

Minutes - Goshen Plan Commission
Tuesday, October 15, 2019 - 4:00 pm
Council Chambers, 111 E. Jefferson Street
Goshen, Indiana

I. The meeting was called to order with the following members present: Jim McKee, Leslie Biek, James Wellington, Joe McCorkel, and Tom Holtzinger. Also present were City Planner Rhonda Yoder and Assistant City Attorney James Kolbus. Absent: Aracelia Manriquez, Connie Garber, John King, Rolando Ortiz

II. Approval of minutes of 8/20/19 – Holtzinger/Wellington 5-0

III. The Zoning/Subdivision Ordinances and Official Staff Reports were unanimously filed into record: Holtzinger/McCorkel 5-0

IV. Postponements/Withdrawals
None

V. PUD Minor Change (not a public hearing item)

19-01MI – Starbucks Coffee Company, Hilton Displays, and Goshen Retail LLC request a PUD minor change to allow illuminated wall signs on the south building façade and the building façade facing Lincolnway East, where illuminated wall signs are not permitted adjacent to residential use/zoning. The subject property is generally located at 1763 Lincolnway East, Suite 2, zoned Commercial B-3PUD, part of the Keystone Square Planned Unit Development (PUD).

Staff Report & Discussion

Ms. Yoder explained signs for this PUD were not specifically addressed in the original PUD, noting that wall signs follow the B-4 District regulations and the Zoning Ordinance prohibits internal and external illumination of signs adjacent to residential land use or zoning. She stated this applies to the south building wall adjacent to a home and the wall facing Lincolnway East which faces residential use across the street. She explained this request includes three internally illuminated wall signs, two on the wall facing Lincolnway East and one on the wall adjacent to the house to the south. She pointed out that with the exception of the illumination the wall signs meet all of the zoning requirements.

Staff recommends external illumination in place of the internal illumination, explaining that fixtures could be installed above the signs, shining down onto the sign and shielded so the light source is not visible. If this condition of approval is accepted, Staff recommends approval of the request.

Petitioner Presentation:

Mary Hohman, 125 Hillside Drive, Greenville, SC, spoke on behalf of the petitioner. She stated a wall sign on the rear of the building will be illuminated and asks that the remaining signs also be allowed illumination. She explained that a large part of Starbucks business is during dark hours and they feel internal illumination is more cost efficient. She advised the lights can be put on a timer so they are not on when the business is closed.

Mr. Holtzinger asked what Starbucks normal business hours are.

Ms. Hohman stated normal business hours are from 5:30 am to 10:00 pm, but pointed out this location has not yet set their business hours.

Mr. Holtzinger asked if there are any Starbucks locations that have externally illuminated signs as recommended here.

Ms. Hohman stated that yes, there are a few rare cases. She went on to say since one illuminated sign has been allowed already they wish to keep the same look with all signs internally illuminated.

Mr. Wellington asked what situations have caused other signs to be lighted externally.

Ms. Hohman stated it's generally because of local ordinances.

Mr. Wellington asked Ms. Yoder why she felt exterior illumination would be better than internal illumination. Ms. Yoder responded that internal illumination causes you to look directly into the light source and there can be more of a glare.

Ms. Biek stated if she lived across the street she wouldn't want to see internally illuminated signs. She pointed out that this area will likely become more and more commercial and the signs can be changed to internally illuminated when that happens.

Ms. Yoder agreed, stating they anticipate this area will become commercial use in the future and when that happens, lighting for the signs can be added.

Mr. Holtzinger asked how bright Starbucks normal signs are.

Ms. Hohman stated their standard is 6,500K which is a very bright, blue light, but they have had cases where they reduce that to a pleasing yellow light. She stated Starbucks' preference is to dim the light instead of having the signs externally illuminated. She stated if there is a standard that Starbucks needs to meet, they will adjust the LED.

Mr. Wellington asked Ms. Yoder if the Commission can dictate the light level that will be permitted.

Ms. Yoder responded yes, but it needs to be something that's easy to review.

Mr. Wellington stated he feels the internal illumination is a better option than external illumination.

Mr. Holtzinger added that a timer should be installed to ensure the lights are off when the store is closed.

Mr. McKee suggested the easiest way to approve these signs is to grant Staff's recommendation for external lighting.

Mr. Wellington argued that approving external illumination would allow them to have any amount of lighting. He stated he prefers dimmer internal lighting. He asked if a motion could be made that allows the Commission to make a decision soon and communicate the internal lighting level to the petitioner.

Attorney Kolbus stated he doesn't know how this would work. He recommended a limit be set on the amount of kilowatt allowed.

Mr. Wellington asked Ms. Hohman if half the proposed illumination would be acceptable.

Ms. Hohman stated that yes the sign would be slightly yellow instead of the typical bright white.

Mr. Wellington recommended the level be set at 3,500K or less.

Ms. Hohman stated 3,500K would be about the lowest they would go.

Action:

A motion was made and seconded, Wellington/Holtzinger, to accept the findings of the Commission and approve 19-01MI to allow internally illuminated wall signs to a maximum of 3,500K or to permit externally illuminated wall signs, with all signs on a timer, illuminated during business hours only. A roll call vote was requested with the following outcome: Wellington, yes; McCorkel, yes; Biek, yes; Holtzinger, yes; McKee, no. The motion failed by a vote of 4-1.

Mr. Wellington asked Mr. McKee what he would like to see.

Mr. McKee stated he doesn't know how much we should regulate business.

Mr. Wellington stated he's trying to make this easy by allowing them to use the sign they always use, with a lighting solution they will approve. He pointed out they do not want the external illumination.

Attorney Kolbus asked Mr. McKee what his motion would be.

Mr. McKee stated he is withdrawing his vote and will vote yes.

The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 5-0.

VI. Audience Items
None

VII. Staff/Board Items

Ms. Yoder advised Commission members there will be a November 19 meeting, noting that she anticipates a large agenda.

Mr. Holtzinger advised that he will not be present for the November meeting.

VIII. *Adjournment* – 4:25 pm Biek/Wellington

Respectfully Submitted:

/s/ Lori Lipscomb

Lori Lipscomb, Recording Secretary

Approved By:

/s/ Connie Garber

Connie Garber, President

/s/ Tom Holtzinger

Tom Holtzinger, Secretary