



City of Duluth  
Planning Division

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City of Duluth  
Planning Commission  
Minutes of November 8, 2011  
City Council Chambers, City Hall

- I. Call to Order: President Digby has called a meeting of the City Planning Commission for 5 p.m., Tuesday, November 8, 2011, in the City Council Chambers.
- I. Roll Call: Henry Banks, Drew Digby, Frank Holappa, Terry Guggenbuehl, Heather Rand, David Sarvela, Luke Sydow, John Vigen and Zandra Zwiebel
- II. Public Hearings

PN 11-120 – Variance to Increase Signage Size at 425 Lake Ave South by Grandmas Sports Bar and Grill. **KD**

Staff: Deming stated that he will be referring to 327 Lake Ave. S., Adventure Zone, and 325 Lake Ave. S., Waterfront Center, two properties with marquee signs in the area. The applicant's variance is to allow a sign to exceed the 10" letter height maximum and to allow the sign to be constructed above the marquee's fascia. Deming went over the criteria to be met for a variance and the purposes for sign regulation stated in the UDC. Marquee signs have more visibility because they are allowed to project into the right of way and, therefore are to be more limited in scale and intensity. Deming pointed out the dimensions of the marquee signs on the other two properties in the area noting that 325 has 24" non-illuminated letters projecting above the fascia and 327 has 48" letters (in two rows) mounted to the fascia. This seems to establish a pattern for what is has been considered reasonable in the past with 24" letters non-illuminated projecting above or allowed to be illuminated if mounted to the fascia. Granting the variance proposed by the applicant may be inconsistent with some UDC intents but that there is a practical difficulty for the landowner to meet the 10" letter height due to the location of the sign.

Staff feels that an alternative variance is warranted that allows 24" tall letters to be mounted above the fascia or on the fascia and that they be illuminated only if the letters are mounted to the fascia, following the established pattern in the area.

Applicant: Brian Daugherty. Thank you for reviewing this. As much as the alternative variance is a nice compromise, they do need the sign to be this height. This is their tasteful way to bring the focus to the entrance. They have modeled their signage after the Zinama and felt that they would need this after the Zeitgeist had their signs up. The 325 marquee itself is only a foot or so in height and is a little out of scale. Their marquee letters are 2 feet and the marquee for the Garden is 3 feet in height. He thinks that the building needs the character, the focus and the attention of the applicant proposed marquee sign.

**MOTION/Second:** Vigen/Guggenbuehl to **Approve** the Alternative Variance to allow letters to be located on or above the fascia and no higher than 24" tall and that the letters be illuminated only if they are mounted to the fascia of the marquee. **VOTE:** Unanimous (9-0)

PN 11-121 – Vacate Public Right of Way at 129<sup>th</sup> Ave West and West 1<sup>st</sup> St by Cheryl and Roger Vine Sr. and Christy and Roger Vine Jr. **SR**

Staff: Robertson stated that this is a straight forward vacation application. The map that is in your planning commission packet and the area that we are looking at is in red. The standards for right of way vacation are uselessness and if it will impact landowners access. This proposed vacation meets the standards in the UDC and will not cause harm to the public. Staff recommends approval to the City Council with no conditions.

Vigen asked what happens when this is vacated for the city assessor – is this reported from this body? Robertson stated that his understanding is that once city council approves it the applicant must take it to the county recorder and have it recorded as vacated and then it comes back to the GIS or City Assessor's office.

**MOTION/Second:** Holappa/Guggenbuehl to **Recommend Approval** to the City Council for the petition to vacate the public right-of-way without conditions. **VOTE:** Unanimous (9-0)

- III. Consideration of minutes – October 11, 2011. Rand/Sarvela to approve the Minutes.
- IV. Communications
- V. Old Business
- VII. Reports of Officers and Committees
  - A. Duluth Historic Preservation Commission
  - B. Education Subcommittee

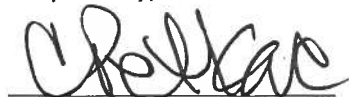
VI. New Business

Digby introduced Jenn Reed Moses regarding the Higher Education Small Area Plan. Moses thanked the commissioners for having time for her tonight. She is the project planner on the small area plan. They had a kick off last spring. The background research and the assessment portion of the Small Area Plan has been completed. They had a public meeting in July with over 150 attendees. They also had a survey on campus with over 90 responses and have received many from UMD and St. Scholastica which had 1200 responses. These are all on our website. They are working with getting a market study from Development Concepts Inc. They presented us with a Draft report and had about 40 people in the public meeting. He is now incorporating the comments in a market study report. At this point it we are starting to get recommendations. They plan to have a public meeting in January and bring the recommendations back to the Planning Commission in February.

Digby stated that they should look at the website for the responses. He added that if they have any questions or concerns forward it to the planning staff.

- IX. Other Business
- X. Adjournment

Respectfully,



Cindy Petkac, AICP  
Planning Manager  
CP:eu