

Special Meeting of the Common Council, City of Iron Mountain, County of Dickinson, Michigan to be held on Monday, June 22, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Room.

Presiding: Mayor VanLaanen  
Present: Council Members Corombos, Alessandrini & Farragh  
Also Present: City Manager Stanchina, DDA-Linnea Marchetti, DDA-Margaret Johnson, Planning-John Nienstaedt, Planning-Carol Scheider, City Planner-Steve Mulka

### **Review of Site/building plans for Bay De Noc College utility building.**

Nienstaedt recommended that Bay De Noc College consider a color for the proposed building that will blend into the existing environment. Nienstaedt and Alessandrini discussed the necessity of the current planning board system.

### **Review of proposed Sign Ordinance.**

Corombos relayed his belief that a substantial amount of the sign ordinances language is subjective. Additionally, he spoke on his concerns over the sign ordinance. Nienstaedt conveyed that a smaller sign committee was put in the ordinance so that the process can be expedited. Corombos agreed that would work as long as all three members are from the planning board, as to not create more bureaucracy. VanLaanen clarified that the Zoning Board of Appeals will be the appeals process for the Planning Board. Johnson detailed the initial thoughts and planning steps relating to this project. Alessandrini noted that if the sign ordinance is done well, the administrator should be able to take care of any upcoming issues. Nienstaedt discussed his perceived need to have multiple people work on the reviewing process. It was the group consensus that Section 8.1 D) on page 35 be amended to say:

The appearance and character of signs located within the Downtown Development Authority and Main Street Districts is to be in conformity with any ~~adopted~~ design standards for such districts, *as adopted by ordinance.*

Corombos conveyed his disapproval of the 500 feet clause in the below section of ordinance. Johnson primarily supported the projected distance. The Group consensus was to change clause 2, On-Premise, Free-standing Signs, on page 39 to:

On-Premise Signs shall be limited to one such sign per lot, except that two free standing signs shall be allowed per lot which has frontage on two public roads. These two freestanding signs must be placed along separate public road frontages and must be separated by a minimum of ~~500~~ 100 feet. Placement and setback of such signs shall be determined in accordance with the standards in this Article.

Alessandrini voiced his concern for figure 28 on page 25. He conveyed the opinion that some businesses only have the roof top sign option. Nienstaedt relayed the previous group's consensus that roof top signs were not allowed before and should not now, adding they are not an attractive form of advertising.

New Business (Cont...)

Joe Stephens – Stevens Decorating- relayed his reluctance to compete his sign projected based on the outcome of the grandfathering clause. Nienstaedt communicated that the sign would not be grandfathered if it was an illegal sign after the current ordinance was put in place. After much discussion, Nienstaedt conveyed that a grandfathered sign may be cared for under clause 6 on page 47.

Corombos talked about clause 2 on page 47 as it relates to the time period in which a sign will become un-grandfathered. Johnson explained her concern for the sign getting dilapidated if the time frame is too long. Alessandrini voiced his concern for a property owner's ability to sell a building in 90 days, given this economy. Mulka conveyed the thought of keeping an interrupted skyline verse not keeping it. It was the group consensus to change clause 2 on page 47 to:

**Re-Establishment.** All Nonconforming signs shall not be re-established or displayed after the activity, business, or usage to which it relates has been discontinued for ~~ninety (90) days~~ one (1) year or longer. All conforming signs faces shall be removed after the activity, business, or usage to which it relates has been discontinued for one (1) year.

Scheider conveyed concern for the problem falling sandwich boards create.

Gene Ducharme – 1044 Carpenter Ave. – He conveyed his concern for off main street businesses to get traffic and the administering of the seven day placement policy. His overall communication conveyed that limiting sandwich boards, would hard off main street businesses.

Stanchina communicated that it would be hard to enforce the proposed sandwich board policy.

Joe Stephens – 310 S. Stephenson- He conveyed that his sandwich boards create between \$6,000 and \$8,000 in business each year. He also conveyed the idea that many businesses can not afford to not use their sandwich boards in this economy. Stephens conveyed that the spirit of the sign ordinance is not easily conveyed by reading it. Stanchina conveyed the idea that an off premise business could place a sandwich board in front of some one else's store front. He also raised the idea that those businesses on Stephenson paid for the frontage while the other didn't, should the off Stephenson businesses be given this advantage for free. Nienstaedt voiced his concern that sandwich boards could get out of control at some point.

Gene Ducharme – 1044 Carpenter Ave. – He conveyed his belief that the sandwich board issues are best handled by enforcement, making sure they are taken in and weighted down properly as to avoid having them fall in the road.

Nienstaedt communicated that the proposed sign ordinance would allow for several additional types of signage which the current sign ordinance does not allow for.

The following changes resulted from the previous discussion:

4a pg 41) this clause has been changed to allow for one sign for every 30 feet of frontage the business occupies.

4b pg 41) this clause has been removed as previously written, the clause "sandwich boards placed within the public right away must be taken in at night and maintained in

New Business (Cont...)

an upright position at all times. Additionally, the content of 4b and 4c are to be switched around.

4c pg 41) this clause has been left as written

4d pg 42) this clause has been changed to allow for 6 square feet when folded flat, not 4 as previously written. Also the max width for a sign has been changed to 30".

4e pg 42) this clause has been left as written

4f pg 42) this clause has been kept with the removal of "shall be kept within thirty-six (36) inches of the building face and within six (6) feet of the building entrance of the business to which the sign pertains and"

Corombos conveyed some concern for the motor vehicle sign section of the proposed sign ordinance. The following discussion resulted in changing clause 7, page 29, to include "motor vehicles and trailers used for advertising are only permitted if they are used in the regular course of business; otherwise they are limited to being displayed for 14 days."

### **Adjournment**

It was moved by Alessandrini and supported by Farragh to adjourn

**Motion prevailed unanimously**

Meeting Adjourned at 8:31 PM



Isaac Micheau  
Clerk-Treasurer