

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Planning Board, held in Williamsville Village Hall, 5565 Main Street, Williamsville, New York on Monday, June 2, 2008 at 7:30pm

ROLL CALL: Present: Kevin Lester, Chairman
Charles Rizzone
Catherine Kulpa
Walter Pacer
Wesley Stone
David Vitka
Edward Zabel

William Wutz, Alternate
Shawn Michel, Alternate

Also present: Brian J. Geary, Trustee Liaison
Christopher A. Cardillo, Village Attorney
Lynda L. Juul, Administrator
Brian Fineberg, Code Enforcement Officer
Deborah A. Habes, Deputy Clerk

Chairman Lester opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ON MOTION by Mr. Rizzone, seconded by Mr. Lester, it was moved to approve the minutes of the last meeting held on April 7, 2008, as submitted.

Unanimously carried.

Log# Sign 08-06-04
Barber Pole

5355 Main Street (C-3)
Barber Shop
Frank Morehouse, proprietor
Owner: Edward Marecki

Mr. Morehouse, business owner, was present to represent the application.

The applicant proposes to erect a 2' high by 8" wide lighted red, white and blue spinning barber pole above the entrance door of the Main Street elevation of the tenant space. The building's fascia is brick and he stated he has the owner's permission to install an electrical box.

ON MOTION by Mr. Stone, seconded by Mr. Zabel, it was moved to approve the application as submitted.

Unanimously carried.

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Log # Sign-08-06-05

Pole Sign

5316-5330 Main Street (C-3)

McDonald's

Owner: Ronald Benderson 1995 Trust

Paul Strata of NAS /Quick Sign, Scott Francis of McDonald's corporate, and Don Richardson, owner of this store, were present to represent the sign application.

Mr. Strata explained that this is an upgraded sign. It will be about 3 ft shorter than the existing sign, depending on the grade. He has compared it to existing signs in the area. All have corporate colors and design. Mr. Lester asked if they had thought of incorporating the sign into the "gateway" design at the corner. Mr. Strata said this is a higher profile sign than the Walgreens sign on the opposite side of Main Street. This is a reader sign, which they use for hiring purposes and also to feature menu promotions. The letters are put up individually and it is backlit. Ms. Kulpa asked if he was aware that backlit signs were not allowed in the Village. He is aware, but it would be a problem with McDonald's corporate. He said this sign has less surface area than the existing sign and they believe that it fits the branding best. There are no non-illuminated signs in the fleet and they chose this sign design as the best fit for the site.

Scott Francis stated that Benderson approached them first to upgrade the sign as long as they were going to be renovating the building and site. Mr. Zabel mentioned the McDonald's in East Aurora and how its sign is low and closer to the sidewalk and seems more in character with the neighborhood. Mr. Francis stated that that type of sign is no longer available in the Corporation. He explained that the reader signboard creates an impulse for buyers. They have tried to sister the Walgreens sign on the other corner. The Walgreens sign is a much larger structure. This is the smallest structure possible.

Don Richardson stated that all the McDonald's are going through the same renovations now. With hard economic times they need to draw customers in. This type of sign fits their needs. He was asked if the reader board sign could be incorporated into the red McDonald's part. He said has never seen that. The reader board could be reduced to a 2 liner from the 3 liner; reduced to 2 ft from a 3 ft high. Scott said he has not encountered any town which did not allow backlit signs. The corporation gives the franchisee a sign package to choose from. Mr. Strata said that he is familiar with the Village Code, but this is a drive thru business. People are driving at 30 miles per hour and they want the sign to be seen. The existing pole sign is 23' tall with the 8'x8' sign panel. Mr. Vitka encouraged the gentlemen to take a look at the Village's community plan. He said the Village wants to be a walkable community. Mr. Richardson said that the majority of his business is drive thru. He wants to make it more accommodating towards the drive-thru customer. Ms. Kulpa stated that the height is excessive and believes they are missing an opportunity to do something really different with this sign project.

The Planning Board's issues are: the corporate colors; height, reader board; reader board size; internal illumination; pole sign.

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The Planning Board suggested substituting columns for the single pole. They would like something historic in nature, as this corner constitutes the gateway to the Village of Williamsville.

ON MOTION by Mr. Lester, seconded by Ms. Kulpa, it was moved to TABLE the sign application.

Unanimously carried.

Log # 08-06-06

Discussion of proposed new build

5316 Main Street (C-3)

McDonald's

Owner: Ronald Benderson 1995 Trust

Randy Bebout of FRA Engineering, Scott Francis of McDonald's Corporation, and Don Richardson, store owner, were present to represent the application.

This project is not being submitted as a formal application but is for discussion only this evening. The applicants will submit a formal application at a later date.

Mr. Bebout stated that the existing building will be demolished and a new building will take its place. Once they get the approvals, their building time frame is 90 days from demo to opening. They have shifted the Union Rd. entrance/exit driveway back to increase the efficiency with 2 divided lanes. They will work with the DOT for the exit and driveway design. The side by side drive-thru is what people want. Sixty-five percent of their business is drive-thru. They are trying to accommodate that. Parking against the building is not uncommon. There have been no issues with accidents or people backing up. There will be a decrease in the number of parking spaces, since the portion of the parcel in the Town of Amherst prevents them from having parking spaces there. The dining room will be more pleasant with an outdoor patio at the front of the building. The patio will be enclosed by a 4' high black aluminum fence for safety. There will be a slight increase in green space due to fewer parking spaces. The circulation will remain the same from the drive-thru onto Union Rd. The island at the Union Rd. exit/entrance will be rounded to allow for traffic exiting from the parking lot. They are providing 98 parking spaces, which provide more than enough for the whole parcel. Line-ups at peak times shouldn't backup much beyond the parking pad area, maybe 10 to 11 cars. The pedestrian walkway could be turned into an island to reduce the distance on the west side. New curb cut onto Union is about 16' further north than it is now. It's a straight shot out of the drive-thru now.

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Applicants' responses to the issues in letters received from owners of neighboring properties:

1. Drive-thru is warranted. It is what customers want.
2. Double drive-thru has been proven to speed up service.
3. Double drive thru does not increase traffic. It helps process people through quickly and efficiently. This is faster than the tandem drive-thru speakers.
4. Site lighting is dark sky compliant. At property line – 0.2 lighting. But they will work towards 0 foot candle.
5. Speaker noise - New speaker system will reduce sound levels. They would consider quieting down the outer speaker during the night. A decimal level plan was handed out to the Board. He will provide a revised decimal level plan at the next meeting.
6. Move the drive thru on the Main St. side - There is not much flexibility with the site. Existing fence would stay. Would like to shift it back and put some plantings in there to soften and buffer. They try to keep the sites as green as possible, but there is no corporate landscape plan. They could try to add some plantings. Mr. Richardson has spoken with the neighbors and intends to be a good neighbor. He is considering putting in a brand new fence.
7. Height of order canopy---There is a flush mount light inside the canopy that shines down. It is 11'3" high. The canopy is proposed on the inner ordering lane only. Mr. Bebout will check with lighting engineers to see if this will affect the foot candle at the property line.
8. The building is the same height as the existing. The exterior is broken up by different colors of brick.
9. This new building will be a significant improvement to the site and the business.
10. Garbage pickup – will be limited to regular pick up times.
11. Trash on residents' properties – Mr. Richardson sends employees to pick up trash that flies around. There will be no gaps under the fencing for garbage to blow through.
12. Solar energy - NO. LED technology? Looking into it but it does not provide good lighting.
13. Snow storage - Slightly increasing green space on the site so snow will be piled in available areas.

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14. Will meet DEC requirements for sediment control.

Building Architecture:

This style of building is a new corporate prototype. There will be blocks of 2 different colors. White effuse, yellow and white aluminum canopy, 3 yellow eyebrow arch logos are proposed on 3 sides of the building. There will be a front patio surrounded by a 4' high black aluminum fence.

Chairman Lester said years ago when the existing building was built, McDonald's worked with the Planning Board to keep it in character with the "village" look. Mr. Lester suggested that there have to be different building types out there that McDonald's would consider. This one is very contemporary in style. The Village is looking for something in tune with the Village's historic character. Mr. Francis suggested they can talk about building materials, such as a fieldstone material; there could be some different exterior treatment options. It could be possible to have fieldstone with one more corner to the back of the building. Services will be on SE corner of the building. Awning canopies must be metal because fabrics do not stand up to the elements. They will be illuminated from underneath. Up-lighting will wash the building at night. The yellow and white awning stripes are corporate.

Mr. Francis suggested the Board take a look at the McDonald's at Kensington/Harlem. It is one that has been recently re-done and is of approximately the same prototype as the one being proposed for Main/Union.

Mr. Richardson stated that the issue of being open 24 hours a day is mandated by the corporation. It allows him to increase his business.

The Board's Issues:

1. Union Rd. exit and entrance (the 2 lanes) will be an issue. Nearest resident's driveway would be too close. Will be a problem if they move the curb cut north where Union reduces to just 1 lane. It could create a bottleneck there. Randy suggests keeping the 2 lanes and moving them to the south.
2. Wants them to resubmit more information to Traffic & Safety Committee for further review and with more info re curb cuts.
3. The building's exterior appearance needs to be softened; shouldn't be a "cookie cutter" look. The Kensington/Harlem store has the stone facing that Scott would recommend.
4. The proposed freestanding sign does not conform to the code.

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5. SEQR was filled out incorrectly. They must re-submit. It is not only commercial property that this parcel abuts, but also some residential.

6. Pedestrian striped crosswalk will help if they move the curb cuts to the south.

The Board thanked the applicants for their cooperation this evening.

Village Attorney Cardillo advised the Board that if the revised site plan is sent to Traffic & Safety Committee for their next meeting, the Planning Board will have to wait for the Committee's recommendations to be submitted to them before the Planning Board could meet again. The Deputy Clerk added that the next regularly scheduled Planning Board meeting is Monday, August 4, 2008. Traffic & Safety usually meets on the first Thursday of the month. She did not know what the committee's plans for meeting during July and August were yet.

ON MOTION by Mr. Lester, seconded by Ms. Kulpa, it was moved to require the applicants to submit further information to the Traffic & Safety Committee for further review and recommendations.

Unanimously carried.

In other business:

Chairman Lester requested that the next Planning Board meeting include a follow up on incomplete projects. He would like to start the next work session at 6:30 p.m. to accommodate this request.

ON MOTION by Mr. Lester, seconded by Mr. Stone, it was moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 p.m.

Unanimously carried.

Deborah A. Habes
Deputy Clerk

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