

Present: Chairperson Jensen; Vice-Chair Ostrowski; Members: Abboud, Borowski, Peddie, Ruprich, Stempien and Westerlund

Absent: Freedman

Also Present: Village Manager, Wilson
Planning Consultant, Borden
Council member, Kelly

Chairperson Jensen called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

APPROVE/AMEND AGENDA

Motion by Ostrowski, second by Peddie, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF A PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD DECEMBER 12, 2012

Motion by Westerlund, second by Peddie, that the minutes of a Planning Commission meeting held December 12, 2012 be approved as submitted.

Motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSAL TO AMEND SIGN ORDINANCE 23.32

Chairman Jensen declared the public hearing open at 7:31 p.m. for comments on proposed amendments to the Municipal Code Chapter 22.32 Signs. No one wished to be heard; therefore, the public hearing was closed at 7:32 p.m.

REVIEW AND CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL REGARDING APPROVAL OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 22.32 SIGNS

Sign Ordinance subcommittee chair Stempien updated the Commission on the status of the sign ordinance amendments. The subcommittee has revised the sign standards table considering the limitations on types of signs allowed for businesses and the effect on multi-tenant businesses. There were discussions with planning consultant Borden on how the ordinance amendments would be formatted once they are finalized and ready to be incorporated into the existing sign ordinance.

Borden stated that the subcommittee has been working on amendments to different portions of the Village sign ordinance without proposing amendments to all of the sections in the document. Only four or five sections are being revised with the intent of updating certain elements including definitions to provide a broader indication of sign types, as well as getting into the types of signs currently allowed. The subcommittee tackled amendments that would address

what types of signs the Village should allow, how large they should be, and where they should be allowed. Ultimately, there will be a document that blends these proposed amendments in with the current ordinance format.

Drafting the amendments into a more formal format may be complicated where there are updated portions of an ordinance section being added to portions of the current ordinance. There is work to be done in terms of blending in sections in addition to tightening up the rest of the document. The subcommittee with the help of Borden is amending portions of the current sign ordinance but not replacing it in its entirety. The document in its present form is not ready to be recommended for approval to Council.

Borden talked about what this sign ordinance update has achieved. He referred to the key sections that have been amended, including new purpose and intent, definitions, sizes in terms of height and area by types of signs. The idea was to generally bring up the quality of signage in the Village that has been allowed for many years under the current ordinance.

Ostrowski said that it will be difficult to view the blended sign ordinance document and identify the differences between the updated ordinance sections and the current sections. He suggested that it would be cleaner if the sign ordinance was pulled out of the zoning ordinance to be a stand alone ordinance in the municipal code. He noted that communities often do this when they go through complete rewrites of their sign ordinance.

Borden responded that the Planning Commission could consider a work plan to update the remainder of the sign ordinance and adopt it as a stand-alone ordinance. Jensen added that the Planning Commission is facing a deadline to implement sign ordinance amendments to replace the existing ordinance sections and move forward with the Southfield Road redevelopment plan.

Manager Wilson mentioned that the moratorium on signs in the Village will expire on February 18, 2013. Council will meet on February 19, but it may not be a good meeting to consider adoption of sign ordinance amendments because the President and President and Pro-Tem will not be in attendance. However, Wilson does not think Council will be amenable to a serious extension of the timetable for adoption of sign ordinance amendments.

There was further conversation about completing the sign ordinance review and updates and moving the new sign ordinance from the zoning regulations into the Municipal Code. Borden remarked that it would have to be adopted as a plain black and white ordinance. The Village could also prepare a stand alone document formatted with graphics. Another part of the process would be to go through the rest of the zoning ordinance to locate references to the sign ordinance and make sure those are consistent in terms of how they reflect back to the stand alone sign code.

It was the consensus of the Commission that, due to the deadline with respect to the sign moratorium, the Planning Commission should amend the regulation portion of the sign ordinance and get it in place, which would allow the Village to process sign ordinance requests. Jensen suggested having a conversation at the joint meeting with Council about the Commission's intent to proceed with a stand along ordinance. The Planning Commission will request funding to complete its review and update of the sign ordinance.

Wilson concurred that adopting the current ordinance amendments would bring the sign ordinance back to a functional level so that sign applications can be processed and addressed under the new standards, which are more in line with the direction of the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission could then continue to work toward a complete update of the ordinance and move it from the zoning code and incorporate the sign ordinance into the municipal code. Wilson affirmed that there has been good work done by the Planning Commission.

Jensen asked LSL Planning to provide the Planning Commission with a draft work plan and estimated cost of updating the second phase of the sign ordinance for consideration at the February 13 joint meeting with Council. Borden said that either he or Brad Strader will be at the joint meeting to discuss the pros and cons of taking the sign ordinance out of the zoning ordinance. They would want a consensus and input from Council to make sure that there is agreement with that approach.

Members talked about the agenda for the February 13 joint meeting with Council. Sign ordinance amendments will be the first item on the joint meeting agenda. Stempien said that he can do an abbreviated explanation of the sign ordinance amendments and a presentation of the signage inventory to provide an awareness of existing signage and what the potential can be with the new ordinance. There was agreement that the proposed sign ordinance amendments should be a separate topic from discussion of the broader zoning ordinance that needs updating. An update on the Southfield Corridor plan will be the second item on the agenda for February 13.

Westerlund stated that the sign ordinance subcommittee would like input from the Commission as a whole on the concept of multi-tenant signs. The current ordinance permits multi-tenant signs. There has been discussion on whether the Village should permit or prohibit multi-tenant signs or create another option. Multi-tenant signs are used for retail stores and for office buildings.

One suggestion was to allow one development sign as the demarcation for a complex, similar to the Corners sign. Another approach is to continue permitting multi-tenant signs. A third approach was to use one sign featuring a designated tenant and listing multi tenants as long as the sign was unified in terms of color restrictions and using consistent styles and proportions. The idea would be to reduce cluttered imagery and provide a cohesive design for the entire sign with all the tenants.

The subcommittee asked for direction on how to finalize this portion of the sign ordinance. Following discussion, it was consensus of the majority of members to proceed with a single ground sign for an office or retail complex with wall signs allowed on the individual stores or offices.

SOUTHFIELD ROAD CORRIDOR UPDATE

Borden informed the Commission that everything but the code is ready for review. LSL has a draft of the design guidelines and concept plan, which will be presented at the February joint meeting with Council. There has been good feedback from the Southfield Road corridor subcommittee. LSL Planning expects to start drafting the code within the next week and have a

rough draft of the code ready for the joint meeting. The presentation will include the concept plan along with design guidelines leading into how it will be implemented in the overlay code.

Borden stated that the next step will be to formalize the process once the materials have been presented. This would be adoption of a concept plan and design guidelines by the Planning Commission and Council. It would be followed by adoption of the code, which will amend the zoning ordinance.

Borden related that the Planning Commission will be in a position soon where it will need to review and consider updating the Village Master Plan. The Southfield Road redevelopment plan guidelines and concepts will be incorporated into the Master Plan at some point.

Either Borden or Brad Strader will present the code component of the corridor plan at the joint meeting on February 13. A subcommittee member will discuss the concept plan and design guidelines. The subcommittee will coordinate that presentation.

JOINT MEETING DISCUSSION ITEMS

As discussed earlier in the meeting, proposed sign ordinance amendments will be the first item on the agenda for the February 13 joint meeting with Council. An update on the Southfield Road Corridor redevelopment plan will be the second item. There followed a discussion on other topics to be addressed at the joint meeting and possibly be included in the Planning Commission work plan for the next year.

Second Phase of Sign Ordinance amendments

The Planning Commission will propose working on a complete update of the sign ordinance with the intent to remove it from the zoning code and to incorporate the sign ordinance into the municipal code.

Updates to the overall Zoning Ordinance

An item that has been raised at past joint meetings is review of allowable uses within various zoning districts. Borden mentioned the areas of parking, landscaping, and site design. Wilson said that there are administrative uses that are governed by the state but fall under the purview of the zoning code, particularly group homes and day care facilities. The ordinance needs to be reevaluated with recent changes in state law.

Road Commission study group alternative designs for future Southfield Road improvements

There has been discussion about whether the Planning Commission and Council need to send an official response to the Road Commission of Oakland County on behalf of the Village regarding their official position for the design of the Southfield Road commercial district between 13 and 14 Mile Roads. It was indicated at the December Planning Commission meeting that the Commission and Council may want to adopt a resolution stating that they have looked at reports, studied the issues, and have reached a consensus on the optimum design for Southfield Road along the Village commercial district.

Other topics

Banking landscape requirements for developments was raised by Stempien as a possible topic of discussion. There may be a need for tree ordinance language that would address this issue.

Jensen suggested that the Commission talk about this in greater detail at an upcoming meeting to determine the facts and how to proceed.

Wilson stated that there have been some changes by the State Liquor Control Board regarding the amount of say municipalities will have over liquor license changes. Some municipalities have drafted an ordinance to give them more control over liquor licensing issues in their community. It has not been an issue in Beverly Hills. Wilson will provide the members with a copy of the Birmingham ordinance for their review.

Commission members questioned whether the Village will consider hiring a full-time or part-time building official. Wilson responded that the issue will be addressed during Council budget deliberations. That option will be considered along with contracting the service out to a neighboring municipality. As with any municipal service, this will be dollar driven. Wilson noted that the Village's fee schedule is too low in either instance.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Questions from Abboud regarding the agenda for the upcoming joint meeting with Council were addressed by Jensen.

Ostrowski commended the sign ordinance subcommittee for its work and the thought that went into this comprehensive document. Jensen concurred with all the effort that went into that project.

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS

Wilson reported that there have been numerous inspections and ongoing work at the Cambridge nursing home. They have not requested a Certificate of Occupancy at this point, but it appears that the building will be reopening. There has been a tremendous amount of restoration going on at that facility.

Wilson informed the Commission that there has been some interest in the 31333 building on Southfield Road. A safety inspection was performed on a portion of that property today. There is a tenant that could be occupying 5,000-6,000 square feet of space in the building relatively soon. It is hoped that there will be some additional activity at that location.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

Motion by Borowski, second by Peddie, to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 p.m.

Motion passed.

David Jensen
Planning Commission Chair

Ellen E. Marshall
Village Clerk

Susan Bernard
Recording Secretary