

DANVILLE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES

June 2, 2016

A meeting of the Danville Planning and Zoning Commission was held on Thursday **June 2, 2016**, in the Community Room, 17 West Main Street, Danville, Illinois.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Tracy Taylor
Ted Vacketta
Pete Goodwin
Jane Campbell
Minni Seth
Adam Brown
Dale Carlton
Kent King

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Katasha Butler

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Christopher Milliken, Lisa Robinson, Ross Hilleary
Liila Bagby, Lori Morgan and Lyn Zhong
Dustin Heiser, Greg & Betty Blanton

Chairman Tracy Taylor called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Roll Call: Tracy Taylor, Ted Vacketta, Pete Goodwin, Jane Campbell, Minni Seth, Adam Brown, Dale Carlton, and Kent King present. Absent was Katasha Butler. A quorum was present.

Advisory to City Council: Announcement made, City Council will hear the petitions on Tuesday, June 21, 2016, at 6:00pm.

Approval of the Minutes: Jane Campbell made a motion to approve the minutes of April 7, 2016 meeting, as presented; Seconded by Ted Vacketta. Unanimously approved by voice vote.

Items of Information: Reminder of the OMA Training needing to be completed by some Commissioners. East Main Street Plan work underway and a couple of the mini-parks will be completed this year. Housing Task Force changes are moving forward. Presentation on the Riverfront Project this evening.

General Oath of Audience was given. Seven individuals present were sworn in.

Public Hearings –

Rezoning Petition #250 – Time-O-Matic DBA Watchfire Signs is requesting that the property directly east of 1015 Maple Street be zoned from AG to II Light Industrial to

allow for the construction of additional parking lots to serve the facility located at 1015 Maple Street.

Petitioner: Dustin Heiser, employed by Watchfire Signs as the Facility Supervisor, indicated that they purchased the subject area which was a football field from the School District, and have since determined that the best course of action would be to have the property rezoned that would allow for construction of a parking lot. He indicated that the company expanded a few years ago and that due to continued growth they now have the need for another 100 parking spots, within the next 3-4 years.

Questions from the Commission:

Chairman Taylor: Is there a time-table for beginning construction of the parking lot?

Heiser: No, but we would like to start this Fall, we have a few other projects going on inside the building to make better use of our space.

Kent King: What about drainage for the parking lot structure?

Heiser: The contractors I spoke with advised that if it's less acre then we don't need to worry about an overflow, but I don't know if it is going to be an additional acre or a complete acre of new parking lot.

Ted Vacketta: Will you be using this whole entire square here for new parking lot?

Heiser: No, the provided sketch shows where we anticipate using about 25%.

Jane Campbell: Will this impact the school in anyway?

Heiser: No, we will be staying to the north of the access on Colfax and it's not been determined if we will have the ability to us Colfax as an additional access. Right now the current plan is just to continue to use the end of Bahl Street as our sole access.

Ted Vacketta: Does your company have long term plans for future expansion and growth and possibly need the north lot for building expansion?

Heiser: Possibly, we still have a lot of land between our building and Bob's Market that we own, but in the interest of just keeping the facility centrally located that would be our primary concern. Since we spent so much money several years ago to make sure all of our facility was under one-roof we are not currently entertaining any plans to have that divided up.

Tracy Taylor: What kind of landscaping do you anticipate having around the parking lot?

Heiser: There is currently a tree line along the property line and the existing parking lot and clearing would be kept to a minimum with the new parking lot landscaped to follow the City ordinance requirements.

Supporting the Petition: None

Opposition to the Petition: **Greg Blanton**, 1004 Garfield Place, which he indicated is approximately 60 yards from where they want to put the parking lot. He said he was mostly concerned with increased noise, lighting and further drainage problems. He

questioned what impact the proximity of the parking lot might have on his property value as well.

Betty Blanton, 1006 Garfield Place, indicated she had been a long time resident of that area, and that she lives in a great neighborhood and is concerned about the possibility of flooding, and did not want the parking lot to butt right up against her property/backyard. She indicated that the property in question has a water drainage problem, because when it rains that area holds water. She feels that as proposed the parking lot would be infringing too much on the residential property and the value of the houses.

Additional Questions from the Commission:

Pete Goodwin: Are you stating that this whole field is basically a pond?

Betty Blanton: No, just the south end of that field.

Petitioner: Heiser again spoke to address a couple of the concerns. He indicated that he had some of the neighboring residents approach the Watchfire facility over the last couple of weeks. He indicated that the bids specifications they are working with right now has all the new construction tying into the existing on site drainage. He indicated that as part of the screening that Watchfire would certainly be open to putting up a fence around the property to act as a shield.

Chairman Taylor: Indicated her biggest concern was with rezoning the whole entire property if it was not all to be used right now. Would Watchfire be willing to leave some of that area along the residential properties in its natural state?

Heiser: Along the south side we most definitely can, particularly if we shift the parking lot to the north. I do not want to be up in somebody backyard and that is something that we most definitely will take into account. We can plant trees, shrubs, we can do whatever to take these steps to provide separation so as not to visually impact the neighbors.

Adam Brown: So you said you were going to tie into the exiting storm drainage. Being more respectful of the residents in the area, is it possible that you can put in some under-drainage on the south side?

Heiser: Possibly, the problem with that method is that you would then have a storm drain right in the middle of that field, but that is something that we can definitely consider.

Pete Goodwin: Is there a reason that the south side was chosen?

Heiser: We had one of our Junior Engineer draw this up as a very basic conceptual design and that's why it has the property line, but it could certainly be designed and oriented differently than shown if need be.

Jane Campbell: This is your only option here in terms of a new parking lot?

Heiser: We would have to stick to somewhere in this field to the East of the facility; if we were to expand our building we would go directly north of our current facility first. And we do have a shipping dock on the east face of our building and so that pretty well blocks off that area as far as parking, because the mixing of employee traffic and semi-traffic is not at all desirable. We understand that our facility is in an older part of town and we do

have neighbors. When the City had re-built Maple and Mays and Pries, for a while we actually had to build a ramp out of our parking lot and we were driving down a residential street and at the shift change it could get kind of hectic. We informed our employees under no uncertain terms were you to let this get out of hand because there were children at play in this area. We try to be respectful neighbors. And I do realize that we only have the tree line that divides us, and I would like to try to accommodate them and their concerns.

Kent King: What if you moved your parking structure away from the property line and put in a larger buffer zone?

Heiser: We could look at that but I don't want to be on the far north end of that property because then you will have semi-traffic and when they pull out of the bay, their lights are on and they will be revving up, so that's why I would like to keep that tree line intact further North.

Ted Vacketta: How many parking spaces in this proposal?

Heiser: We are trying to add between 80 and 90 at this time. We are currently at a 2-shift operation and it's a line item in our contract that we can change it to 3 or 4, a swing-shift; And that would elevate a lot of the issues, because there is a period of time between 2 and 3:30/4 o'clock that 1st shift is still here and 2nd shift is starting to show up and no one has really left for the day yet so, that's where we would have to account for all of our employees at a single time. But by the time I get there tonight this parking lot is going to be a ghost town whereas the west one would be mostly full.

Ted Vacketta asked Mr. Milliken to address three items- the undesirability of having industrial zoning right up against the residential zoning, ability to stipulate additional buffer zone next to residential properties, and requirements of the city's storm water ordinance for the expansion of the parking lot.

Milliken: Indicated that certainly it is not ideal to have industrial areas butting up against residential so creating separation thru buffering is important. Any stipulations and/or conditions that the commission feels is appropriate can be placed on the petition to provide for that. The zoning ordinance itself would require screening. A specific setback for the parking lot itself is required and a fence and or combination of fence/landscaping that could help minimize the noise and lighting as much as possible would be required regardless. I am certainly all for encouraging some type of additional buffering outside of what is being presented. As far as the storm water ordinance all water from the parking lot would have to be detained on site and their design would have to be approved by the city before they could proceed with that construction.

Adam Brown: What kind of current detention do they have in place right now?

Milliken: I believe there is a basin out behind the building that was added/expanded at the time of the facility expansion a few years ago.

Heiser: Yes, we have a detention pond on the northwest corner of our property.

Department Comments:

Christopher Milliken: Noted several neighbors were present, and acknowledged that the property identification was kind of general in the letter as far as the specific property being

zoned. Milliken distributed a copy of the property layout showing precisely what portion of the property was proposed for rezoning. Milliken indicated that the subject property has been primarily undeveloped, serving as an athletic field for many years, so it doesn't have an official address. Milliken discussed details of the rezoning and expansion of the subject facility that took place in 2012 and indicated that then most of the parking ended up being on the west side of the facility. He furthered indicated that Watchfire did provide the necessary buffering and landscaping and drainage associated with that development and appear to be maintaining that satisfactorily. Again, this is a different neighborhood to the east and I think you need to consider it separately from that discussion. With it being rezoned to I1, and under common ownership obviously whatever they do with the rest of their property is something they could then do with this property as well.

Motion made by Kent King to adopt the preliminary findings of fact and approve Rezoning Petition #250 with the condition of additional buffering stipulations to be placed on the South and East sides of the property.

Seconded by Pete Goodwin

A discussion ensued on appropriate conditions and wording of those conditions.

Milliken suggested that there are two options for proceeding from here. One option would be to continue the public hearing to July 7th meeting, the next Planning and Zoning Commission meeting so that plans could be prepared and brought back to you for review and approval and for the neighbors approval. The other option would be to vote on the petition tonight with the agreed on conditions and to require the petitioner to come back to the Commission at a later date for final site plan approval. If the public hearing is continued, the City Council would not vote on it this month, and the petition would come back here in July for Commission vote and then it would go Council later in July for their review and vote.

Heiser suggested that is reasonable that some details could be added and brought back so long as this doesn't create a perpetual back and forth.

Milliken indicated that procedurally then the current motion would need to be withdrawn and a new motion would need to be made to continue the public hearing on this petition to the July 7th meeting.

Kent King withdrew his prior motion.

Motion made by Ted Vacketta to continue the public hearing on Rezoning Petition #250 to the July 7th meeting so that the petitioner can prepare and bring additional information back to the Commission and neighbors.

Seconded by Jane Campbell

Roll Call Yes: Kent King, Dale Carlton, Adam Brown, Minni Seth, Jane Campbell, Ted Vacketta, Pete Goodwin and Tracy Taylor

No: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Katasha Butler

Motion carried: The public hearing on Rezoning Petition #250 was continued to July 7th meeting. Milliken then advised all those present that if they desired they could attend on July 7th where this discussion would be continued.

Other Business:

Riverfront Concept Plan – Re-envisioning Danville’s Downtown Riverfront: Liila Bagby introduced Lori Morgan and Lyn Zhong of the Planning Team from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. They gave an overview of the proposed plan and concepts for redevelopment of the Downtown Riverfront area. The Conceptual Plan presented goals and developmental streams to build upon. They discussed some off site elements in connecting downtown to the riverfront, greenway connections with Ellsworth Park and other regional destinations. They talked about the development of the north side of Main Street. They talked about how to implement the streams and concepts and the potential costs and potential funding sources for doing so.

Liila Bagby then indicated the actual documents will be posted on the city’s website and put on public display at the Library and at City Hall. This will go to Public Services Committee later in June and following that it will go to Council for final acceptance/approval.

Proposed Sign Code Changes: Presentation by Ross Hilleary of the proposed zoning ordinance changes for signage including at shopping centers, and differentiating free standing pole and monument style signs. Also changes in regards to abandoned signs and sign structures were discussed. Hilleary indicated that part of the changes were being made to encourage monument style signage.

Milliken indicated that the proposed changes would be formalized into a petition and brought back to the Commission next month for public hearing and further discussion.

Motion made by Ted Vacketta to adjourn, Seconded by Dale Carlton. Unanimously approved by voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45pm.