

**MINUTES
CITY OF DARIEN
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
January 16, 2013**

PRESENT: Beverly Meyer – Chairperson, Ron Kiefer, Don Hickok, John Lind, Louis Mallers, Ray Mielkus, Pauline Oberland, Ken Ritzert, Susan Vonder Heide, Michael Griffith – Senior Planner, Elizabeth Lahey-Secretary

ABSENT: None

Chairperson Meyer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the City Hall – City Council Chambers, Darien, Illinois and declared a quorum present. There was no one in the audience and Chairperson Meyer closed the public hearing at 7:01 p.m.

A. Public Hearing - PZC 2012-16: Text Amendment, Zoning Ordinance: To reduce the required minimum parking width from 10 feet to 9 feet.

Mr. Michael Griffith – Senior Planner presented the staff report. He reported that this request relates to parking stall width. He stated that implementing 10-foot wide stalls on older developments when parking lots are restriped can be difficult. He stated 9-foot wide stalls is the common standard.

Commissioner Hickok stated that it appears that staff is not following the rules.

Mr. Griffith explained what happens to a parking lot that was developed in the 80s and how following Code loses spaces. He referenced Brookhaven Plaza.

Commissioner Hickok questioned the requirements for parking spaces.

Mr. Griffith explained that shopping centers or multi tenants follow 4 parking spaces per 1,000 feet of the total shopping center and that a stand alone restaurant allows for 1 space per three seats.

Commissioner Lind stated that parking lots are repaved based on what was there previously and the owner defends ignorance. He stated that there needs to be rules that can be enforced. He further stated that he would like to see staff negotiate 10 foot and 9 foot stalls where necessary and that the petitioner submit a detailed striping plan for new or existing lots.

Commissioner Hickok stated that he would like to keep 10 ft. stalls and have petitioners justify to the PZC. He stated that making smaller spaces does not make sense when the average car only allows for 14 inches on each side.

Commissioner Vonder Heide stated that 10 ft. stalls creates concern for the city and running the risk of businesses going somewhere else if the other community requires 9 ft.

Commissioner Oberland agreed and stated that 9 ft. stalls creates less hassle and less restriction.

Commissioner Vonder Heide stated having staff negotiate opens the city up to ambiguity and a potential law suit. She stated that parking spaces downtown are no more than 7 or 8 feet and 9 feet is not unreasonable.

Commissioner Mallers agreed that 9 ft. stalls are reasonable.

Commissioner Hickok stated that Darien has 10 ft. stalls to live up to “Darien is a nice place to Live”. He stated that otherwise he would not move into the city. He further stated that it is nice to have 10 ft. stalls.

Commissioner Lind stated that the City can do this correctly with a detailed plan and review.

Mr. Griffith reported that review is already in place and that a permit is required for striping and dimensions. He explained that the issue is that enforcing 10 ft. stalls on a property that was built decades ago puts a burden on the business and that it makes more sense to go with the standard that was there.

Commissioner Vonder Heide questioned if there were any lots with less than 9 ft. stalls.

Mr. Griffith stated that he was not aware of any.

Commissioner Lind noted that he is still angry back when the City Attorney spoke at the Walmart hearing against 10 foot wide stalls.

Commissioner Oberland stated that the issue is not the process but rather enforcement.

Commissioner Hickok stated that tonight we are talking about greed.

Commissioner Oberland stated that the City needs to pick its battles.

Commissioner Kiefer stated that 10 ft. stalls are not needed in the Ordinance. He suggested putting in 9 ft. and asking that staff work with petitioners.

Chairperson Meyer stated that diagonal parking is easier to pull into.

Mr. Griffith reported that the Ordinance allows for angled parking, providing standards, but that it is the developer who decides to go with angled parking.

Commissioner Hickok questioned if double striping is in the Ordinance.

Mr. Griffith reported that there is nothing in the Ordinance about double striping. He stated that 9 ft. is the national standard and 10 ft. is not normal. He further stated that no one is coming in requesting 8.5 ft. stalls.

Commissioner Vonder Heide suggested keeping it unambiguous as possible so that the Code is clear for the developer and that it won't expose the City.

Commissioner Vonder Heide made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Kiefer that based upon the information presented, the request associated with PZC 2012-16 is in conformance with the standards of the Darien City Code and move that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend approval of the petition as presented.

Upon roll call vote, THE MOTION CARRIED 7-2. Commissioner Hickok and Commissioner Ritzert voted NAY.

Mr. Griffith reported that the petition would be forwarded to the Municipal Services Committee on Monday, January 28th at 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Commissioner Hickok made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Kiefer to waive the reading of the December 5, 2012 Meeting Minutes.

Upon voice vote, THE MOTION CARRIED 9-0.

Commissioner Ritzert made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Lind to approve the December 5, 2012 Meeting Minutes.

Upon voice vote, THE MOTION CARRIED 9-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

OLD BUSINESS/PLANNER'S REPORT

None.

NEXT MEETING

Mr. Griffith announced that the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 6, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Commission, Commissioner Hickok made a motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Kiefer to adjourn. Upon voice vote, THE MOTION CARRIED unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

APPROVED:

Elizabeth Lahey
Secretary

Beverly Meyer
Chairman