

CITY OF THE DALLES PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday, February 20, 2014

City Hall Council Chambers

313 Court Street

The Dalles, OR 97058

Conducted in a handicap accessible room

6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Lavier called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Lavier welcomed returning Planning Commissioner John Nelson.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bruce Lavier, Mark Poppoff, Chris Zukin, Jeff Stiles, John Nelson

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Dennis Whitehouse

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Planning Director Richard Gassman, Administrative Secretary Carole Trautman

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was moved by Zukin and seconded by Poppoff to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion carried unanimously; Whitehouse absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

It was moved by Zukin and seconded by Poppoff to approve the January 16, 2014 minutes as submitted. Zukin, Poppoff, Lavier and Nelson approved, Stiles abstained; Whitehouse absent. The motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

QUASI-JUDICIAL HEARING

Application Number: VAR 123-14; Escape The Dalles, LLC; Request: Application to gain approval for an additional sign on the southeast building elevation. The property is located at 2014 West 7th Street, The Dalles, Oregon, and is further described as 2N 13E 33CB t.l. 1500. Property is zoned "CG" – General Commercial.

Chair Lavier read the rules for a public hearing and asked the Commissioners if any had a conflict of interest, ex-parte contact, or bias that would hinder them from making an impartial decision on the application. Stiles indicated he managed property across the street from the applicant's property. Director Gassman asked Stiles if he saw any reason it would hinder him from making an impartial decision on the application review. Stiles stated he did not believe it would hinder his decision.

Chair Lavier opened the public hearing at 6:08 PM.

Director Gassman stated staff received three written comments to the application and asked they be placed on the record.

Gassman advised that current code allowed for a large volume of signage, but it did not provide an allowance for the number of signs. He reported that the Mayor's appointed Sign Committee was currently looking into changing the allocation of the number of signs and allow the volume of signage to be placed on different sides of structures. The applicant's business was allowed two signs on the face of the building and a free standing sign, but the code did not allow the fourth sign. Gassman pointed out that the options were: 1) allow the variance as approved; 2) deny the variance; or 3) allow the variance with conditions of approval. He said the three comment letters were mostly concerned with the sign's lighting. Options would be to restrict the lighting on the fourth sign by not allowing it to be internally lit, or to have the sign turned off at a certain hour of the evening. Gassman said that if the change in sign code the Sign Committee was considering was adopted, this variance would become a moot point.

Director Gassman said, under the existing code, the applicant would be allowed 4,000 square feet (s.f.) of signage on the front of the building, but he did not know the total square footage of all of the proposed signage. He said the issue was the number of signs, not the square footage of the signs.

Testimony

Proponents

Patrick Nofield, 571 Antler Road, Cannon Beach, Oregon, stated he was the owner of The Dalles Cousins and Cousins Country Inn, and he is very excited to bring Marriott's Fairfield Inn to The Dalles. Mr. Nofield stated the proposed additional flush mount sign was 94 square feet in size, which would place their signage well under the allowed total square footage. One reason Mr. Nofield and business partners requested the additional sign was that, with the motel located on West 7th Street, the motel would be more visible for westbound travelers on I-84 and West 6th Street.

Mr. Nofield said the combined building face area was 20,000 s.f., and if the variance was allowed, there would be a total of 288 s.f. of flush mount signage. Plans also called for a 20 s.f. monument sign in the front of the property. Total building footage is 47,000 s.f. on a 2-acre site. In comparison, Mr. Nofield said, a business located on Ash and W. 6th Streets had approximately a 10,000 s.f. site area and a 2,000 s.f. building are. The business had two free standing signs with two panels each, one 24 s.f. and the other approximately 40 s.f.. There is also a canopy with signage and a logo on the west side approximately 42 s.f. in size. Mr. Nofield commented that when contrasting the two areas, there was some disparity in square footage percentages.

Mr. Nofield showed the commissioners that none of the three property owners that submitted comment letters lived on the southeast side of the structure and would not affect them directly. He said the lighting on the proposed sign was designed to shine on the sign letters rather than lights shining outward towards the neighborhood. The sign colors were not bright, they were muted, Mr. Nofield stated.

Poppoff stated he would like to see signs designated B and C on the plans turned off at 11 PM, because the front sign would be illuminated and visible to travelers, and not very many people would be looking for a motel after 11 PM. Stiles said he would anticipate travelers coming in at all hours. Nelson said he would have no objection to the sign being lighted during dark. He felt that, in proportion to the building size, the signs were proportionally well designed, and the proposed additional sign would not disturb the property owners that submitted comments.

Zukin said the style of the proposed flush mount sign was internally lighted, and the light coming from this sign would shine less brightly than the lights shining out from the room windows. Zukin said the proposed sign had "indirect" lighting, and he felt there should be no restrictions on the lighting or the timing. He was in support of the variance request.

Chair Lavier closed the public hearing at 6:30 PM.

Opponents

None

Deliberation

Zukin said it was a nicely designed sign system, tasteful, and the lights probably would not bother other people. Stiles said he thought the lighting issue would not have any direct effect on the two buildings he managed. Nelson said he visited the site. He said he thought the signage design looked in scale with the building, and there would be no lighting issue.

It was moved by Zukin and seconded by Nelson to approve VAR 123-14, requesting one additional flush mount sign on the southeast side of the structure, based on the findings of fact and the testimony given, including the two conditions of approval as presented in the staff report. Lavier, Zukin, Stiles and Nelson approved, Poppoff opposed; Whitehouse absent. The motion carried.

RESOLUTION:

It was moved by Zukin and seconded by Nelson to approve PC Resolution #536-14 for VAR 123-14, Escape The Dalles, LLC, as submitted. Lavier, Zukin, Stiles and Nelson approved, Poppoff opposed; Whitehouse absent. The motion carried.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Director Gassman welcomed John Nelson to the Commission and advised there was still one open position. Gassman also reported that Wasco County adopted all of the City's recent LUDO changes, and those amendments would apply to the City's Urban Growth Boundary Area. Most significant of the changes were those related to House Bill No. 3479 regarding minor partitioning. Gassman said the Sign Committee has been meeting on a regular basis and is making progress.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:

Various commissioners welcomed Nelson.

NEXT MEETING:

March 6, 2014

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Lavier adjourned the meeting at 6:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Carole J. Trautman, Administrative Secretary.



Bruce Lavier, Chairman

Feb 3 2014

Re " ~~DR~~ VAR 123-14

I oppose the sign
Request on South East side
of the Hotel.

The light would be on all
night. I live on the 8st.



A.M. Currie
2114 W 8th
TD

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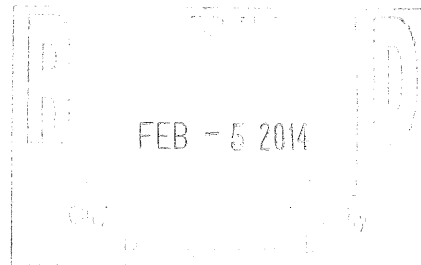
VAR 123-14

I inquired about the sign on the new
Hotel and I feel the ones in front should
be enough.

With the additional ones you would have
to change the ordinance - would this
make it easy for other businesses to
do the same, do we really need more signs?

H. Barker
2226 W 8th
The Dalles

Fax to 541-298-5490



Dawn Hert

From: kayway1936@charter.net
Sent: Wednesday, February 05, 2014 7:47 PM
To: Dawn Hert
Subject: Sign on side of building

I strongly object to a lighted sign of any kind on the side of this building, it would shine directly into my front windows and yard.

I did research the type of sign they wanted, like the ones at the end of Fred Myers building, and I can see it would not be appropriate facing a residential area.

Thank you for your kind consideration of this letter.

Karen Slaughter
2222 West 8th Street
The Dalles, Oregon 97058

FEB - 6 2014