

# MILLWOOD PLANNING COMMISSION

## REGULAR MEETING

JUNE 27, 2011

## MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order. Prior to calling the meeting to order, Ms. Beese moved to nominate Kelly Stravens as Planning Commission chair for the current meeting. Mr. Hansen seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stravens called the meeting to order at 6:08 PM. Commission members present were: Bobbie Beese, Kelly Stravens, Laura Burrill, and Dan Hansen. Staff present: Tom Richardson, City Planner, and Ray Oligher, Assistant Planner.

Mr. Hansen requested that an additional item be placed on the agenda to elect Mr. Stravens as Planning Commission chairperson for the term of 1 year (through the May, 2012 meeting). Motion seconded by Ms Beese and passed unanimously.

2. Approval of Minutes. Two changes were made to the minutes from the May meeting; the addition of Shannon Stravens as a participant in the C-2 zone walk-through before the May Commission meeting and a correction of Ms. Beese's statement requesting that care is needed when making changes to lot coverage percentages due to Millwood's location. Ms. Beese moved to approve the minutes as amended. Motion seconded by Mr. Hansen. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Public Hearing: Special Sign Permit SSP 2011-03 for Hilderbrand Auto. Mr. Hilderbrand was not in attendance at the start of the meeting, so a call was made to his place of employment. Mr. Hilderbrand promised to come to the meeting. Ms. Beese moved to continue this portion of the Public Hearing until he arrived. Motion seconded by Mr. Hansen, approved unanimously.

CPA 1101: While waiting for Mr. Hilderbrand, the Commission once again familiarized itself with CPA 1101 Electric Vehicle Infrastructure. As no additional changes were required, Mr. Hansen moved that the item be put forward to the City Council at their July 5 meeting. Motion seconded by Ms. Burrill, approved unanimously.

Mr. Hilderbrand and his wife appeared at this time. Ms. Beese moved to continue the hearing on SSP 2011-03, Mr. Hansen seconded, approved unanimously.

Mr. Oligher gave the staff report. The first item presented was one additional photograph, showing the relative positioning of the current pole sign and the new readerboard. The rest of the report was spent listing the following areas where the current sign did not match C-1 zone regulations; the sign is currently within the 15' setback, the sign has flashing lights, the sign is over 42" in height so should be on a pole, and the method of electrification is just an extension cord across the yard.

Mr. Stravens questioned whether the portability of the sign was a problem. As long as the sign was not easily portable and unable to be blown over, portability was not a problem.

After the staff report, the applicant noted that before the readerboard sign was placed in front of the parcel, it was hard to attract business to his startup enterprise. The readerboard sign attracted attention that the pole sign did not. The applicant also mentioned that his neighbors had not been against the sign but were pleased in his efforts in trying to build up business. Staff reported that there was one call that resulted from the required letter that is sent to neighbors announcing the hearing, and that call was positive.

Ms. Beese noted that readerboards are permitted in the C-1 zone, if on a pole that is back 15'. Also, since the sign was over 42" in height, the sign had to be 12' above ground. This led to a discussion on the meaning of the height rule. Consensus was that the proper reading of the regulation is that if the top of a sign is physically taller than 42" from the ground, the bottom of the sign needs to be raised so that it is 12' from the ground. There should be nothing between 42" and 12' for a clear sight line.

Mr. Hansen was concerned with setting a precedent if the council were to allow this sign as it currently exists. Then, everyone else along Trent would want to push signs out to the parcel lines, reducing sight lines and creating safety issues for pedestrians and bike riders. This led to a discussion on rule consistency and how that consistency has made Millwood distinctly different from the look of the City of Spokane Valley, which surrounds it.

In the open public discussion, Greg Mott, at 3301 N. Argonne Road, presented his concerns. Since there is nothing that makes Mr. Hilderbrand's lot any different from the lots around it, there should be no exception to the current sign regulations; the 15' setback rule should be enforced, there should be no pulsating lights, the sign should be permanently mounted and only 42" high, or, on a pole 12' high. Mr. Mott was also concerned that the City should not be allowing this precedent.

Public hearing was closed for deliberation. Initial discussion centered on the conditions that are imposed on the Planning Commission for Special Sign Permits. For example, could there be time limits imposed for making the sign compliant? Staff presented the regulations and consensus was that time limits could be part of any solution.

After deliberation, a temporary solution was reached. Within 2 weeks of this Commission meeting;

1. The flashing lights will be removed.
2. The sign will be moved back to at least 5' from the property line.
3. The bottom of the sign will be leveled.
4. Landscaping will to be maintained so that the sign is not covered by any vegetation.
5. This situation can continue for up to 6 months, after which the sign has to be removed.
6. This hearing will be re-opened in December to discuss compliance of current signage.

Mr. Hansen moved that the compromise solution be approved and the hearing re-opened in 6 months to discuss current signage on this parcel, seconded by Ms. Burrill. Passed unanimously.

Discussion then led to why there were no “Welcome to Millwood” signs on Trent. The Commission was informed that the Mayor did purchase Welcome to Millwood signs some time ago, but they are too small to be clearly seen by traffic moving at arterial speeds. There is no additional money in the budget for signs. This discussion will be relayed to the City Council.

CPA 1102 Mr. Oligher presented an updated Staff Report on C-2 Zoning changes.

Initial discussion concerned the growing number of changes in the document and whether we should accept changes to date and start fresh. In order to maintain a record of all changes for final presentation to the City Council, it was decided that staff would print the document with changed text removed for Planning Commission use, while maintaining a copy with all changes for final presentation.

Subsequent discussion centered on the definition of “Development”. When should renovation make the jump to redevelopment? When do we apply the design standards for the zone? What does “higher intensity of use” really mean?

So far, changes to the regulation have reduced exceptions to the application of design standards, so every redevelopment must follow the new rules. This is felt to be too strict. Mr. Stravens felt that we need to define a rule that triggers when design standards apply. This rule should be placed at the beginning of the Design Standards section of the chapter.

Due to the late hour, motion to continue this discussion until the next meeting was made by Ms. Beese, seconded by Mr. Stravens. Carried unanimously.

CPA 1103 No discussion.

4. Staff Report. Mr. Richardson briefly described the recent UGA update from the City. A copy was given to the Planning Commission at the beginning of this meeting for discussion at the next meeting.

5. Public Comments. None.

The next Planning Commission meeting will be held on Monday, July 25.

6. Adjournment. Ms. Burrill moved for adjournment. Motion seconded by Mr. Hansen. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

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Chairperson

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Secretary