

**Minutes
Plan Commission Meeting
January 23, 2017
7:00pm**

Chair Busse called the meeting of the City of Monona Plan Commission to order at 7:00 pm.

Present: Chair Alder Jim Busse, Mr. Robert Stein, Mr. Chris Homburg, Alder Brian Holmquist, Ms. Susan Fox and Mr. Dale Ganser

Excused: Mr. Griff Dorschel, Ms. Kathy Thomas

Also present: City Planner & Economic Development Director Sonja Reichertz

Approval of Minutes

A motion by Mr. Stein, seconded by Alder Holmquist, to approve the minutes of January 9, 2017 carried with no corrections.

Appearances - There were no appearances.

Unfinished Business – There was no unfinished business.

New Business

A. Public Hearing on Zoning Permit Request for Reconstruction of the City Hall Parking Lot at 5211 Schluter Road.

Josh Straka, Strand Associates explained the existing pavement is deteriorating and the City needs more parking spots, additional lighting, and improved landscaping. The project will narrow the center median and add 21 new parking stalls for a total of 51. There will be a new handicap stall, and the Police Department will have 3 stalls. The circulation will remain the same as existing. A sidewalk will be added on the Schluter Road end of the parking lot, and a new seating area will be added near the sidewalk. New LED lighting is included, with 6 new 25' light poles. Two flagpoles are proposed (one taller pole is needed to display the American flag over the State flag). The lot will have the same drainage plan as existing, and will sheet outward to the north and south. A stormwater control bio-basin will be added on the north end of the lot. 10 trees are planned for removal. 1,067 landscaping points are proposed (765 required) and 4 canopy trees. There were no other appearances and the public hearing was declared closed.

B. Consideration of Action on Zoning Permit Request for Reconstruction of the City Hall Parking Lot at 5211 Schluter Road.

Planner Reichertz explained this project requires a permit approved by Plan Commission because it is a substantial enlargement and site plan alteration. The Plan Commission should discuss the proposed lighting plan which meets code requirements but will be substantially different from the existing lighting. Reichertz also recommended adding more canopy trees.

Ms. Fox asked for more detail about the lighting but otherwise thinks the plan looks great.

Mr. Homburg agreed more landscaping should be added. He said the area where lighting glare might be the biggest problem is with the two decorative lights because of the glass panels. Mr. Stephany noted that the panels can be removed. Mr. Straka stated that the parking lot fixtures will point down. Mr. Homburg asked why shepherd's hook fixtures were not proposed. Mr. Straka replied that they are 3 times more expensive.

Mr. Stein said canopy trees in the center island may be more beneficial than the proposed single stems. He pointed out the honey locust on the south west corner of the site may be in conflict with a light pole. Mr. Straka said some City Staff requested smaller trees in the center island so they did not block lights or drop leaves, nuts or berries onto cars, but they can be swapped out if desired.

Alder Holmquist asked if the drive aisle width could be reduced. Then the center island width could be maintained to save trees or add a pedestrian path. Mr. Stephany said pedestrians have not had a problem walking through the city hall lot because of the adequate width in the drive aisle, and that plowing the sidewalk would be an unnecessary added workload for public works staff.

Chair Busse suggested the applications look at a different style for the two decorative poles; the carriage light is very traditional, but the building architecture itself is not. Chair Busse asked about pervious asphalt instead of the bio-basin as a stormwater control feature. Mr. Straka said that would be feasible but must more expensive and difficult to maintain.

Mr. Homburg noted that the proposed condition number one for recording of the maintenance agreement is not necessary because the city has to maintain the facilities.

A motion was made by Mr. Homburg, seconded by Mr. Ganser to approve a zoning permit for reconstruction of the City Hall parking lot at 5211 Schluter Road, as proposed, according to Section 13-1-180 of the Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances, with the following conditions of approval:

1. Erosion control and stormwater management permit applications shall be submitted to the City's Public Works Director for review and approval.
2. A variance for a second flag pole at 25' height is approved.
3. If complaints are received regarding glare or intensity of lighting, the Plan Commission reserves the right to require review of the lighting plan and fixtures and require modifications.
4. Additional landscaping as discussed shall be shown on the site plan and submitted to the City Planner for review and approval.

The motion carried.

C. Public Hearing on Zoning Permit Request for Reconstruction of the Public Library Parking Lot at 1000 Nichols Road.

Zach Simpson, Strand Associates explained that his project has been reviewed and designed by the Library Board for over a year and was desired to address safety issues for pedestrians due to icing, providing a safer path for pedestrians to avoid vehicle conflict, and improve drainage. He explained site plan changes including improved grading in pedestrian areas, improved angles for parking, and

an added sidewalk down the middle. A one-way circulation pattern will remain. The lower part of the lot would be steeper and flatten out at the top where pedestrians are walking. The cross slope is improved to help with drainage and reduce ice issues. The Library Board and Council chose to build a completely new boulder wall to replace the existing cast-in place concrete wall with brick face. This option was far cheaper than extending the concrete / brick wall. Six trees will be removed. The landscaping plan shows 643 points while 585 are required. There is a net decrease in impervious surface so TSS removal is not needed.

Alder Doug Wood, 5304 Schluter Road, and former member of the Library Board, spoke in favor of the project. The Board has been trying to address the steepness of the lot and lack of pedestrian facilities for years.

Ken Court, 5308 Healy Lane, spoke regarding the landscaping plan. He lives next to the library. The three red cedars there shield vehicle headlights. He saw one is planned for removal and asks that it be kept.

D. Consideration of Action on Zoning Permit Request for Reconstruction of the Public Library Parking Lot at 1000 Nichols Road.

Planner Reichertz explained this project requires a permit approved by Plan Commission because it is a substantial enlargement and site plan alteration. She said 8 parking stalls are being removed, but the lot still meets the minimum code requirements.

Alder Holmquist asked if the grade change is significant enough to address the issue. He is concerned that parking will be lost in an effort to change the grade, but it really won't be very significant. He likes the idea of the center walkway because with angled parking it is more difficult to see pedestrians walking in the drive aisle.

Mr. Simpson said the red cedar is being removed because it is very close to the sewer.

Mr. Homburg said the proposed 10% at the egress may cause trouble for vehicles; Monona's typical grade standard is 8% for roads. He did not think the pedestrian path will be utilized as much as others might think; people are still going to walk up the drive aisle. He is troubled with the loss of parking stalls. He also spoke against replacing the brick wall. When the library addition was done, there was a lot of discussion about the brick wall and it was designed specifically to bring the two additions together. He asked if the lot can be adjusted to add a foot of space to the north, which would eliminate the need for an extended retaining wall. Then the brick wall cut be shortened and saved. Mr. Homburg asked what will prevent cars from driving over the center sidewalk. Mr. Simpson stated it is a mountable curb to allow plows to go over it. Mr. Homburg said it really appears to be more of a driveway gutter and the curb should be taller to be a truly mountable curb. Mr. Homburg said the project is barely above the minimum landscaping points, and as a city project we should set an example for higher landscaping standards.

Mr. Stein likes the idea of improving pedestrian flow and safety in the middle, but agrees that the curb needs to be more of a buffer for vehicles. He asked if they considered connecting the sidewalk to Healy. Mr. Simpson said it would require a switch back or stairs. Mr. Stein said shortening the brick wall may result in a steep grade, and it may be a tight squeeze to change the lot dimensions. He likes the natural look of the boulder and that there should be more native plantings to match.

There was discussion of the sidewalk link that wraps around the ADA parking stall. Commission members would rather see it lead straight from the center sidewalk to the library entrance.

Chair Busse echoed comments about concerns with the 10% egress, and what appears to be minimally improved grading through the rest of the lot. He asked if there were different surface options to improve traction on the pavement.

The center sidewalk was discussed. Mr. Simpson said it is an 8 foot sidewalk but could be narrowed with bumper overhangs. The minimum they would recommend for width is 5 feet.

A motion was made by Mr. Homburg, seconded by Ms. Fox to approve a zoning permit for reconstruction of the Library parking lot at 1000 Nichols Road, with the following conditions of approval:

1. Erosion control permit applications shall be submitted to the City's Public Works Director for review and approval.
2. Landscaping shall be added as discussed at the Plan Commission meeting, specifically adding more native plantings near the wall, adding a note to the plans to attempt to save the one red cedar noted for removal, and add a new red cedar behind it.
3. The grading and parking and parking lot dimensions shall be reviewed to determine if the brick wall can be saved and eliminate the boulder wall, for review and approval by staff.
4. The center sidewalk shall be revised to included mountable curb and submitted to staff for review and approval.

The motion carried.

Reports of Staff and Commission Members

A. Staff Report Regarding Status of Development Project Proposals.

The next meeting is February 13, 2017. Applications include the proposed redevelopment of the former La Bamba site on Monona Drive for a Summit Credit Union Branch Location.

B. Plan Commission Requests for Information Concerning Development Projects.

Mr. Ganser asked for Riverfront Redevelopment updated. Reichertz reported that CDA meets on 1/24/17 to consider a developer to negotiate with. Galway Companies is a master developer proposing three phases of development. They would start with a mixed-use building on the Riverfront site. Mr. Homburg asked what developers think about the MMSD 60" interceptor line on the site. Reichertz said the City has met with MMSD. Rerouting the line is not an option. Lining it could be possible. There are also planned improvements to the pump station that could impact the interceptor line. More discussion is needed but everyone is aware of the challenge.

Adjournment

A motion by Mr. Stein, seconded by Mr. Ganser, to adjourn was carried. (8:55 pm)

Respectfully submitted by:
Sonja Reichertz, City Planner & Economic Development Director