

**City of South Lyon
Planning Commission Meeting
November 8, 2007**

Chairman Weipert called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

PRESENT: Commissioners Weipert, Bradley, Subotich, Kurtzweil, Lanam, and Leimbach.
Commissioners Mosier, Culbertson and Tartaglia were excused.

Also present were Ben Tallerico (Planning Consultant) and Kristen Cunningham, Director of Community and Economic Development.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

**Motion by Bradley, supported by Leimbach
To approve the Agenda for November 8, 2007.**

VOTE

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**Motion by Lanam, supported by Subotich
To approve of the Minutes for October 11, 2007 as amended.**

VOTE

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion – Ordinance Changes

Cunningham reviewed the ordinance changes the Commissioners were to discuss and then suggested they review the matrix for the point system and discuss further at another meeting.

Exterior Building Materials

Weipert stated she did not check to see where this would fall in the order of the ordinances. Tallerico noted he put a blanket into the site plan review as a catchall that way the Planning Commission has some discretion on what they do want to see and at what point. Weipert asked if that meant they could request the materials at preliminary and then ask to see revised material at final if they were not satisfied with something. Tallerico stated that was correct.

After a general discussion of the wording the agreement was to state exterior building samples be provided at all Planning Commission meetings.

Façade Definitions

Tallerico added to the sign ordinance that the façade is defined as the elevation of the first floor to the roof. Lanam asked if it should say to the lowest main roof elevation. Tallerico stated the building department would be the ones to interpret the code. Kurtzweil suggested they strengthen it by saying to the roofline and clarify that the gable areas would be excluded. Tallerico stated it could read gable roof will be calculated at the lowest point of the roofline.

Leimbach suggested it read from the first floor entry to where the wall meets the roof or the first floor to cover a two-story building. Cunningham asked what happens if there is a business on the second floor. Kurtzweil stated they could add an exception for first floor businesses. Tallerico stated language could be added for commercial use, which would stop the calculation from including the space on the second floor if it was not a business. Then if there was a business on the second floor it would be up to the landlord to say how or if the signage would be split.

Leimbach asked if the stair leading to the first floor business would be counted. Tallerico stated it would not be if they say elevation of the first floor.

There was a general discussion regarding the size of signs. Tallerico suggested they make changes to the sign ordinance one step at a time. Leimbach noted it would be nice if there were a uniform size in signs. Cunningham stated they could recommend it but it may be tough to get approved. Tallerico stated any commercial use using the same formula is the most fair and equal for everyone and would be palatable for business owners.

Leimbach asked what if they classify the second story business, which is different than the first floor for a separate calculation. Tallerico asked how would different be defined; there could be different uses on the first floor as well and the second floor could be a different use but owned by the same person. Leimbach stated then it would be up to the landlord to split. Tallerico stated keeping it simple and as equal as possible is going to be easier to accept and manage. There was a general discussion regarding other communities and their sign ordinances.

Cunningham stated that maybe, right now, with the status of the economy this would not be the time to restrict and limit the signage. Many business owners are stating a need for more signage and that would be what Council would hear as well.

Tallerico suggested the language read, as the front façade is from the elevation of the first floor to the beginning of the roofline when floor above is non-commercial the measurement is to the ceiling. Bradley noted that would be a good place to start. Weipert agreed that it would be a better definition to clarify the original intention.

Poles and Pylon Signs

Tallerico added pole signs to the definition of pylon signs with an obsolescence clause that sign removal must take place within seven years of adoption unless the sign could not be relocated. Weipert asked what the ground sign definition was and the height of ground signs. Tallerico read the definition and noted the height of ground signs was in another section.

Weipert asked if there would be any type of sign that would fall in between these definitions. Leimbach noted projection signs. Tallerico stated projection signs were not permitted per the city ordinance. Leimbach asked if an obsolescence clause could be added to that. Tallerico stated he could add projection signs to the definition.

There was a general discussion regarding example pictures of signs in the ordinance and when or if they could be added.

Sign Brightness

Tallerico noted this would be difficult because it becomes an enforcement issue so he tried to grab some examples from other communities to start the discussion. He suggested it might be good to have the City Manager review it as well.

Subotich asked if they could restrict the amount of lumens. Tallerico replied yes but again enforcement would be an issue. The hours of use and restricting flashing and/or strobe lights may be easier. Cunningham noted the building department would know if it would be flashing when it goes in.

Leimbach questioned whether awnings and the distance above the parapet should be included. Tallerico stated awnings are tough in Michigan because they are sails. The amount of money that would have to be spent would be incredible. Cunningham suggested that be added to a future conversation if they would like to review it. Tallerico asked Ms. Cunningham to check with the building department on how they handle awnings.

Cunningham asked if the Commission wanted to add something that may not be enforceable. Tallerico asked if this would be too much for Council to address at one time. Bradley suggested going with the first three items and wait for the rest when the sign ordinance would be under full review. Weipert stated they should take a longer look at the illumination part and discuss later.

Cunningham stated she would set the public hearing for all these ordinance changes and the sign illumination would include items one, two, and four.

Matrix for Point System

Cunningham distributed a draft and asked the Commissioners to take it home, read through it, and give it some thought. Tallerico briefed the Commissioners on how he started and noted some items would need to be added and some items would need to be deleted. Kurtzweil asked if Canton uses something like this. Tallerico stated he would find out. Tallerico also asked the Commissioners to add what they would like to see both positive and negative. The amount of points, whether positive or negative, would reflect their importance. Cunningham asked for feedback no later than November 29th.

Litter and Blight

Cunningham stated this would not be the final conversation on this topic. She noted that the Michigan Municipal League has a project to help communities with exactly this issue and recently sent out some information that included references to the Grand Rapids code, which she had a copy of and would share with the Commissioners.

Leimbach asked if South Lyon has a dangerous building code. Cunningham stated if the building is secured, and windows are boarded, then it was not defined as dangerous. She noted Grand Rapids uses whether or not utilities are turned on as a factor to define a building as a nuisance.

Tallerico asked if the city has a Dangerous Building Committee. Cunningham stated no and that the problem is that there are really only two buildings where this is an issue which was not enough to justify a committee and/or a dangerous building officer. Cunningham stated she would provide the Commissioners with all of her information so they could discuss it at the next meeting.

Master Plan Wrap-up Discussion

Tallerico stated he did no receive any additional changes so he went ahead and printed and bound copies for the city.

Weipert asked about the corridor and neighborhood improvement authority. Tallerico stated that the program actions were just his thoughts. He was not contracted for that portion. Cunningham noted right now they were not needed but were options. Tallerico stated he could remove it.

Weipert asked for clarification of the census explanations and the growth rates of the population. There was a general discussion regarding the census counts and the wording in the Master Plan that explains them. Tallerico agreed to rewrite the section regarding the retirement age so it was easier to understand.

Tallerico reviewed the next steps beginning with asking Council for comments and then distribution to neighboring communities.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

STAFF REPORTS

Cunningham reported the next meeting would include the public hearings and Advance Auto Parts.

Leimbach asked if the Planning Commission should have representative present at the South Lyon Township Planning Commission meeting to state their objection to the development of the Meijer store. Cunningham stated the city has already sent a letter to the township opposing the building of the store. Leimbach stated he felt the Planning Commission should also voice their concern based on the economic impact on the development of the city. He asked if Cunningham should write a letter and have the Chair sign it on the Commission’s behalf. Kurtzweil asked Ms. Cunningham to write the letter for them. Cunningham stated she would write the letter and give it to the Chair to review and sign.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Subotich supported by Lanam.

To adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

VOTE

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY


Pam Weipert, Chairperson


Jennifer Knapp, Recording Secretary


Keith Bradley, Secretary