

City of Oconomowoc
Architectural Commission Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2010

The Deputy Clerk called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm.

Members Present: Paul Schultz, Kent Johnson, Chad Vande Zande and Jeremy Flint
Members Absent: Michael Day
Staff Present: Jason Gallo and Chris Dehnert

Due to the absence of Chairman Day, motion by Schultz to nominate Johnson as Chairman pro-tem; second by Vande Zande. Motion carried 4-0.

5:30 PM Public Hearing: The hearing opened at 5:33 pm. Johnson read the public hearing notice into the record. Dan Warren, on behalf of Pabst Farms Development Inc., has applied for a Special Exception to be allowed to erect a ground sign that does not meet sign code requirements. The ground sign is to be located at the SE corner of STH 67 (Summit Avenue) and Pabst Farms Blvd.

No comments were made. The public hearing closed at 5:36 pm.

2. Approve Minutes for December 2, 2009: Motion by Flint to approve the December 2, 2009 minutes; second by Vande Zande. Motion carried 4-0.

3. Pabst Farms Village Crossing - Consider / approve special exceptions and sign plans for an off-premise ground sign that exceeds the height and sign area requirements, to be located at the SE corner of STH 67 and Pabst Farms Blvd (Tax Key No. OCOC 0633.999.002): Gallo explained the applicant is requesting to erect a ground sign that does not meet sign code requirements, and the members may choose to grant any or all of the special exceptions requested for sign height, sign area and to place advertising signage off-premise. The proposed sign will be located in the SC-Suburban Commercial District and is considered temporary, though it could be in place for a long time. Gallo stated the proposed sign is to be 12' high, and while the maximum height in the code for permanent signs is 8', there are no height restrictions for temporary signs. He noted there is currently another temporary sign in the applicant's development which is 12' tall. The proposed sign will be 64 sf, and the code allows for permanent signs up to 50 sf and temporary signs up to 32 sf. It will also be located on a different tax parcel than where the development will be. Gallo noted the applicant owns a very large piece of property, and the members should first decide if the development is or is not considered part of one large planned development. If so, the sign would not be considered off-premise. He added the applicant has not addressed the timeline for the sign. He is concerned that it could be there for a long time, noting with a slow economy and the unknown of how long it could take for units to sell, it could remain for 12 years or more. The applicant has also requested the sign be lit 24 hours a day with 300 watt unshielded bulbs which Gallo stated will give off intense lighting levels and cause sky glow. Lastly he was concerned there is no landscaping planned around the sign which he would prefer to see. Gallo agreed that Pabst Farms is a prominent business in the community and noted their sign request has the support of the Mayor. Schultz stated there is a sign located just off I-94 which is not listed as an existing sign, and its message has changed to include this condominium project. He questioned if it should come back to the Architectural Commission for review since the sign has changed. Gallo confirmed that the sign is not on the same parcel so it was not included in the report. That sign was granted a special exception for size and Gallo agreed if the message has changed that amendment should come back to the commission for review.

Dan Warren of Pabst Farms Development asked the members to look differently at Pabst Farms as the development encompasses 2-1/2 square miles. He is not asking for any special advantage, but just that the members realize Pabst Farms is different than other developments in the community. Warren clarified that certain signage in the development was approved as to location and size during the TIF process. He requested the members consider the sign by I-94 and the signage request tonight as all part of Pabst Farms. He believes the sign on I-94 was changed last spring in order to reflect the current active Pabst Farms project which is the Village Crossing. Warren noted they recently removed a large temporary sign and added they take signage very seriously in that they take care of it while it is up and make sure to remove it when it is no longer needed. As to the size and height of the proposed sign, he noted there are no neighbors as it will be located in the middle of a field. Warren also thought the lighting didn't matter and the wattage was appropriate due to its location near I-94.

Flint inquired if a temporary sign has a specific timeframe or duration to it. Gallo explained that this type of temporary sign has to advertise a development on it pursuant to City ordinance. The sign can remain in place up to the time that building permits have been issued for 80% or more of the lots in the development. Flint asked how this 12' sign could be deemed to be non-conforming when

there is already another sign in the development which is 12' high. Flint was concerned that approval of this sign due to it being off-premise could be setting precedence and would be a bad example for retail stores. Johnson noted the requested signage is covering 144 units, not just one business. He also thought you have to consider the lack of neighbors in the area along with the nearby lights of the interstate. He concluded the members should set a timeframe for when the applicant would have to come back to update them with the status of the temporary sign. Schultz didn't want to set the precedence of putting up billboards for every new development that starts up, but he doesn't have a problem with one. He added he believes the sign should be landscaped around its base. Flint suggested a mound around the base of the sign for plantings just like they have done for other signs. The issue of lighting the sign was then discussed. Warren felt a 10 pm cutoff was a little early, noting their main monument sign stays on all night. He would like to see the lights turn off at midnight, and he offered to have a timer put on the sign. Warren was also agreeable to having a mound with plantings around the base of the sign. He also respects the members request for a timeframe, adding he doesn't feel the sign will be in place for 12 years. The members agreed that Pabst representatives should come back to the Architectural Commission in five years to report on the status of the temporary sign.

Flint explained he doesn't plan to vote in favor of this sign request as he doesn't want to set precedence for off-premise signage.

Motion by Vande Zande to grant the special exceptions and approve the signage plans for the Pabst Farms sign for Village Crossing Development, located at the corner of Summit Avenue and Pabst Farms Boulevard, as the sign is not considered off-premise; exceptions are being granted for height and area; and the permit shall be issued subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The maximum sign height shall be 12 feet, and include a mound with plantings around the base of the sign;
- 2) The maximum sign area shall be 64 square feet;
- 3) Pabst Farms shall come back to the Architectural Commission for an update on the status of the sign no more than 5 years from the date of this approval;
- 4) The sign shall be illuminated with bulbs not exceeding 300 watts; the lights shall be shielded; and they are to be turned off no later than midnight;
- 5) The proposed sign and existing signs shall be landscaped by May 15, 2010 in conformance with a plan approved by the City Planning Department; and
- 6) A sign permit and electrical permit is required from the City Building Inspection Department prior to installing the sign.

second by Schultz. Motion carried 3-1 (Flint).

4. Lake Country Village Condominiums - Consider / approve wall and ground signs at 1001 Regent Road: Hank Shulruff of Lake Country Partners explained they purchased the complex in September of 2009 which consists of 90 residential units, which includes 60 apartments and 30 condos. The complex has had the same name since 1974 even though there have been several different owners. He believes the complex is in need of a branding change, and they also plan to reduce the number of signs which are presently there. Shulruff then explained Sign #1, which is located off Hwy 67, will be cut acrylic black channel letters to replace what is currently there. It will be non-illuminated. Sign #3 is a ground sign located by the 700 building of the complex. It will consist of sandblasted cedar on 50" high posts with gold lettering on a black background, and it will be non-illuminated also. The signs which have fallen into disrepair by the 500 and 600 buildings of the complex will be completely removed. Sign #2 is an introductory sign to the complex, and it is the same as Sign #3 except it will not have a phone number listed on it. The members thought this was a great improvement to the complex. Shulruff added they are doing cosmetic work on the inside of the units and cleaning up the outside areas. Gallo noted all aspects of the signage requests are in conformance with the code. His only concern was with the lack of landscaping by Sign #3 along with removal of the two signs in disrepair. Shulruff said he will be happy to landscape by Sign #3 and remove the other signs as previously noted.

Motion by Schultz to approve the sign plan for Lake Country Village Condominiums, 1001 Regent Road, as submitted, except landscaping is to be added at the base of Sign #3 and the old signs are to be removed; second by Flint. Motion carried 4-0.

5. Natural Health Center for Acupuncture - Consider / approve projecting wall sign at 132 N. Main Street: Doug Laak was present on behalf of his fiancée, Aimee Brown, who is looking for approval of a sign for her new business. Gallo explained the proposed sign measures 3' x 3.5' for a total of 10.5 sf. It will consist of composite pressboard which will project perpendicular from a wrought iron decorative bracket. He noted City ordinance requires a 10' clearance zone from the ground beneath the sign to the bottom of the sign itself, which was not indicated on the application. Gallo added the owner indicated they may illuminate the sign in the future by either a gooseneck type light over or under the sign. He had concerns with this and also noted there was a spelling error on the proposed signage, which the applicant was aware of. Gallo noted the sign, which is located in the Downtown Business District,

conforms to the requirements of the Downtown Plan, and he is recommending approval conditioned on the applicant maintaining the 10' clearance zone directly beneath the sign. Johnson inquired if Gallo could approve the lighting plan himself. Flint noted he wanted to make sure the lighting came back before them as he had concerns with how the sign would be lit. Schultz noted the colors of the sign don't match the building, and he didn't care for the wood background either. Laak agreed with Schultz and thought that a solid dark color would look better. He didn't have a problem changing this part of the sign but noted the other colors in the design on the sign actually match their business cards. Johnson agreed a forest green or a color which matched the trim on the building would look good as a background to the sign. Laak said they would not have a problem coming back with a fixture design for lighting the sign. Gallo added the building owner signed off on this signage request. Laak was then concerned as to how much signage they would be allowed in the front window of the building, noting they did not want anything too big. Gallo then read from the code and said they would be allowed up to 17 sf for a window sign which does not have to come back to the commission for approval.

Motion by Schultz to approve the sign plan for Natural Health Center for Acupuncture at 132 N. Main Street, as presented except the background color of the sign is to be changed to compliment the colors of the building and its texture is to be flat; the sign is to be a minimum of 10 feet off the ground for clearance; and no lighting is approved at this time and if requested in the future, must come back before the Architectural Commission for approval; second by Vande Zande. Motion carried 4-0.

6. Reports and comments from the Architectural Commissioners: Flint thought the readerboard at the Olympia Resort is non-conforming as he noticed it was blinking and scrolling very fast, which is against City ordinance. Gallo said he will check it out.

7. Reports and comments from the City Planner: None.

8. Adjourn: Motion by Schultz to adjourn at 6:35 pm; second by Vande Zande. Motion carried 4-0.

Chris Dehnert, Deputy City Clerk