

AGENDA
MAPLE PLAIN PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MAPLE PLAIN CITY HALL
April 5, 2018
6:00 PM

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ADOPT THE AGENDA**
- 4. APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**
 - A. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes – March 1, 2018
- 5. OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment - Signs
- 6. ADJOURN**

MINUTES
MAPLE PLAIN PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MAPLE PLAIN CITY HALL
March 1, 2018
6:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

Planning Commission Chair Michele Bliss called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Present: Planning Commission Chair Michele Bliss, Planning Commissioners Mardelle DeCamp and Barbara Korri. Also Present: Councilmember Caitlin Cahill, City Administrator Robert Schoen, City Planner Mark Kaltsas and Assistant to City Administrator Nicole Kathman.

Absent: Planning Commissioners Barb Rose and Stephen Shurson

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ADOPT THE AGENDA

Motion by Planning Commissioner DeCamp, seconded by Planning Commissioner Korri, to adopt the agenda. Motion passed, 3-0.

4. APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

A. Planning Commission Meeting Minutes – December 7, 2017

Planning Commission Chair Bliss requested the following corrections to be made to the December 7, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes: changing the spelling of “Michelle” to “Michele” under agenda item 1 and changing the spelling of “Alkona” to “Akona” under agenda item 5.

Motion by Planning Commissioner DeCamp, seconded by Planning Commissioner Korri, to approve the December 7, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting with changes. Motion passed, 3-0.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. PUBLIC HEARING: Text amendment to Chapter 150, Section 150.25, (B), (2) of the City’s zoning ordinance pertaining to sign regulations for the Mixed-Use Zoning Districts

Assistant to the City Administrator Kathman stated that City Staff is seeking feedback regarding the following three questions:

1. Should the design guidelines in regards to signage be applied to all mixed-use and industrial signs or only mixed-used?
2. Should the City continue to prohibit internally illuminated and neon signs in the City?
3. Should the City consider allowing internally illuminated signs in certain areas of the City?

Planning Commission Chair Bliss opened and closed the Public Hearing at 6:09 pm as no members of the public were present.

City Administrator Schoen explained that the reason this is on the agenda is that a couple of business owners in the downtown area have requested to have internally lit box signs. Schoen also noted that multiple variances to allow internally lit signs have been approved over the last few years for the Gordon James building.

Planning Commission Chair Bliss stated that the Design Guidelines apply to all areas of the City. Bliss added that the Design Guidelines included prohibiting box lit signs due to a desire to have signs with more style and class. Bliss also emphasized the importance of the guidelines as a plan for making the City look how desired.

Schoen shared that businesses are seeking other avenues to help with improving signage such as allowing internally lit signs as there are a lot of illegal temporary signs.

Planning Commission Chair Bliss discussed how the Planning Commission and the City has worked with businesses to find solutions for signage acceptable to both the City and the business including those at the Gordon James Building. Bliss emphasized the importance of working with businesses and not allowing signage to be a last priority.

Planning Commission Chair Bliss brought up the idea of meeting with businesses to explain the design guidelines. City Administrator Schoen stated that creating a format for meeting with multiple businesses to have discussions on items such as the design guidelines is being explored by the City Council. Bliss added that having this type of meeting would allow businesses to plan for signage.

Planning Commissioner DeCamp stated that the design guidelines fit a small town, but not necessarily the traffic and speed of Highway 12. Planning Commission Chair Bliss replied that backlit signs are just as bright.

Councilmember Cahill stated she agreed that box lit signs should not be allowed, but mentioned that the individually lettered internally lit signs like

those approved at the Gordon James building look nice. Cahill inquired if allowing individually lettered internally lit signs on Highway 12 would be helpful to businesses. Schoen replied that it would show flexibility by the City.

Assistant to the City Administrator shared the input she received from absent Planning Commissioner Shurson on this topic. Kathman stated Shurson thinks that the design guidelines should be maintained for downtown buildings not facing Highway 12, but is fine with internally lit signs for downtown buildings facing Highway 12 and signs in the Budd Avenue and Gateway Mixed Use areas as long as they are tastefully done and not big box-lit signs.

Planning Commissioner Bliss stated that the current allowed amount of lumens should be maintained.

The Planning Commission recommended drafting design guideline and ordinance language to allow individually lit internally lit signs back for discussion.

- B. **PUBLIC HEARING:** Text amendment to Chapter 153, Section 153.084 of the City's zoning ordinance pertaining to parking space dimensions.

Assistant to City Administrator Kathman stated that the City has granted three variances within the past three years relating to parking space depth and aisle width standards for 90 degree parking spaces. Kathman stated the current standards for 90 degree parking spaces are 20 feet depth and a drive aisle width of 25 feet, but staff has seen that the typical standard being 18 feet with an overhang of 1.5 feet and a drive aisle width of 24 feet. Kathman stated that City Staff is seeking input from the Planning Commission in regards to changing the 90 degree parking space depth and drive aisle width to what is standard.

Planning Commission Chair Bliss asked about parking spaces without overhang. City Planner Kaltsas replied the depth requirement without overhang would be 20 feet.

Kathman Assistant to the City Administrator shared the input she received from absent Planning Commissioner Shurson on this topic. Kathman stated Shurson agrees with recommended changes.

Planning Commission Chair Bliss opened and closed the Public Hearing at 6:45 pm as no members of the public were present.

Motion by Planning Commissioner DeCamp, seconded by Planning Commissioner Korri, to recommend to City Council to make City

Staff's recommendations to the 90 degree parking space depth and drive aisle width. Motion passed, 3-0.

- C. PUBLIC HEARING: Text amendment to Chapter 153 of the City's zoning ordinance pertaining to small cellular wireless technology in City right of ways.

City Planner Kaltsas stated that in 2017, the State Legislature passed legislation permitting small cell facilities to be located in city right-of-ways. Kaltsas explained that the City Council will be reviewing adding a permitting process to the City Code as allowed by State Statute. Kaltsas noted this permitting process does not allow for regulation. Kaltsas stated that cities have the ability to regulate use in residential zoned only, but not any other types of zoned areas.

Planning Commission Chair Bliss asked about backyard right-of-way and if a lot of small cell facilities were anticipated. Kaltsas responded that small cell facilities would not be allowed in backyard right-of-ways. Schoen replied that at this time these structures are not anticipated as the primary reason for the legislation was the Super Bowl, but may happen in the future.

Planning Commission Chair Bliss asked about small cell facilities being chosen to be conditional use instead of an interim use. Kaltsas explained that there is not a good established lifespan to make it an interim use and additionally companies want more than an interim use if they are investing in infrastructure.

Planning Commissioner DeCamp inquired if companies would primarily choose to use existing infrastructure. City Administrator Schoen stated there would certainly be a financial advantage to do so.

Kaltsas explained that ordinance reads to regulate small cell facilities in residential zoned areas as a conditional use without other specified criteria because it allows for more city discretion.

Planning Commission Chair Bliss opened and closed the Public Hearing at 7:04 pm as no members of the public were present.

Motion by Planning Commissioner Korri, seconded by Planning Commissioner DeCamp, to recommend to City Council to make the change to Chapter 153 of the City ordinance to make small wireless facilities a conditional use in City right of ways.

City Administrator Schoen stated that a conditional use permit revision for Collision Corner is anticipated for the April Planning Commission Meeting. Schoen also shared that a land-use application for the Gateway property

site is expected to be on the Planning Commission agenda for April or May.

6. ADJOURN

Motion by Planning Commissioner DeCamp, seconded by Planning Commissioner Korri, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed, 3-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:08 pm.

City of Maple Plain

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment - Signs

To: Planning Commission
From: Mark Kaltsas, City Planner
Meeting Date: April 5, 2018

Request:

A proposed text amendment to the City of Maple Plain Ordinance as follows:

- a. A text amendment to Chapter 150, Section 150.25, (B), (2) of the City's zoning ordinance pertaining to sign regulations for the Mixed-Use Zoning Districts.

Sign Ordinance

The City has a provision in the sign ordinance, Section 150.25 (B) (2), which states that all signs must comply with the Maple Plain Design Guidelines.

150.25 DISTRICT REGULATIONS.

(B) Mixed Use and Office Districts.

(2) Design guidelines. Signs located for permitted uses in these districts shall conform to the city's Design Guidelines.

This provision essentially requires all signs located in the City's mixed use, office and industrial districts to comply with the Maple Plain Design Guidelines. The City's Design Guidelines have the following provisions relating to signage:

Gateway District:

Signs are encouraged to be backlit where possible, and to avoid internal lighting and neon signs. Box-lit signs are not permitted in the Gateway.

Downtown District:

Signage

A sign package should be created that allows each user the creativity to clearly define their space, but to do so in a manner that creates a visually appealing street frontage. Clear communication, as well as an aesthetic that caters to the small-town flavor shall be required in all sign packages.

All proposed signage should meet the current sign ordinance. In addition to these requirements, the following standards shall be applied to signs within the Downtown District.

Clean, elegant signage with small town character. Materials and scale should reflect the materials and scale of each user.

Supplemental signs are acceptable in this District, including sandwich boards and projecting signs.

Wall signage (i.e. signage affixed to the structure and flush with the façade) is required to ensure visibility of each user.

The following requirements shall apply to the signage package for each user:

<i>Area</i>	<i>The total signage package shall not exceed 15-percent of the total façade area. This area includes the primary wall sign, supplemental signs including sandwich boards, projecting signs, and window signage.</i>
<i>Sign Materials</i>	<i>Primary material should be wood. EIFS may also be included but will be calculated against materials requirements. Other materials include metals such as aluminum or wrought iron.</i>
<i>Lighting</i>	<i>All signs within the Downtown District must have secondary lighting. Internal lighting is not acceptable. This includes neon signs which are also not permitted. Backlit signs are appropriate provided they meet lighting standards set forth in the City's zoning code. Light pollution should be reduced when possible and energy reducing light fixtures used when possible.</i>

The City has granted two variances within the past two years relating to internally illuminated signage in the MU-D district. The City has received three recent sign permit applications for internally illuminated signs within the MU-D and Industrial zoning districts. Several of the sign permit applications are on buildings that have other existing internally illuminated signs.

Staff reviewed the requirements relating to lighting set forth in the Design Guidelines and noted that by reference in the zoning ordinance the provisions apply to the rest of the commercial districts in the City. The Design Guidelines clearly stipulate that internally illuminated signage is not permitted in the Mixed-Use-MU Zoning Districts. The City's sign ordinance further applies the lighting standards to all other commercial and industrial districts. The intent of the guidelines appears to have been to create a small

town feel which utilizes design, materials, colors and lighting of a different scale than more standard suburban commercial internally illuminated or neon signage.

Planning Commissioners discussed allowing a certain type of internally illuminated signage for businesses in the I-Industrial zoning district as well as for those properties that directly adjoin TH 12 in the MU zoning districts. Staff has prepared a draft ordinance amendment for further consideration and discussion by the Planning Commission.

There are several considerations that should be further discussed by the City:

1. Should the City's sign ordinance Section 150.25 exclusively reference the Design Guidelines for all MU and Industrial signs? The City could except out the I-Industrial District or portions of the MU District to allow certain types of internally illuminated signage (see proposed language below).
2. The proposed language would allow internally illuminated signs that are comprised of individual letters and not plastic faced cabinet signs.
3. Should the City consider allowing internally illuminated signs in only certain areas of the City (i.e. Highway 12 frontages, on buildings with existing internally illuminated signs, etc.). It may be difficult to regulate which properties have TH 12 visibility versus TH 12 frontage. Should businesses located on TH 12 be permitted to have different sign allowances than those businesses that can be seen from TH 12, but do not have direct frontage? Staff is seeking additional direction from the PC relating to this issue.

DRAFT SIGN ORDINANCE LANGUAGE

150.25 DISTRICT REGULATIONS.

(B) Mixed Use and Office Districts.

(1) Residential regulations. The regulations for uses set forth in 150.25 (A) shall apply to the uses if established in the Mixed Use and Office Districts.

(2) Design guidelines. Signs located for permitted uses in these districts shall conform to the City's Design Guidelines with the following exceptions:

- a) Internal Illumination. Only those signs as set forth in § 150.25, (B) may be illuminated internally by either, or both, of the following methods. No other form of internal illumination is permitted.*
 - i.) Individual channel letters shall be permitted but only with the following physical characteristics.*
 - a. Translucent plastic (e.g., acrylic, lexan, sentra) faces, aluminum returns, and a white internal light; and*
 - b. Individual reverse-channel (also known as "halo-lit" or "reverse lit") aluminum letters with opaque faces and returns of any color and white internal light.*
- b) Prohibited Forms of Illuminated Signage.*
 - i.) Exposed neon, or technologies such as LED that simulate neon, are prohibited for signs and shall not be incorporated into the design of a principal or accessory structure.*
 - ii.) Plastic-faced cabinet signs, whether internally or externally illuminated.*

Summary:

Based on direction and discussion relating to the possible ordinance amendment, staff will prepare the requisite ordinances for consideration by the City Council. It is recommended that Commissioners review the existing building signage located throughout the MU and Industrial zoning districts in addition to the Design Guidelines (See Attached).

Attachments: Maple Plain Design Guidelines