting no: none

Absent: Jones; Eaton

Motion carried

Chairman presented the Agenda Item of Site Plan Review – Depot.

Chairman Waltke opened by asking for clarification of a statement made in the Sturgis Journal stating the City Commission had approved the Site Plan for the Depot. He stated he thought that was the job of the Planning Commission. Mr. Hughes addressed this and state that it was just a misunderstanding and they had used the term "Site Plan" in error. He stated the actual Site Plan Review was the job of the Planning Commission.

Mr. Walked then asked for a representative of the project and Mr. Chuck Baber approached the podium. Mr. Baber presented a summary of the project and made himself available for questions and comments. Mr. Mikulenas inquired about development on the contaminated portion of the site and the right of way from the railroad. Mr. Baber stated that they were allowed to develop on the contaminated portion so long as they did not make the conditions worse and that an agreement with the railroad was in process. Mr. Hughes also confirmed that all issues with the property have been resolved. Mr. Good expressed concern about storm water running from the contaminated property to the non-contaminated property and Mr. Baber stated it was the other way around.

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Opened for Public Comment

None heard.

Closed for Public Comment

Opened to the Commission

A motion was made, seconded, voted on, and carried.

MOTION: Made by Jon Good and seconded by Michael Caywood to accept the Site Plan as presented contingent upon final Staff approval.

Voting yes: Six

Voting no: none

Absent: Jones; Eaton

Motion carried

New Business

No new business was presented.

Adjourned 8:35 pm

Tammy Williams, Recording Secretary

STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

MAY 20, 2014

Called to Order at 7:30 pm in the Wiesloch Raum of City Hall.

Members present: Chairman, Keith Waltke; John Mikulenas; Jon Good; Peter Stage; Michael Brothers;
Don Eaton; Eric Jones

Members absent: Michael Caywood

Staff present: Dir. Community Development, George E. Musolff;
Also present: City Manager, Michael Hughes Sturgis City Commissioner, Robert Hile

Minutes of the March 18, 2014 Regular Meeting approved as presented.

Chairman Waltke opened by asking anyone in attendance who had not signed in to please do so.

Chairman presented the Agenda Item – Site Plan Approval O'Reilly Auto Parts 1230 S Centerville Rd

Chairman Waltke asked Mr. Musolff If There were any concerns from staff or administration concerning the site. Mr. Musolff explained that the site was reviewed and approved by all necessary staff and that it met or exceeded all minimum standards and requirements.

Opened to Commission

Several comments concerning the age of the building and previous occupancy of the site.

Opened for Public Comment

None Heard

MOTION: Made by John Mikulenas and seconded by Pete Stage to accept the Site Plan as presented

Voting yes: Seven

Voting no: none

Absent: Caywood

Motion carried

Chairman presented the Agenda Item of Sign Ordinance Language for BH-1 District.

Mr. Waltke asked for City Staff comment and Mr. Musolff addressed the Commission

Mr. Waltke asked if all other members were in agreement. Most members were in agreement. Mr. Hughes addressed the Commission and asked to clarify a couple of items. He wanted the members to know the issue they were trying to address was more what was reasonable and not just allowing larger signs in general. He offered to supply more information if requested. He also stated they wanted to keep signage tasteful and consistent. Mr. Musolff also pointed out the proposed language would only increase total square footage on the property line by 10 square foot.

MOTION: Made by Jon Good and seconded by Don Eaton to table this issue for discussion at the next Commission Meeting.

Voting yes: Six

Voting no: Mikulenas

Absent: Jones

Motion carried

New Business

Chairman Waltke, Complimented the Commission on their professionalism and expressed his gratitude for having the opportunity to work with and chair the Planning Commission for the past several years. He reminded the Commission members that while internally the members may, and should have differing opinions, it is better that they maintain a professional demeanor during meetings. Members of the press and general public for instance pick up on subtle gestures such as rolling of the eyes, head shaking, and well intentioned jibes, and misinterpret them as disrespect or declarations of ineptitude. In that case the credibility of the entire proceeding is suspect in their eyes. This as he pointed out was mentioned only to remind the Commission that all of their hard work could be jeopardized very unintentionally, by simply being very passionate about doing the right thing. Again Mr. Waltke thanked the board for all of their hard work.

Adjourned 8:04 pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Musolff". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "G" and "M".

George Musolff, Zoning Administrator

STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
September 16, 2014

Called to Order at 7:30 pm in the Wiesloch Raum of City Hall.

Members present: Chairman, Keith Waltke; John Mikulenias; Jon Good; Peter Stage; Michael Brothers; Eric Jones

Members absent: Michael Caywood; Don Eaton

Staff present: Dir. Community Development, George E. Musolff; Recording Secretary, Kerisa Butler

Also present: Assistant City Manager, Andrew Kuk; Oak Press Solutions President, David Franks

Welcome Kerisa!

Minutes of the May 20, 2014 Regular Meeting approved as presented.

Chairman presented the Agenda Item – Site Plan Review – 504 Wade Street- Oak Press Solutions.

Chairman Waltke began by requesting the representative for the property approach the podium. Mr. David Franks, president/representative, addressed the Commission and gave a brief description of the proposed site plan for “curb appeal”, addition of a new parking lot for visitor parking. They also are going to add 1 curb cut (driveway) and remove one driveway approach. With the curb cuts of the driveways they are going to extend the radius so to accommodate large tractor trailers. Also on the site plan are future plans that they intend to do over time. Mr. Franks explained to the commission that next year is the 50th Anniversary of the company and that they are growing more each day. Chairman Waltke asked staff member Mr. Musolff if he had anything to add and he did not other than what was reported in the staff report.

At this time Chairman Waltke asked the Commission if there was any discussion, Mr. Mikulenias stated that he would like to congratulate Oak Press Solutions and how happy he is that they have been a part of our community for so many years.

MOTION: Made by John Mikulenias and seconded by Peter Stage to grant the Site Plan for a new parking lot and curb cut at Oak Press Solutions.

Voting yes: Six

Voting no: none

Absent: Caywood & Eaton

Motion Carried

New Business

Jon Good brought up the B-H language and wanted to know if it had been finalized. It was finalized in the last meeting. Mr. Good also wanted the Commission to know that it will be one year tomorrow since they have sent a positive recommendation to the City Commission to create a planned development district for MOSO Village Project.

It should be noted in the minutes that staff have been directed to submit language for a possible ordinance for wood burners in the City of Sturgis, Mr. Musolff has not yet submitted the language but wanted it noted so that it could be discussed for future meetings. Mr. Good had been supportive of wood burners in the beginning, but he has since learned that you cannot regulate fuel. If you cannot regulate the fuel in a wood burner you create a problem in your community by allowing the wood burners. If someone chooses to burn green wood we have no control over that, by burning green wood they can create a tremendous smoke plume, it may very well be hazardous to our community to allow wood burners because we cannot control what they burn in it. Keep that in mind as we are provided with the language on wood burners. Chairman Waltke stated good point as long as we are able to follow through as there are already wood burners here.

Adjourned 7:42 pm


Kerisa Butler, Recording Secretary

STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

October 21, 2014

Called to Order at 7:30 pm in the Wiesloch Raum of City Hall.

Members present: Chairman, Keith Waltke; John Mikulenas; Jon Good; Michael Caywood; Michael Brothers; Eric Jones

Members absent: Peter Stage; Don Eaton

Staff present: Dir. Community Development, George E. Musolff; Recording Secretary, Kerisa Butler

Also present: City Manager, Mike Hughes; Atlantic Packaging (formerly International Paper) Facility Manager, Doug Flint; Atlantic Packaging Representative, Chuck Huber; Fishbeck Civil Engineer Meijer Project, Jason Vander Kodde

Minutes of the September 16, 2014 Regular Meeting approved as presented.

Chairman presented the Agenda Item – Class “A” Non-conforming Use Request- 500 International Way

The owner of International Paper is requesting a Class “A” non-conforming status. The pre-existing non conformities run along the east and south property lines, where the building fails to meet current setback requirements. The property is bordered on the south and east by the railroad right of ways, and on the north and west by public road. It is Zoned Manufacturing both currently and on the future land use map also. Chairman Waltke asked if there was a representative for the property and that he approach the podium. Doug Flint, Facility Manager, now Atlantic Packaging (formerly International Paper) here in Sturgis, MI took the podium, and stated that the company was purchased by Atlantic Packaging on October 1, 2014. The request is being made by Wels Holdings. Mr. Flint stated that it is probably their holding company, but he has only been with them for 15 days now. Wels Holdings is making the request due to a lending requirement, as stated in the staff report. Commissioners are aware that financing or refinancing is hard to obtain for a non-conforming structure. Mr. Caywood asked why Wels Holdings is listed as the applicant, when the request should be made by the owner. Mr. Musolff stated that it can be made by either the owner or an agent. Planning commissioners stated that if the information provided based on the representation is not accurate then they can reverse their decision. The non-conforming use status has to do with the proximity to the property lines, due to railroad right of ways and residential properties. Mr. Good stated that he takes it as Atlantic Packaging and Wels Holdings are attempting to finance the purchase of the property, and with it in a non-conforming status any commercial appraiser is going to tell the bank it is a non-conforming property. The class “A” would allow it to be refinanced or rebuilt without question. With the planning commission and City of Sturgis authorizing that the structure be rebuilt in the exact same footprint in case of any catastrophic event. Mr. Good then stated that the future land use map is followed in regard to any improvements and it does show that manufacturing is expected to continue on that site. He moves to approve the class “A” non-conforming status.

At this time Chairman Waltke asked the Commission if there was any discussion, Mr. Good stated that he was curious how far they are missing the borders by, and Mr. Musolff answered by 5 feet.

MOTION: Made by Jon Good and seconded by Michael Caywood to approve the Class “A” non-conforming Use Request for 500 International Way.

Voting yes: Six Voting no: none Absent: Stage & Eaton Motion Carried

Chairman presented the next Agenda Item – Meijer Site Plan Amendment – Jason Vander Kodde

Due to an impasse with Applebee’s Restaurant, Meijer is requesting approval for Site Plan Amendment. The proposed amendment will delete the access drive on the southern end of the site shared with Applebee’s. This will require the shifting of the fueling center to the south and expansion of the northern access drive. This has been discussed with City staff and it is their consensus that with the access to South Street and White Street, the proposed adjustments present no cause for concern. Mr. Vander Kodde stated that in April they presented 5 accesses to the site and it is the southern South Centerville driveway that they have been unable to solicit from Applebee’s, where the temporary dead-end is now. At this time, they prepared a new site plan and traffic impact study to eliminate that access and propose only one access drive onto South Centerville Road. This new site plan will create an additional 13 parking spaces, and increase inbound driveway, from 3 lanes to 4 lanes.

They have been working with the cell tower company to reduce the easement but they have not come to a decision. They have widened the north four bays of parking, to protect the cell towers easement, making it wider than minimum requirements. They are going to place a fence around the cell tower easement. Minor changes have been added at the staff level, added a sign for the bottle return and changed their parking lot lights from metal halide to LED. The connection to the Burr Oak Tool parking lot has been deleted. Finally, they were going to use Burr Oak Tools remaining parcel for utility service, but have since decided to use West South Street that has been reviewed by Barry Cox, City Engineer. That summarizes our proposed changes with the request for tonight being the elimination of one access. Should there be positive action tonight we anticipate closing within 60 days if everything goes as planned.

Mr. Vander Kodde asked if the commission had any questions and Mr. Mikulenas has a concern about White Street. In April, it was deemed that White Street would be used primarily for employees but changing the access he wonders if they need to be concerned about White Street. Mr. Hughes stated that White Street would be used primarily as a service drive. In regards to the traffic study, there were no significant changes with the new site plan. Mr. Jones asked about the truck docks being in the southeast corner of the building. White Street is most likely going to experience trucks going down White Street, since they won't use the parking lot entrances. That will bring up some additional weight factors for White Street. Mr. Good stated that he thought the original plan for deliveries were to be made using White Street. Mr. Vander Kodde stated not necessarily, the asphalt around the perimeter on the site plan shows a darker patch, which is a heavy duty path. Meijer protocol calls for all Meijer delivery trucks to follow the paths there. Mr. Mikulenas asked about MDOT for plan changes or additions to traffic lights or turn lights. Mr. Vander Kodde stated that MDOT emailed back with no objection. City staff can see no reason to deny the amendment for the Meijer Project.

At this time Chairman Waltke asked the Commission if there was any discussion, and heard none.

MOTION: Made by Jon Good and seconded by John Mikulenas to approve the new site plan amendment as presented for the Meijer Project by Jason Vander Kodde.

Voting yes: Six Voting no: none Absent: Stage & Eaton Motion Carried

New Business

Mr. Good stated by ordinance, they are a 9 member board and have been operating without 1 member for some time. If nobody is volunteering then should they consider amendment to the bylaws to create a 7 member board and eliminate one of them? He does believe it should be a full board. Mr. Hughes stated that each year before May they do some advertising but it has not been effective because it is not the only board. As members, the planning commission members should talk to people they think might be a good fit, and could go about it that way. Mr. Caywood brought up the attendance policy and that he recalls that you must be to a certain number of meetings or otherwise you would be kicked off. Advertising might be another way they can do it.

Mr. Mikulenas asked for an update on MOSO Village and Mr. Hughes explained that they are still working on financing. It seems positive but they are working on a USDA backed loan that is quite cumbersome. Mr. Hughes has spoken with the bank that will be financing and he is in good shape with them.

Adjourned 8:12 pm

Kerisa Butler, Recording Secretary

STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

November 18, 2014

Called to Order at 7:30 pm in the Wiesloch Raum of City Hall.

Members present: Chairman, Keith Waltke; John Mikulenas; Jon Good; Michael Caywood; Michael Brothers; Eric Jones; Peter Stage

Members absent: Don Eaton

Staff present: Dir. Community Development, George E. Musolff; Recording Secretary, Kerisa Butler

Also present: Scott Sinotte, State Farm Agent; Heather Mikulenas, public

Minutes of the October 21, 2014 Regular Meeting draft approved, final to be approved via email.

Chairman presented the Agenda Item – Class “A” Non-conforming Use Request- 1001 E. Chicago Rd.

The State Farm Insurance office located at 1001 E. Chicago Rd. is requesting a Class “A” non-conforming status. The chairman began by reading the staff report, and then called the representative for State Farm to the podium. Scott Sinotte, taking over for Lynn Reid, December 1, 2014 asked that he be able to have a sign near the road for his business. The property is currently zoned R3 and there are some zoning issues with being able to use a sign here. Mr. Musolff presented the Planning Commission with the section of the Zoning Ordinance that goes along with what Mr. Sinotte is asking for. Mr. Mikulenas asked Mr. Musolff if what they were trying to decide was going from Zoning section 1.1002 to 1.1003 for churches, schools, and other entities that meet non-conformities in an R3 Zone. This Zoning Ordinance for a Class “A” non-conforming status is restrictive enough that he couldn’t change the business to anything else without the planning commission getting involved. Mr. Mikulenas then stated he had been by the property and that there are other businesses near there that have signs near the road and that it looks fine. Mr. Good stated that he did not see any issues with the request, and moves to approve the Class “A” non-conforming status.

At this time Chairman Waltke asked the public in the audience if they had anything to add, they did not, so the planning commission voted.

MOTION: Made by Jon Good and seconded by Eric Jones to approve the Class “A” non-conforming Use Request for 1001 E. Chicago Rd.

Voting yes: Seven

Voting no: none

Absent: Eaton

Motion Carried

New Business

Mr. Good stated that it might be worth the time for the Planning Commission to revisit the Future Land Use Map regarding the East Chicago Road corridor. Even though it is not all city property throughout the East Chicago Road corridor, perhaps something could be done for concerns relating to Class “A” non-conforming use requests popping up.

Chairman Waltke said he was at the corner of US 12 and Nottawa, when he looked into The Great Lakes Chocolate Factory, and saw a young boy leaning against the plate glass window on the interior. He wondered if there is any ordinance to put railings around plate glass windows so customers can not lean on them. The Planning Commission asked the Insurance agent, present, what his professional opinion is regarding safety. Mr. Sinotte stated that he has had that conversation with many businesses, and it is up to them if they feel the need to put extra safety equipment in place.

Adjourned 7:48 pm

STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
December 16, 2014

Called to Order at 7:35 pm in the Wiesloch Raum of City Hall.

Members present: Jon Good; Michael Brothers; Eric Jones; Peter Stage
Members absent: Chairman, Keith Waltke; John Mikulenas; Don Eaton; Michael Caywood (via email vote)
Staff present: Dir. Community Development, George E. Musolff
Also present: Mike Himes, Vision Signs; Cathi Abbs, Sturgis Chamber; Kathy Jessup, Sturgis Journal

Minutes of the October 21, 2014 Regular Meeting as well as the November 18, 2014 Regular Meeting.

Jon Good as acting chairman presented the Agenda Item – BC Sign Approval – 209 W. Chicago Rd. (Gina's Healing Hands Day Spa) – Reaffirmed 1/20/15 with full quorum

Per the design given and the staff report accompanying, the commission can see no reason to deny the proposed sign for Gina's Healing Hands Day Spa.

MOTION: Made by Eric Jones and seconded by Peter Stage to approve the back lighted sign for Gina's Healing Hands Day Spa, as recommended by the Design Review Committee.

Voting yes: Four (+ email vote) Voting no: none Absent: Waltke, Mikulenas, Eaton, Caywood Motion Carried

Jon Good as acting chairman presented the Agenda Item – 306 W. Chicago Rd. (Sturgis Chamber of Commerce/Southwest Michigan First/DDA) proposed sign – reaffirmed 1/20/15 with full quorum

Per the design given and the staff report accompanying, the commission can see no reason to deny this sign in the Central Business District.

MOTION: Made by Eric Jones and seconded by Michael Brothers to approve the fourth color scheme as recommended by the Design Review Committee for signs in existing frame work at 306 W. Chicago Rd. for the Sturgis Chamber, Southwest Michigan First, and the Downtown Development Authority.

Voting yes: Four (+ email vote) Voting no: none Absent: Waltke, Mikulenas, Eaton, Caywood Motion Carried

New Business

Mr. Good stated since there appears to be no new business to discuss the meeting is adjourned.

Adjourned 7:43 pm


Kerisa Butler, Recording Secretary