

Present: Chairperson Drummond; Vice-Chairperson Stempien; Members: Copeland, Grinnan, Ostrowski, Ruprich, Westerlund, and Wright

Absent: Member: Wilensky

Also Present: Planning and Zoning Administrator, LaPere  
Clerk/Assistant Manager, Rutkowski  
Planning Consultant, Borden  
Council Liaison, Hrydziusko

Westerlund called the regular Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. virtually via Zoom per Executive Order 2020-154.

**AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA/APPROVE AGENDA**

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

Roll call vote:  
Motion passed (7-0)

**ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON**

Motion by Westerlund, second by Stempien, to elect Andrew Drummond as Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

Roll call vote:  
Motion passed (7-0)

**ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

Motion by Westerlund, second by Copeland, to elect Robert Stempien as Vice-Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

Roll call vote:  
Motion passed (7-0)

**ELECTION OF SECRETARY**

Motion by Grinnan, second by Ostrowski, to elect Robert Ruprich as Secretary of the Planning Commission.

Roll call vote:  
Motion passed (7-0)

Drummond arrived at 7:42 p.m.

**REVIEW AND CONSIDER APPROVAL OF REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD JUNE 24, 2020**

Motion by Grinnan, second by Ruprich, to approve the minutes of a regular Planning Commission meeting held June 24, 2020 as submitted.

Roll call vote:  
Motion passed (8-0)

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None.

**REVIEW AND CONSIDER APPROVAL OF A SIGN FACE REPLACEMENT ON EXISTING POLE SIGN AT 31645 SOUTHFIELD ROAD, HEALTHQUEST**

Borden provided an overview of the sign request at 31645 Southfield Road for a new business, HealthQuest. The proposal has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements of the Village Zoning Ordinance. If the application is approved by the Commission, the applicant must obtain a permit prior to installation. Borden clarified that the proposal before the Commission is only pertaining to the pole sign and that the wall sign proposal will be going before the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance at their next meeting.

As outlined in the table below, Sections 22.32.095 and 22.32.110 provide the overall requirements for signs, while Section 22.32.120 provides regulations for nonconforming signs:

	<b>Permitted</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Area	30 SF maximum	49.9 SF	Existing nonconformity
Number of signs	2 types	1 existing pole sign 1 existing wall sign	Both of the existing signs are nonconforming. The applicant has only applied to re-face the nonconforming pole sign. Another application will be required for a new/modified wall sign.
Height	Max 8'	12.5'	Existing nonconformity
Illumination	Back-lit, indirect, external, or no more than 30% internal	Information not provided	Application form notes that existing illumination will remain. Applicant should identify the existing illumination.
Setback	4' minimum	Information not provided	Existing sign structure. Applicant should identify existing setback.
Landscaping	200 SF min. area w/ live ground cover	Mix of stones and grass; size not provided	Existing condition. Applicant should provide size of landscape area. We suggest the applicant consider removal of stones and replacement with lawn/live groundcover
Color scheme	No more than 3 colors	Burgundy, black and white	In compliance
Lettering types	2 (max.)	2	In compliance

As noted above, the existing ground sign is nonconforming due to its size. Section 22.32.120(3) allows the changing of a nonconforming surface sign space to a lesser or equal area. In this instance, the proposal entails a surface sign space of an equal area.

Borden suggested the applicant remove the stones from ground around the base of the pole sign and replace with live ground cover.

John Pessina, 1773 Star Batt Drive, Rochester Hills MI, was in attendance and answered questions from the Commission on behalf of HealthQuest. Pessina stated that they would remove the stone and replace it with lawn. He clarified that the sign was 100% internally illuminated. HealthQuest leased both spaces in the building and would like to occupy the entire pole sign. The business plans to open by October 1.

Stempien was concerned that the area of the sign face was too large and that allowing the petitioner to use the entire sign face would exacerbate the nonconformity.

Borden clarified that the entire area is considered the sign face, despite the previous tenant's use of only the top half of the sign face.

Westerlund referred to the requirement of 200 square feet of landscape material. He would like to see more vertical landscaping and plant species in addition to grass at the base of the sign.

Pessina stated he would accommodate the landscaping requests.

Ostrowski asked if the Zoning Board of Appeals would receive a copy of the Planning Commission minutes when considering the wall sign variance, to which Administration affirmed they could be provided a copy of the minutes. Ostrowski expressed his concern about whether the existing wall sign would remain in place when the new business opens before obtaining a variance. He stated if the sign were removed then there would no longer be a nonconforming sign, so it should not be replaced as such.

LaPere and Borden clarified that the petitioners could not simply do a sign face change on the existing wall sign. Instead, it would have to come down and they would need to provide a compliant wall sign if they do not obtain the variance from ZBA.

Ostrowski stated he would be opposed to two wall signs on two different sides of the building.

Borden spoke to the design of the proposed wall signs.

Ostrowski agreed with the previous comments regarding updating the landscaping around the sign.

Ruprich asked if the tenant intends to use the entire building space or if it is subject to a sublease and other potential signs in the future.

Pessina confirmed that HealthQuest would be utilizing the entire space for a physical therapy facility and there is no intent to sublease any of the space.

Westerlund and Borden discussed setback requirements.

Borden suggested the applicant update the application to include the illumination and setback information for record keeping purposes.

Drummond noted that this sign was built to include two tenants and if approved, this would be the largest sign for one tenant in the village. He would like to see the sign stay within the constraints of the previous tenant's space, which is about 25 square feet. He also suggested vertical landscaping at the base of the sign to cover up some of the blank panel at the bottom. He believes a 50 square foot internally illuminated sign would be too bright.

Westerlund commented that there were several open items for this sign and was hesitant to move forward with approval without submittal of further details.

LaPere provided information on the temporary sign procedure.

Borden provided information on special event sign requirements.

Motion by Westerlund, second by Grinnan, that the Planning Commission tables the consideration for approval of a sign face replacement at the existing sign at 31645 Southfield Road for HealthQuest so the applicant can update the application to include information on illumination, setbacks, landscape materials, and consideration of the sign size. Furthermore, the Planning Commission approves the temporary placement of a special event sign of no more than 30 square feet for a grand opening.

Roll call vote:  
Motion passed (8-0)

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

#### **LIAISON COMMENTS**

Hrydziuszkowski reminded the Commissioners that there will be a millage renewal on the next ballot and stated that it is imperative that the renewal is approved. She asked the Commission to help get the word out.

#### **ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS**

LaPere reported Administration received a sign request from BP that is still pending ongoing compliance issues. She also reported that Council approved the Village's engagement in the Redevelopment Ready Communities Program with MEDC.

#### **COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS**

Ostrowski asked if there was any updated discussion or direction from Council to the Planning Commission.

Wright said she was happy to be on the Commission and is looking forward to working with the group.

Stempien thanked the Commission for nominating him to serve as Vice Chairperson and welcomed Wright to the Commission. He asked for more information about the millage renewal to be posted on the Village website. He asked about BP's outstanding items.

Ruprich welcomed Wright.

Westerlund welcomed Wright to the Commission. He asked about the status of the Lahser Road applicant. LaPere stated the petition is still outstanding due to having to hold the public hearing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Grinnan welcomed Wright to the Commission.

Copeland welcomed Wright and hopes to be back meeting in person soon.

Drummond apologized for being late to the meeting and welcomed Andrea Wright to the Commission. He asked for clarification on BP's pole sign request. Drummond asked the Zoning Board of Appeals to review the sign ordinance prior to making a decision on the variance for the wall sign for HealthQuest at 31645 Southfield Road. He noted the time and effort that went into developing the sign ordinance and does not want petitioners circumventing the ordinance through appeals to the ZBA.

Ostrowski would like the ZBA to take the sign ordinance into consideration when making decisions on variances. He would like the ZBA to refer to the Planning Commission minutes to see the Commissioners' thoughts and concerns on the issues. Grinnan agreed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

**Andrew Drummond**  
**Planning Commission**  
**Chairperson**

**Kristin Rutkowski**  
**Village Clerk**