

MINUTES OF THE OTTAWA ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
October 15, 2020

Chairman Charlie Sheridan called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Ottawa City Council Chambers.

Roll Call

Present: Charlie Sheridan, Todd Volker, Dan Bittner, Bill Stevenson, Earl Lecki, John Stone and Vince Kozsdiy. Also present, Matthew Stafford, City of Ottawa.

Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Sheridan at 7:00 p.m. It was moved by Will Stevenson, and seconded by Earl Lecki, that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved.

Chairman Sheridan recounted the city ordinance provisions for granting zoning variances, per Section 118-19, G, 3 of the city zoning ordinances (see attached). Chairman Sheridan then noted that there was one item for consideration.

Item 1

Property: Lot 4 in Janko Plaza Planned Unit Development, a subdivision of part of the Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 36, Township 34 North, Range 3, East of the Third Principal Meridian, pursuant to Final Plat of said Lot 1 recorded as document #2020-12256; situated in the City of Ottawa, La Salle County, Illinois, commonly known as 2950 Fairfield Lane.

Applicant: Midwest Car Washes, LLC.

Review: Representing Midwest Car Washes, LLC, was Chuck Jackson, owner of ID Signs Company, Springfield, Illinois. Mr. Jackson requests a variance from the city sign ordinance.

Speaking for the applicant, Mr. Jackson noted that the current city ordinance bases the size of electronic signs in Ottawa as a percentage of the size of the business's main sign. Because of this approach to determining the size of electronic signs, all one needs to do to have a very large electronic sign is to have a massive main sign! This loophole permits businesses to have electronic signs of any size, if the petitioner simply has a large enough main sign.

The general sense of the ZBA is that this loophole needs to be eliminated if the city wishes to have actual control of the size of electronic display signs. Mr. Jackson argued that his sign variance request should be granted because otherwise he might install a very large main sign in order to keep the electronic display he wishes to use.

Action: Vince Kozsdiy moved that the ZBA recommend that the petitioner be granted a sign variance to allow the electronic sign to go above 50% to 100% of the size of the principal sign, and to also make this variance conditional upon petitioner's acceptance to conform to any future illumination control, if and when the city passes a more restrictive sign ordinance pertaining to night-time illumination levels.

The motion was seconded by Todd Volker and unanimously approved.

With no further business before it, Vince Kozsdiy moved that the ZBA be adjourned. This was seconded by Earl Lecki and passed unanimously. The meeting was concluded at 7:40 p.m.

Submitted,

TODD D. VOLKER
ZBA Secretary

ZBA Variance Considerations

Section 29 G,3 Standards for Variances

The Zoning Board of Appeals shall not recommend a variance from the regulations of this ordinance unless it shall make written findings based on evidence presented to it in each specific case that all the standards for hardships set forth are met.

- a. The property in question cannot yield a reasonable return if permitted to be used only under the conditions allowed by the regulations in the district wherein the property is located.
- b. The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances such that the enforcement of this Ordinance would result in practical difficulties or impose exceptional hardships due to special and unusual conditions which are not generally found on other properties in the same zoning district.
- c. The variance, if granted, will not be a substantial detriment to adjacent property.
- d. The proposed variation will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property, or substantially increase the congestion in public streets, or increase the danger of fire, or endanger the public safety, or substantially diminish or impair property values within the neighborhood.
- e. The granting of the variation will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to other property and improvements in the neighborhood in which the property is located, and will not overcrowd the land or create undue concentration of population.