

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

For the Regular Meeting of the Planning-Citizen Advisory Commission January 23, 2006 at 7 p.m.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Jahnke and the Clerk called the Roll.

Present: Commissioners Berry, Dimmick, Grimm, Hall, LaPonsie, Mundt, Schmaltz, Teelander and Chairman Jahnke.

Absent: None.

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

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by Teelander to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of November 28, 2005 and the worksession of December 12, 2005 as corrected.

YEA: 9. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #1. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by LAPONSIE to approve the agenda as presented.

YEA: 9. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #2. **PUBLIC HEARING.**

- A. Ordinance regulating canopies and awnings in the business and public facilities districts – recommendation to the City Council. After review of the ordinance, Chairman Jahnke suggested the following changes to the ordinance:

Section 1 – Awning – Awning means a roof-like structure attached to a building.

Section 2 – Canopy – Canopy means a protective roof-like covering mounted independently on a frame over a walkway, door or installed equipment.

Jahnke noted a canopy is defined as a separate structure.

Commissioner LaPonsie questioned Section 4.23. The following was suggested:

Canopies and awnings are permitted in C-1, C-2, C-3 and PF Districts to be placed around

door or window openings in buildings and structures without limitation as the number. Canopies and awnings shall not encroach beyond the public sidewalk into the public street. In addition, canopies and awnings are permitted over installed equipment attached to a building or structure. Such canopies and awnings shall be compatible with the building or structure.

Public Works Director Dan DesJarden questioned if the fire station had a canopy or awning over the front door which covers the sidewalk. Jahnke explained if the cover is attached to the building, it is considered an awning. If it is not attached to the building, it is considered a canopy. DesJarden inquired if the canopies cover bank and gas stations. City Manager Pasquale explained such covers are considered structures which require a separate site plan approval.

Building Inspector Doug Hopkins suggested the ordinance state any canopy, which requires a foundation for support. He believed a canopy is attached to the fire station because it covers a walkway. Jahnke referred to restaurant entrances with steel structures holding a canopy, but not attached to a building. Hopkins questioned if this would cover the island as mentioned. Jahnke responded yes. Hopkins stated a foundation should be required when referring the canopies at gas stations.

Jahnke suggested the definition for awning read "a roof-like structure not requiring a foundation and attached to a building that serves as a shelter, as over a storefront, window, door, deck or installed equipment".

Jahnke suggested the definition for canopy read “a protective roof-like covering not requiring a foundation mounted independently on a frame over a walkway, door or installed equipment.

DesJarden questioned the awning at Grand Collision. Is this an awning, lighting or sign? Commissioner Mundt stated by definition, if it has a word on it, it is a marquee and falls under the sign ordinance. Jahnke noted it could be considered an awning, as it is part of the roof structure. DesJarden said an awning is over each window. Hopkins added an awning refers to store front windows and doors.

Mundt read the following definition: “a marquee is a permanent structure that projects from a permanent wall of a building. A marquee sign is a sign attached to a marquee, canopy or awning projecting from and supported by the building”. Hopkins explained a marquee sign is typically considered to be similar to that above Larkin’s Other Place. A marquee would have a ceiling underneath it.

LaPonsie questioned if a marquee sign has its own special criteria. Hopkins responded yes. It is part of the sign ordinance.

Jahnke inquired if it was the Commission’s intent to disallow signage from being on canopies and awnings, even if such signage would be determined to fit within the rest of the signage ordinance for square footage and size. He questioned why the Commission would not allow signage on a canopy or awning, if this met the sign requirements.

Jahnke suggested the wording “Canopies and awnings shall not encroach beyond the public sidewalk into the public street. In addition, canopies and awnings are permitted over installed equipment attached to a building or structure. Such awning canopies shall be compatible with the building or structure”.

By general consensus the Commission agreed.

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by LAPONSIE to recommend to the City Council approval of the ordinance amendment as corrected regulating canopies and awnings in the business and public facilities districts.

YEA: 8. NAY: 1. (Mundt) ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #3. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **SITE PLAN REVIEW** - None.

B. **VARIANCES – RECOMMENDATION TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS** - None.

Item #4. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ON GOING BUSINESS.**

A. Consideration of consultants for Master Plan Update. On Monday, January 16, the Commissioners had the opportunity to hear presentations from three planning consultant firms: McKenna Associates, Gove Associates and Williams & Works to update the City's Master Plan.

City Manager Pasquale stated each of the three firms were well qualified and have long standing reputations in master plan work.

Commissioner LaPonsie stated she was most impressed with McKenna Associates. The firm has worked with Eaton County regarding urban growth boundaries. LaPonsie noted it may also be beneficial for the City to work with a firm less familiar with the area. Commissioner Berry agreed with LaPonsie.

Commissioner Hall believed all three firms are good qualified vendors. He noted the City has never worked with McKenna Associates or Gove Associates.

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONSIE and seconded by HALL to recommend to the City Council that McKenna Associates provide the Master Plan Update for the City of Lowell.

It was noted McKenna Associates was chosen due to their expertise in urban growth, legal expertise as well as a fresh set of eyes.

YEA: 9. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

Hall suggested a line item be placed within the budget in which contributions are made every year toward a future new master plan.

Item #5. **BUILDING INSPECTOR'S REPORT.** Building Inspector Doug Hopkins commented on the shed at 206 Pleasant. A letter sent to the owners was returned back to the City as unaccepted. The issue will now be turned over to Lowell Police Department. Hopkins noted the shed needed to be moved by December 1, 2005.

Hopkins also commented on Section 4.06 - Clear Vision. Planning Chairman Jahnke suggested the issue be placed on the agenda for February 27, 2006.

Item #6. **PUBLIC COMMENTS.** No comments were received.

Item #7. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS.** Commissioner Dimmick stated it was good to be back.

Commissioner Mundt commented on an article which indicated Cedar Springs is considering actions against the free standing wood furnaces which are placed on private property in order to heat a home. Building Inspector Doug Hopkins did not believe this should be an issue. The furnace is contained and has a chimney.

Commissioner Hall questioned what prompted the tree removal along Bowes Road. Chairman Jahnke noted new power lines. Councilmember Shores explained the lines would hook into the new substation. A meeting was held in November for all the property owners. Shores noted some trees which were not in the right of way will be replaced.

Commissioner Teelander stated the middle school parking lot lights are very bright.

Chairman Jahnke suggested the Lighting Ordinance be placed on the February 27, 2006 agenda.

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL to adjourn at 9:34 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

Clark K. Jahnke, Chairman

Betty R. Morlock, City Clerk