

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE OWOSSO PLANNING COMMISSION
Council Chambers, City Hall
July 28, 2014 – 7:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman William Wascher.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

ROLL CALL: Roll Call was taken by Recording Secretary Marty Stinson.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman William Wascher, Vice-Chairman Frank Livingston, Secretary Tom Kurtz, Commissioners, Brent Smith, Craig Weaver and Randy Woodworth.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioners David Bandkau, Mike O’Leary, Thomas Taylor.

OTHERS PRESENT: Susan Montenegro, Assistant City Manager and Director of Community Development; Charles Rau, Building Official; Mr. Shane Applebee, Petitioner for 1011 Corunna Avenue; Mr. Jed Dingens, Architect for Mr. Applebee; Ms. Jane Idle, Property Owner near 1011 Corunna Avenue; Jason Kellogg, Tenant of Ms. Idle’s property.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER WOODWORTH, SUPPORTED BY COMMISSIONER WEAVER TO APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR JULY 28, 2014.

YEAS ALL. MOTION CARRIED.

MINUTES APPROVAL:

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LIVINGSTON, SUPPORTED BY COMMISSIONER KURTZ TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JUNE 23, 2014.

YEAS ALL. MOTION CARRIED.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Staff memorandum
2. PC minutes from June 23, 2014
3. Site Plan submission – 1011 Corunna Avenue
4. Rezoning Application – 1011 Corunna Avenue – public hearing

COMMISSIONER / PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Commissioner Woodworth commented that Corunna Avenue still had rezonings coming up.

PUBLIC HEARING: 1011 CORUNNA AVENUE – REZONING FROM B-1 TO B-4

Petitioner Shane Applebee has owned 1011 Corunna Avenue for 15 -20 years and now plans to install a propane refilling station for school buses. All the equipment and tanks will be above ground. He is requesting the zoning be changed from B-1 to B-4 for this use.

Public Hearing began at 7:07 p.m.

Ms. Jane Idle owns two bordering properties, one addressed at 1015 Corunna Avenue. She sees huge issues with traffic, trains and traffic lights at this corner. She also remembers the house that blew up five or six years ago. This is a residential district.

Her tenant, Mr. Jason Kellogg, spoke next and has worked for Schwan Foods. He has worked with propane and knows propane can be dangerous. When it leaks it can freeze your hands. It should be farther out of the city.

Public Hearing ended at 7:09 p.m.

Commission Comments:

Commissioner Woodworth commented about cell phone fires; his concern about the in and out traffic situation. He sees this area as a B-1 small commercial business area.

Commissioner Kurtz asked for clarification between B1 and B4 zoning. Ms. Susan Montenegro, Assistant City Manager and Director of Community Development, read both definitions from Chapter 38 of the City Ordinances. She then commented that there is nothing that really addresses propane specifically.

Mr. Applebee commented that propane safety has come a long way. There is now a key fob that reads and authorizes the pump to shut off by itself rather than manually. The equipment is checked yearly. All piping is above ground. The gas has to be the right mixture before there can be an explosion. It is heavier than air and will dissipate before it ignites. It is very safe because of the technology.

Ms. Idle asked if there are any other propane filling stations in this area. Mr. Rau, Building Official, said there were none when she spoke with him on the phone. Mr. Applebee commented the closest of this size would be St. Johns Schools. There are small propane filling stations at gas stations.

Commissioner Kurtz asked about traffic flow. Mr. Applebee said that right now there are only two buses planned. Eventually there could be a whole fleet. They operate to the south of Owosso and would require a curb cut on Corunna Avenue and then exit onto Gould Street completely missing the railroad tracks. It could run 24 hours. Per Ms. Montenegro, the International Fire Code prohibits them from distributing to the public without an attendant present.

Mr. Jed Dingens addressed the Planning Commission. B-1 zoning is silent on Propane Stations. B-4 zoning lists a pump station and was more generous in the issues. The pump will be 50 feet from any residential property. They are proposing a new fence.

Mr. Kellogg asked why this wasn't underground. Mr. Applebee replied that if it doesn't take off, he can remove the equipment. Mr. Kellogg asked about drunk drivers. Mr. Applebee explained there will be crash posts all around it and a shut off valve on the bottom of the tank.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER WOODWORTH, SUPPORTED BY COMMISSIONER KURTZ THAT THE OWOSSO PLANNING COMMISSION CONFIRMS THE ZONING CHANGE FOR 1011 CORUNNA AVENUE FROM B-1 TO B-4 AND HEREBY RECOMMENDS SENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL FOR A PUBLIC HEARING.

YEAS ALL. MOTION CARRIED.

SITE PLAN REVIEW: 1011 CORUNNA AVENUE

Mr. Jed Dingens began with noting that the lighting would be shielded and pointing down. This property already has a drain and a ridge down the middle. There is a curb cut on Gould Street which needs widening. There is no curb cut on Corunna Avenue, but a new one is needed. MDOT will need to do a review on this property also. There are two buses and each will refill once a week. The tank will be 55 feet from the property lines. There will be bollards around the tank to prevent being hit by vehicles. There will be a fence installed along the one residential property on the north line.

Chairman Wascher commented on the drainage arrows direction towards Wright Street. Those were changed towards the drain on the property. The size of the building was reduced to conform to setback regulations. It was asked how big the tanks on the buses were. 118 gallons per Mr. Applebee. Mr. Dingens noted that there were fire hydrants in each of the next blocks going east and west on Corunna Avenue.

Ms. Montenegro stated that the city doesn't have any issues at this time. Her personal view was that this was less dangerous than individuals filling small propane tanks. The Applebee's will probably have bigger hurdles with the railroads and MDOT.

Commissioner Woodworth commented that now the lot is vacant and does not add anything at all. His thought was this project still won't add any shopping or help anyone else's property.

Commissioner Weaver disagrees. It will look better than a vacant lot.

Mr. Applebee commented that this is a good location between Owosso and Corunna. Reesa doesn't have any room on their property. This is a cleaner alternative fuel that is cheaper. They have 28 – 30 buses. Owosso has no plans to change right now, but if we build it they will come...

Commissioner Kurtz sees this as a great business opportunity. Mr. Applebee said that Durand has three such buses, but they won't be coming over here. Schools are changing over.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER KURTZ, SUPPORTED BY COMMISSIONER LIVINGSTON THAT THE OWOSSO PLANNING COMMISSION HEREBY APPROVES THE SITE PLAN FOR 1011 CORUNNA AVENUE WITH THE SLOPE CHANGE TOWARD THE DRAIN AND BUILDING CHANGE TO MEET SETBACK REGULATIONS.

YEAS: SMITH, LIVINGSTON, WEAVER, KURTZ, WASCHER

NAY: WOODWORTH

MOTION CARRIED.

COMMISSIONER / PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Commissioner Smith thinks we're going to see more of these installations.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER KURTZ, SUPPORTED BY COMMISSIONER WEAVER TO ADJOURN AT 8:12 P.M.

YEAS ALL. MOTION CARRIED.

Tom Kurtz, Secretary

mms