

**FLORENCE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
FLORENCE GOVERNMENT CENTER
BUSINESS MEETING
NOVEMBER 13, 2019
7:30 P.M.**

Mr. Pieper called the meeting to order at 7:40 P.M.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Timothy Pieper, Chairman
Ms. Dee Begley
Ms. Lois Evans, Vice-Chairwoman
Mr. Kenny Vaught

BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Mrs. Linda Schaffer

LEGAL COUNSEL PRESENT

Mr. Dale Wilson

Mr. Vaught took the oath of office prior to the meeting and was eligible to participate as a Board member.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Mr. Pieper stated the Board members received copies of the minutes of the Florence Board of Adjustment meeting of October 16, 2019. He asked if there were any comments or corrections? Ms. Begley made a motion to approve the minutes as written and Mr. Vaught seconded the motion. Mr. Pieper called for a vote and it carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Request of Drury Southwest, Inc. for a Variance. The Variance is to allow a 99 foot high hotel building. The approximate 7.97 acre site is located at 7913 - 7915 US 42, Florence, Kentucky and is zoned Commercial Services/Planned Development/Parkway Corridor Study Overlay (C-3/PD/PO).

Staff Member, Todd Morgan, AICP, presented the Staff Report which included a PowerPoint presentation (see Staff Report).

Ms. Begley asked what the height of the former hotel was before it was torn down? Mr. Morgan replied he didn't know the overall height of the two-story hotel. Mr. Morgan said he did a little research on some other hotels in Boone County. The only 8 story hotel he found was the Marriott on KY 20. The tallest hotel in Florence he found was the Hyatt Place on Meijer Drive and it's 6 stories tall.

Ms. Begley asked about potential impacts on adjoining property owners. Mr. Morgan replied this site will have its own parking. The Planning Commission also notified all the adjoining property owners and he received no complaints or comments.

Mr. Pieper asked if they will have to go through FAA approval for the height? Mr. Morgan responded that he received an email from Paul Hegedus, with Kenton County Airport, regarding the request. It's attached to the Staff Report. His email states that Kenton County Airport Board has no objection to the building height as long as it's reviewed by the Kentucky Airport Zoning Commission and Federal Aviation Administration.

Ms. Evans asked how tall the Hilton on Turfway Road was? Mr. Morgan responded it's 5 stories tall. She asked how tall that would be? Mr. Morgan said you can approximate about 10 feet per floor and add additional height for a parapet wall or architectural feature or top. Mr. Morgan said as a comparison the hotel they are looking at tonight is 8 stories tall and 95' tall.

Mr. Vaught said the height of the hotel will not be out of character with the area. The lights at the stadium and signage on Steilen Drive are examples. He doesn't see any issues.

Mr. Pieper asked if anybody in the audience would like to speak regarding the request? Mayor Diane Whalen said the City of Florence is an adjoining property owner and they received notice. The City of Florence owns the stadium and they are concerned about the east side of town. The City of Florence wants to make sure that the right project is presented to this Board. There have been a couple of other potential projects on this site. The first was a fueling center for semi trucks. This was not the type of use the City was looking for because it could impact the stadium and tourism. The City has had lots of discussion with Drury and even toured their hotel in Mason. The City is supportive of this project. The Fire Marshal had no comments because they have a 100 foot ladder truck. This will be the tallest building in the City but they believe it will be a showcase and an anchor for the east side of town.

Mr. Pieper asked the applicant if they would like to speak? Mr. Mark Ziers, with Drury Southwest, said they are excited to build this project. He indicated the extra 4' of building height they are asking for would allow a margin of error if the building design changes before they start construction. The 95' tall building they are showing is their standard prototype. They have already submitted an application to the FAA for their review and approval.

Ms. Evans asked when they expect breaking ground and when the hotel would be completed? Mr. Ziers said they would probably start construction the end of next year or beginning of 2021 and construction takes from 16 to 18 months.

Ms. Begley said there are Drury's that are five and six stories tall. Mr. Ziers said the lowest hotel they will build today is 7 stories. They evaluated this site and determined an 8 story hotel with 187 rooms would be appropriate for this market. The older 4 and 5 story Drury's are receiving facelifts now or being rebuilt.

Mr. Pieper asked if the height could increase any further (above 99')? Mr. Ziers responded it could not.

Mr. Pieper asked if anybody had any additional comments? There was no response.

Mr. Pieper made a motion to approve the application as submitted and Ms. Begley seconded the motion. Mr. Pieper called for a roll call vote and Mr. Pieper, Ms. Begley, Ms. Evans, and Mr. Vaught were in favor. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pieper asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Vaught so moved and Ms. Evans seconded the motion. Mr. Pieper called for a vote and the meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:59 P.M.

APPROVED

Timothy L. Pieper, Chairman

ATTEST:

**Todd K. Morgan, AICP
Senior Planner, Zoning Services**