

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

DATE: May 17, 2001

APPROVED

TIME: 7:30 p.m.

PLACE: Urbana City Building
400 S. Vine Street
Urbana, IL 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Armstrong, Herb Corten, Darwin Fields, Anna Merritt,
Joe Schoonover, Charles Warmbrunn, Harvey Welch

MEMBERS ABSENT None

STAFF PRESENT: Rob Kowalski, Senior Planner
Tim Ross, Planner

OTHERS PRESENT: Sharon Andrae, James Rauch, Carl Webber

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. A quorum was declared present.

2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Corten moved to approve the minutes from the March 15, 2001 meeting as corrected. Mr. Fields seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as corrected by unanimous vote.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

6. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

7. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

Case # ZBA-01-MIN-1; Request for a minor variance to allow a 15% increase in the allowed area for a sign at 2012 North Lincoln Avenue. (New Andrae's Harley Davidson site).

Case # ZBA-01-MAJ-4; Request for a major variance to allow an increase in the required height of a sign from 75 feet to 100 feet at 2012 North Lincoln Avenue.

Mr. Kowalski gave the staff report. Both cases were presented together since they were regarding the same property. Staff recommended that the Zoning Board of Appeals grant the variances as requested. The Board will have to make two separate actions on the cases since the major variance will have to be forwarded to City Council while the minor variance will end with the Board.

Mr. Corten asked if the proposed sign would be higher than those already erected in the vicinity. Mr. Kowalski answered that the request is to vary the height from the allowable 75 feet to 100 feet so that the sign will be partially visible to traffic on the Interstate and at the Interstate 74/ Lincoln Avenue interchange. Mr. Corten asked if this would possibly promote future requests for additional signs. Mr. Kowalski replied that it was possible.

Mr. Warmbrunn asked if the request for the height of the sign was because of the trees along the interstate affecting the visibility. Mr. Kowalski answered that the trees were the justification for requesting an increase in the height for the sign. Mr. Warmbrunn asked if the property being located near the interstate would qualify it for having a higher sign. Mr. Kowalski replied since the site was within 2000' from Interstate 74, the development meets the criteria of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to have a taller sign than allowed for typical freestanding signs, but the applicant wishes for the sign to be taller yet. Mr. Warmbrunn asked if the trees on the site would be left standing or would be removed during construction. Mr. Kowalski stated that most of the trees would come down. He commented that Carl Webber, Attorney for the Petitioner was in the audience and could answer that question better.

Ms. Merritt stated that as a vehicle approaches the crest on the interstate, the driver should be able to see the sign. Mr. Warmbrunn asked if the sign would be visible from Bradley Avenue. Mr. Kowalski stated that people driving east along Bradley Avenue would see the sign for a short time, and then it would disappear due to vegetation and the Melrose Apartments. Mr. Warmbrunn asked if the Melrose Apartments would block visibility of the sign or if people would be able to see the sign over the Melrose Apartments from Bradley Avenue. Mr. Welch stated that people would probably have to drive past the Melrose Apartments to see the sign.

Mr. Welch asked if the visibility of the sign would be affected by the trees on the development site or by the trees along the interstate. Mr. Kowalski replied that it would be the trees along the

interstate that would affect the visibility of the sign. Mr. Kowalski noted that the sign would be taller than any trees on the site and that the trees on the site will most likely be removed anyway. Mr. Schoonover stated that it would seem that people would be able to see the sign from the west and the south, but not from the east or the north.

Mr. Corten commented that we want the sign visible for people to find the business. He asked about advertising on the interstate. Mr. Kowalski stated that gas stations and hotels are able to advertise on roadway identification signs provided by the state, so that drivers are aware of where to pull off. The only advertising Andrae's Harley Davidson would have for interstate motorists would be the freestanding sign. Ms. Merritt commented that most people don't pull off the interstate to stop at a motorcycle shop like they would for gas or a place to sleep. Most people that do business at a motorcycle shop will already know where the shop is located.

Mr. Welch commented that because of the configuration of the sign, the area of the sign, technically wouldn't make it look much larger than most other business signs, because it will not be square. It won't be very striking.

Carl Webber, Attorney for the Petitioner, approached the Zoning Board of Appeals to comment. He stated that vehicles coming from the west and going east would have visibility of the sign. He added that the request for the increase in height was not only for marketing purposes but safety. Customers looking for the business would be able to see the sign from a further distance and would have adequate time to exit the interstate. The sign would not be appearing suddenly when approaching the intersection. It would prevent driving accidents. Mr. Webber stated that the Petitioner is only requesting an increase in height for what was needed for the sign to clear the trees.

Mr. Corten asked which size of sign had been selected. Mr. Webber stated that the Petitioner, Sharon Andrae, had chosen the 11'6"x15' sign.

Mr. Webber stated that vehicles going east to west wouldn't see the sign. According to the development plans, the Harley Davidson store will look more like a shopping center with clothes, etc. available. If the Petitioner just wanted to sell cycles, then the location could be anywhere, and customers would find the shop. However, Ms. Andrae wants to draw in other types of customers who are interested in buying shirts and souvenirs, etc.

Mr. Schoonover asked if the trees on the development site would be removed. Mr. Webber answered that they will try to save as many trees as possible. However, with the ordinances requiring a certain amount for parking space and detention area, most of the trees will have to be removed on the site.

Mr. Armstrong asked if there would be any requests for additional signs. Mr. Webber stated that the only other sign would be a sign on the door, which would not request a variance of any kind. Mr. Kowalski stated that according to the sign ordinance, a second freestanding sign would not be allowed but that one sign is permitted for each frontage.

For Case #ZBA-01-MIN-01, Mr. Corten motioned to accept Staff recommendation of approval and grant the minor variance. Mr. Fields seconded the motion.

The roll call was as follows:

Ms. Merritt	-	Yes	Mr. Schoonover	-	Yes
Mr. Warmbrunn	-	Yes	Mr. Armstrong	-	Yes
Mr. Corten	-	Yes	Mr. Fields	-	Yes
Mr. Welch	-	Yes			

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

For Case # ZBA-01-MAJ-4, Mr. Warmbrunn motioned to accept Staff recommendation of approval and grant the variance be forwarded to the City Council. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. The roll call was as follows:

Mr. Schoonover	-	Yes	Mr. Warmbrunn	-	Yes
Mr. Armstrong	-	Yes	Mr. Corten	-	Yes
Mr. Fields	-	Yes	Mr. Welch	-	Yes
Ms. Merritt	-	Yes			

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

ZBA-01-MAJ-05; Request for a major variance to allow a reduction in the required front yard setback at 501 East Oakland Avenue.

Mr. Ross gave the staff report. Staff recommends that the Zoning Board of Appeals recommend approval of the proposed variance, as requested to the Urbana City Council.

Mr. Schoonover asked if Mr. Ross had heard from the surrounding neighbors. Mr. Ross replied that he had not heard from them. Mr. Schoonover then asked if Mr. Rauch would have to trim the tree to keep it from touching the roof. Mr. Rauch stated that the tree would not be touching the roof at any time.

Mr. Welch asked Mr. Rauch if the stakes in the ground in the picture represented the measurements of the expansion to the house. Mr. Rauch answered that was correct. The dimensions of the addition would be 10'L x 20'W.

Mr. Corten motioned to recommend approval of the variance to the City Council. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. The roll call was as follows:

Mr. Warmbrunn	-	Yes	Mr. Armstrong	-	Yes
Mr. Corten	-	Yes	Mr. Fields	-	Yes

Mr. Welch - Yes
Mr. Schoonover - Yes

Ms. Merritt - Yes

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

9. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

10. STAFF REPORT

There was none.

11. STUDY SESSION

There was none

12. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Kowalski, Senior Planner
Urbana Plan Commission