

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF ROMULUS REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS HELD ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2016**

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Chandler at 7:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call Showing: Sheldon Chandler, Donald Morris, Kenneth Mientkiewicz, Emery Long, and Melvin Zilka

Also in attendance: Carol Maise, City Planner and Christina Wilson, Sr. Secretary

3. Motion by Zilka, supported by Long to approve the agenda as presented.
Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Zilka, Long, Morris, Mientkiewicz and Chandler. Nays – none. Motion Carried.

Agenda

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes

A. Board of Zoning Appeals regular meeting held on March 2, 2016

5. Petitions

A. BZA-2016-001; Larry Vogel

Location: 14645 Hannan (DP #82-80-119-99-0021-720)

Request: To remove the petition from the table and take action on the request. The petitioner has requested that the application for side yard setback and minimum floor area be withdrawn.

B. BZA-2016-002; BK Wahrman

Location: 15525 Wahrman (DP #82-80-130-99-0003-700)

Request: A variance from *Section 8.04, Area, Height, and Placement Requirements and Section 11.12(d)(4), Large Warehouse and Distribution Facilities* of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a 15-foot side yard setback for the northernmost driveway where a 30-foot side yard setback is required.

Project: The applicant is proposing the development of 5 industrial buildings (838,006 sq. ft.) for warehouse and distribution uses.

C. BZA-2016-003; Metro Detroit Signs (Travelodge)

Location: 9095 Wickham (DP #82-80-043-99-0006-706)

Request: 1. Variances from *Section 48-7* of the Sign Ordinance to allow two (2) 96.9-sq. ft. (193.8 sq. ft. total) pylon signs. The Ordinance allows a pylon sign of up to 64 sq. ft. per side (128 sq. ft. total area) in the RC, Regional Center District.
2. Variance from *Section 48-7* of the Sign Ordinance to allow a 39-foot high pylon sign (1-94) and a 28-foot high pylon sign (Wahrman Road). The Ordinance allows pylon signs up to 20 feet in height in the RC, Regional District.

Project: Replacement of the Red Lion signs with Travelodge signs.

6. Old Business

A. BZA-2015-023; WCAA Temporary Batch Plant Update

7. New Business

8. Communications

A. City Planner's Status Report

9. Discussion

10. Adjournment

4. Motion by Mientkiewicz supported by Zilka to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals held on March 2, 2016. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Mientkiewicz, Zilka, Morris, Long and Chandler.

5. Petitions

A. **BZA-2016-001; Larry Vogel, 14645 Hannan, DP #82-80-119-99-0021-720**

Chairman Chandler read into record a Planning Department Staff Report to the BZA.

Project Update:

Per the direction of the BZA at the March 2, 2016 meeting, Mr. Vogel met with Robert McCraight, Director of Public Services and came to a resolution regarding the development of a single-family residence on his property. As explained in Mr. Vogel's correspondence, we understand that he will not be needing the variance requested since he will be constructing a home that complies with the side yard setback and minimum floor area requirements. Since the Building Department has not received a building permit application, it is recommended that the BZA remove the item from the table and DENY the requested variances.

Motion by Zilka supported by Morris to remove BZA-2016-001; Larry Vogel from the table. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Zilka, Morris, Mientkiewicz, Long, and Chandler. Nays – None. Motion Carried.

Motion by Morris supported by Mientkiewicz to deny the variance request for BZA-2016-001; Larry Vogel. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Morris, Mientkiewicz, Zilka, Long and Chandler. Nays – None. Motion Carried.

- B. **BZA-2016-002; BK Wahrman**, 15525 Wahrman, requesting a variance from *Section 8.04, Area, Height, and Placement Requirements and Section 11.12(d)(4), Large Warehouse and Distribution Facilities* of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a 15-foot side yard setback for the northernmost driveway where a 30-foot side yard setback is required.

Conrad Schewe, Core Partners, 30100 Telegraph Rd., Suite #366, Bingham Farms, MI 48025 stepped forward as petitioner on behalf of BK Wahrman.

- Mr. Schewe thanked the board members for hearing this petition this evening.
- Mr. Schewe explained that they have received prior site plan approval from the Planning Commission. The site is very large and the matter at hand is the northwestern portion of the site at the curb cut.
- Mr. Schewe continued to explain that the basis of the issue is that when Wahrman Road was realigned there are two culverts for the Carter Drain that are in that vicinity.
- Mr. Schewe handed the board members an aerial photo view of the site.
- Mr. Schewe commented that their premise for this project all along is to respect the Ordinances and requirements from a Zoning and Engineering perspective but, on this particular case; as you can see in the aerial photo, when they realignment was done there is a culvert that runs north/south, that parallels Wahrman Road. There is also another that comes in from the north/west and heads southeast. With that, there has always been sort of a farmers access on this northern piece of land, which is about 7.5 developable acres there where we've got planned a 5,500 sq. ft. building, roughly. So, when the culverts were placed there and the road was repaved, a curb approach was put in there, which you can see on the plans. The road section there on Wahrman has got a curb. The curb drops for the approach.
- Mr. Schewe explained that this area is the only place you can put a driveway in. The northern portion of the property has a ditch line there that runs along our property line so, this has always been the access and will continue to be so.
- Mr. Schewe stated that they have respected the 30-foot setback all along that northern property line as far as we could. If you look at the blow-up corner section of the plans in your packet you can see the last 75 feet we jog the driveway north and that's where the 15-ft. encroachment comes into play.
- Mr. Schewe also stated that they did not create this condition and it's the only access to the site so, our respectful request is for approval of the variance for the 15 feet for that particular curb cut.

Chairman Chandler closed the petition portion of the meeting and opened for public comment. He asked if anyone wished to speak on the matter to please step forward.

Let the record show an affidavit of first class mail has been shown and is on file.

Daniel Redstone, Redstone Architects, 2709 S Telegraph Rd, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302 stepped forward to speak.

- Mr. Redstone stated that he represents the property to the north of the proposed development.
- Mr. Redstone pointed out his property on the aerial provided by Mr. Schewe.
- Mr. Redstone stated that he has 330 feet that borders the development.
- Mr. Redstone explained that he was pretty excited to see this kind of development come to Romulus at the south side of the airport.
- Mr. Redstone stated that he fully supports this project and that he attended tonight's meeting to take a look at where the variance is being requested.
- Mr. Redstone asked Mr. Schewe for a copy of the map and variance request.
- Mr. Redstone commented that this was the first time he has seen the site plan and that he sits on the BZA for West Bloomfield and that this request is relatively minor.
- Mr. Redstone urged the BZA to accept the variance request, approve it and let them get on with their development.
- Mr. Redstone thanked the board members for their time.

Mr. Chandler closed the public portion of the meeting and opened it up for questions or comments from the board members.

- Mr. Chandler asked Mr. Schewe if building #1 was going to be part of Phase 1.
- Mr. Schewe stated that there was kind of three different products here, building 1 is what we call an industrial building. The west side of it is where our offices will be located at grade entrances and there will be truck docks on the rear. Buildings 2, 3 and 4 are large warehouse buildings that will have truck docks on both the east and the west side. So, they are kind of two different products. Our intent is to do building 1 and 2, Phase 1 A & B. We have them laid out as 5 distinct phases, just so we can have a little flexibility. Our intent is to do building 1 and 2 at the same time. Building 5 we would mark it as a build-to-suit. We do a lot of that for automotive tenants so, we would expect to do a build-to-suit industrial building.
- Mr. Chandler asked Mr. Schewe if the building on the north side if that is where the side yard setback variance request is located.
- Mr. Schewe replied that was correct. He pointed out on the aerial map the 5.5 acres where it was needed.
- Mr. Schewe commented that although not impossible but, very difficult to cross the Carter Drain there, they have chosen not to impact any flood plains or anything of that nature.
- Mr. Morris stated that was a good idea.
- Mr. Chandler commented that he has a County drain in the back of his property so, he understands what it is like.
- Mr. Chandler asked Mr. Schewe if the northernmost building on the site plan will be the first building built.
- Mr. Schewe stated that it will not, the building in question is building #5.
- Mr. Schewe remarked that they hope to do building 1 and 2. They are in for engineering approval for mass grading for the whole southern part of the site, as well as the first 2 buildings. The intent is to start the land development and construction of the first 2 buildings and the 5th building will be marked for build-to-suit and build a specific building for a specific tenant.
- Mr. Chandler asked Mr. Schewe when they will start clearing the land.
- Mr. Schewe replied that they are in for engineering approvals now and they are hoping early to mid-June.
- Mr. Zilka asked Mr. Schewe if they have clearance from the FAA.

- Mr. Schewe replied that he believed the answer to be yes. They had to file for FAA approval but, he thinks it's handled through M-Dot. M-Dot has a division of aeronautics and we just received through the M-Dot Division of Aeronautics a tall structure permit which came in an email last week. The buildings themselves are maybe only 40-feet high. We will have to notify them when we are building them because there will be cranes involved, but the buildings fall within the limits, whatever they are.
- Mr. Chandler noted that the buildings are right in line with one of the runways at the airport.

Motion by Morris supported by Zilka to approve **BZA-2016-002, BK Wahrman** for a variance to Section 8.04 and Section 11.12(d)(4) to allow a 15-foot side yard setback for the northernmost driveway where a 30-foot setback is required for location 15525 Wahrman Road.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Morris, Zilka, Mientkiewicz, Long and Chandler. Nays – None. Motion Carried.

- C. **BZA-2016-003; Metro Detroit Signs (Travelodge)**, 9095 Wickham requesting a variance from *Section 48-7* of the Sign Ordinance to allow two (2) 96.9-sq. ft. (193.8 sq. ft. total) pylon signs and a variance from *Section 48-7* of the Sign Ordinance to allow a 39-foot high pylon sign and a 28-foot high pylon sign.

Kevin Deters, Metro Detroit Signs, 23544 Hoover Rd, Warren, MI 48089, stepped forward as petitioner on behalf of Travelodge.

- Mr. Deters stated that the Red Lion is becoming a Travelodge and we would like to have done face changes to the existing signs.
- Mr. Deters explained that when the hotel went from Red Roof Inn to Red Lion a few years ago we did face changes to the existing cabinets. We would like to do that here ideally however, unlike Red Roof and Red Lion the previous two have stacked copy but, Travelodge is one word horizontally. The existing cabinets at the size that they are constructed cannot support the word "Travelodge" going from left to right in any sort of copy that you would be able to see.
- Mr. Deters stated that they are requesting new cabinets on the existing poles. The cabinets are smaller in size area wise than what is currently there, which was granted a variance in 1988. Also because these new cabinets are horizontal instead of vertical they are shorter in terms of overall height. The poles will remain the same but, the signs themselves are going to be a little shorter. So, this remains consistent with the variance that they have for larger and taller signs but, it also would bring the new signage more into conformity to the current ordinance.
- Mr. Deters stated that Carol Maise from the Planning Department put a report together explaining everything and I'm sure you all have read it, so I'm not going to repeat it nor am I going to disagree with it either because she recommended approval based on these conditions.
- Mr. Deters asked to go on record saying that he agrees with the City Planners suggestion of approval for the requested variances.

Chairman Chandler closed the petition portion of the meeting and opened it for questions or comments from the public. He asked if anyone wished to speak on the matter to please step forward.

Let the record show an affidavit of first class mail has been shown and is on file.

- The owner of the Travelodge, Mr. Namou stepped forward to speak. He noted that he is fine with what Mr. Deters said and that it will look much nicer. They are replacing the rusted cabinets that have been there since 1998 and they are also getting LED lighting.

Mr. Chandler closed the public portion of the meeting and opened it up for questions or comments from the board members.

- Mr. Chandler asked Ms. Maise if this was basically a renewal of the variance granted in 1998.
- Ms. Maise replied that oftentimes when there is a change to lessen a variance, it's something that can be done administratively but the way the Sign Ordinance is written substituting a non-conforming sign with another one is not permitted without approval from the BZA. They are reducing the nonconformity by making it smaller and bringing it into closer compliance with the ordinance requirements.
- Mr. Morris asked Ms. Maise if that they were basically tidying this up.
- Ms. Maise replied they are replacing them since the tenant is changing.
- Mr. Morris stated that it made a lot of sense to him.
- Mr. Chandler agreed that it would be an improvement there.
- Mr. Mientkiewicz commented that there was a note in the BZA packet about landscaping around the I-94 sign and asked Mr. Deters if there is anything there now.
- Mr. Deters replied that he hadn't stood at the base of that sign and wasn't sure.
- Ms. Maise stated that's why staff recommended maybe some tall shrubs or something to soften the pole a little bit, since it's out there and pretty visible.
- Mr. Deters replied that it sounded fine to him and asked Mr. Namou if that would be ok.
- Mr. Namou agreed to dress the sign up with landscaping similar to the Wyndham Gardens sign. We will do it right away.

Motion by Mientkiewicz supported by Long to approve **BZA-2016-003; Metro Detroit Signs (Travelodge)** for a variance to Section 48-7 of the Sign Ordinance for two (2) 96.9 sq. ft. (193.8 sq. ft. total) pylon signs and a variance from Section 48-7 of the Sign Ordinance to allow a 39-foot high pylon sign and a 28-foot high pylon sign. Approval is conditioned upon:

1. Supplemental landscaping to be provided around the base of the pole sign along I-94.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Mientkiewicz, Long, Morris, Zilka and Chandler. Nays – None. Motion Carried.

6. Old Business

A. WCAA Temporary Batch Plant Update

- Ms. Maise reminded the board members that the temporary batch plant was approved conditioned upon administrative approval once a contractor was established. She noted that there is quite a bit of activity out there as they have been working since Friday. Staff met with their team last week to review the proposed schedule and operations. Reports have been provided to the board and she advised that additional information will be provided to the city. There was concern about the traffic and proposed truck routes, particularly the intersection of Eureka & Wayne. They were directed to coordinate this with Wayne County.

- Ms. Maise stated that she had received a call from Bob McCraight that trucks coming from the airport were not covered and not in compliance. Mr. McCraight jumped right on it and made contact with the right people.
 - Mr. Chandler asked Ms. Maise if the trucks will be using I-94 and Vining exist as well as the I-275 entrances.
 - Mr. Zilka commented that it does show on the map that they will be using those ramps.
 - Ms. Maise stated that the trucks are heading back coming up Vining and Goddard east to the plant on Inkster.

 - Mr. Morris commented that we knew from the beginning when it was discussed that when redoing a runway, they are going to be busy.
 - Mr. Morris also commented that he was at the gate area recently and there were a lot of trucks coming from the runway area, it's very busy. It is what it is.
 - Ms. Maise agreed and stated that the Building and DPW departments are right there and probably the most impacted. So, they are right on top of things.
 - Mr. Morris stated that the trucks and the WCAA need to make sure they are following the Ordinance and he has faith that they will.
 - Mr. Chandler noted that with the DPW and Building Department right there, they will be watching.
 - Mr. Chandler asked Ms. Maise if they anticipate being done by September.
 - Ms. Maise replied that it will be a quick project.
 - Mr. Zilka commented that in the literature provide in their packets it states that they will be operating 24 hours a day. His worry is the trucks and their lack of concern for other motorists.
 - Ms. Maise suggested that if the board members have any concerns that they should let her or Bob McCraight know. We have contacts that we are in constant communication with and we will notify them if there are any problems.
 - Mr. Zilka asked Ms. Maise if during the meeting with the WCAA there was any discussion of placing signs up at the intersections.
 - Ms. Maise replied that it was a suggestion and that the WCAA is working on that now. Theresa Samosiak from the WCAA emailed today and stated that they were submitting addition information to OHM and that there may be a suggestion for signage. It is an on-going thing and WCAA needed to get things going to see what kind of problems could arise.
 - Mr. Zilka stated that he believes that signage will help with the traffic because if drivers know that there is heavy traffic they will use another route.
 - Mr. Morris reiterated that it is going to be busy.
 - Mr. Mientkiewicz suggested that the quicker they can get this done the better for everyone.
 - Mr. Zilka stated that the contractor doing this project us the same contractor that did I-96 and they know what they are doing.
 - Mr. Morris jokingly commented that they know what a bonus is.
7. New Business
- Mr. Zilka, the board members and Ms. Maise congratulated Mr. Chandler for being selected as the person of the year.
8. Communications
- A. City Planner's Status Report – Ms. Maise referenced her status report and asked if the members had any questions.

9. Discussion

- Mr. Morris asked Ms. Maise the status of Jimmy John's at Wayne and Goddard.
- Ms. Maise replied that it is currently under engineering review.
- Mr. Morris stated that he noticed people in and out of the building recently.
- Mr. Long commented that he spoke with Nabil, owner of the property, and that it is moving along.
- Mr. Zilka asked Ms. Maise what the status was of the property at Pennsylvania and Wahrman.
- Ms. Maise replied that a revised plan came in today for Logos Logistics. The Planning Commission granted approval conditioned upon a few items. They will need a variance and the BZA will be seeing them soon.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Zilka supported by Morris to adjourn at 7:35 p.m. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Zilka, Morris, Long, Mientkiewicz and Chandler. Nays – None. Motion Carried.



Donald Morris, Secretary
Zoning Board of Appeals