

**MINUTES OF THE
ROCK ISLAND BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS**

Regular Meeting

5:30 p.m.

April 13, 2022

ATTENDANCE:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
(x) Kevin Day		(x) Pandora Lawrence
(x) Donald Mewes		() Nicole Parker
(x) Gary Snyder		(x) Bill Sowards
(x) Tanja Whitten		

Staff Present: Alan Fries.

Chair Snyder called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

General Public Comments – There was no one present to make any general public comments. The meeting continued.

Approval of Written Agenda – Mr. Sowards made a motion to approve the written agenda for the meeting. Mr. Day seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes – Mr. Mewes said there is one correction to the minutes as it identified as him being present, but he was unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Day made a motion to approve the amended minutes reflecting the change in the March 9, 2022 regular meeting. Ms. Whitten seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Procedural Explanation – Chair Snyder explained the procedure to be followed for the public hearings.

Public Hearing #2022-05: The applicant, Joe Steele 1530 78th Avenue West, for a variance to allow a digital sign to exceed 50% of the total sign area coverage requirement allowing it to be 100% of the total sign area for a freestanding sign in a B-4 (highway business) district.

Mr. Fries presented the staff report. He said the Sign Ordinance requires that a digital sign area not exceed 50 percent of the total sign area (Section 4-67). The applicant proposes to erect a digital freestanding sign (6' x 12' in area and mounted on a pole making the total height of sign and pole of 25 feet) in the south front yard.

Comments:

Signs by their intent are designed to relay information to people, so they are able to locate and identify businesses and their services. Sign Ordinance regulations limit the area of a digital sign to 50 percent of a freestanding sign area and these regulations are designed to fulfill the Ordinance intent to “promote the safety of persons and property by ensuring that signs do not create a hazard by: 1) confusing or distracting drivers and 2) impairing driver’s ability to see pedestrians, obstacles or other vehicles...”. Staff believes that since the car wash is located in a segment of 78th Avenue West that includes large open space recreation areas and industrial uses any potential “distracting” elements of the sign are minimal.

Chair Snyder called for the applicant.

Joe Steele, 3300 42nd Street West, was sworn in. He said his business purchased three similar digital signs and have used two of them at other locations of his businesses and would like to use the remaining unused sign at this Rock Island car wash to help promote the business.

Ms. Lawrence asked where his other businesses are located. Mr. Steele replied they are along Route 67 in Milan.

She then asked how tall would the freestanding sign be. Mr. Steele said he would not have it to the maximum 25 feet allowed, but would bring it down somewhat.

As there were no other questions and one else wished to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Decision Case #2022-05 – Ms. Lawrence made a motion to approve the request tht may be lower than 25 feet in height because:

1. Reasonable Return: The proposed variance will improve the return on the property.
2. Unique Circumstances: The segment of 78th Avenue West includes open space recreation areas and large industrial uses making potential any “distracting” elements of the sign minimal.
3. Character Alteration: The proposed variance will not alter the character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Day seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously (Lawrence, Day, Whitten, Sowards, Mewes and Snyder).

Other Business-

Mr. Sowards asked if there would be anymore “Zoom” meetings for the Board in the future. Mr. Fries replied that the City has gone back to in-person meetings for the Planning Commission and Board. He said if there is a need in the future for Zoom’ meeting the City could consider it again.

Adjournment:

Chair Snyder adjourned the meeting at 5:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Fries
Acting Secretary, Rock Island Board of Zoning Appeals

