

MINUTES OF THE OTTAWA PLAN COMMISSION MEETING

October 24, 2011

Vice-Chairman Brent Barron called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Ottawa City Council Chambers.

ROLL CALL

Present: Barron, Burns, Howarter, Less, Perry, Reagan, Stone, Volker

Absent: Buiting

Others: City Planner Tami Huftel

Vice-Chairman Barron introduced Todd Volker as the recently City Council-appointed member of the OPC to replace Tom Ganiere who resigned earlier in the month.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Brent Barron noted that the September 26, 2011 minutes showed him as being absent and requested that the minutes be changed to reflect that he arrived late, after voting had taken place. It was moved by Reagan and seconded by Perry that the minutes be approved as corrected. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

a. Rezoning Request – 300 West Norris Drive

Engineer Mike Soenksen and property owner Ray Banushi presented OPC members and the audience with a concept plan of a parking lot they are proposing to replace the existing house located at 300 West Norris Drive at the northwest corner of the intersection of West Norris Drive and Clinton Street. The rezoning request from B District to C-3 will allow the owner to develop a 16 space parking lot to serve as an overflow lot for his business, the Hi-Way Restaurant, at 210 West Norris Drive. Soenksen advised there will be no entrance/exit from US Route 6/Norris Drive. All ingress/egress will be from the alley to the north, which is owned by Banushi. Neighbors attending the meeting expressed concerns about possible site blockage for vehicles traveling in the area. It was noted that the area will have a better line of vision with the house being removed and that any fencing that is installed will take into consideration line of site. Some discussion was held regarding why the alley is not a City alley and concerns expressed about the quantity and type of street lighting that was to be used. Barron reminded members that this meeting was only to address the rezoning request and that the underlying issue about alley maintenance would be something the Council would have to address. Banushi explained to the neighbors what his intentions were regarding: use of existing light poles, barriers to prevent vehicles leaving lot directly onto Norris Drive, type of fencing and heights and his portion of the alley maintenance. Soenksen told the audience that the current drawing is only a preliminary plan. If the rezoning request is approved they will then meet with the City to discuss the details of the lot layout, fencing, lighting, etc. Barron added that there can be no “conditional use” terms attached by the OPC to a rezoning request. Banushi assured neighbors in attendance that he had every intention to make the lot look nice for his customers and his neighbors.

There being no further questions or discussions, it was moved by Howarter and seconded by Less that the OPC recommend the City Council approve the request to rezone the property located at 300 West Norris Drive from District B to C-3 Special Business. Motion carried unanimously.

Acting Chairman Barron then welcomed Todd Volker as the newest member of the Ottawa Plan Commission. Todd has served on other city committees including the Ottawa Main Street USA development, Princeton's Historic Preservation and is currently a member of the Ottawa Zoning Board of Appeals.

Barron then noted that with the resignation of Chairman Ganiere, an election of a new chairman was in order. Barron asked if any of the other members would be interested in the position. With no responses, Barron said as Vice-Chair he would consider the Chairmanship. As he occasionally has to be late to meetings due to traffic issues coming from Chicago, he added that it would be important to also appoint a new Vice-Chairman. Howarter nominated Brent Barron as Chairman of the OPC, seconded by Todd Volker. Appointment made by acclamation. Members discussed filling the Vice-Chairman vacancy at the next OPC monthly meeting. John Stone noted that he may wish to be considered for the position.

Tami asked members to consider a request made by Poms Tires to relocate their existing outside storage units to behind their building on a new gravel lot that will be fenced in. As the owners want to make this change before the winter weather sets in, she suggested setting up a special OPC meeting on Monday, November 14 so the request can be reviewed and a recommendation be made at the November 15 City Council meeting. This would give her the required 15 day notice timeframe. Members agreed they could have a quorum and that this meeting would be considered the November OPC meeting in lieu of one right after Thanksgiving. In addition they could use the meeting to appoint a Vice-Chairman. Tami will contact each member via e-mail advising if the next meeting will be on the 14th or the 28th.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy C. Stisser
Recording Secretary