

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF ROMULUS REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS HELD ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2015**

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Chandler at 7:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call Showing: Emery Long, Donald Morris, Melvin Zilka, Kenneth Mientkiewicz and Sheldon Chandler
Also in attendance: Carol Maise, City Planner
3. Motion by Zilka supported Long to approve the agenda as presented. Roll Call Vote: Zilka, Long, Mientkiewicz, Morris, and Chandler. Nays – none. Motion Carried.

Agenda

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes
 - A. Approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals held on July 1, 2015.
5. Petitions
 - A. **BZA-2015-013; Double D Welding**
Location: **28510 Hildebrandt**
DP #80-050-99-0009-700
Request: A variance to *Section 48-7* of the Sign Ordinance to allow a 50-sq. ft pylon sign. The Ordinance allows a pylon sign of up to 40 sq. ft. per side.
Project: New pylon sign
 - B. **BZA-2015-014; Storage of America**
Location: **11285 Middlebelt**
DP #80-094-99-0018-000
Request:
 1. A variance from *Section 11.12(a)(3)* of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a 31.16-foot front setback; a front setback of 60 feet is required.
 2. A variance from *Section 11.12(a)(3)* of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a 15- foot side yard setback from a residential use; a setback of 75 feet is required.
 3. A variance from *Section 14.02(b)(4)* to allow 9-foot wide parking spaces; 10- foot wide spaces are required.
Project: Development of an 8-building, 41,550-sq. ft. mini-warehouse, self-storage facility

6. Old Business
 7. Communications
 - A. City Planner's Status Report
 8. Discussion
 9. Adjournment
4. Motion by Mientkiewicz supported by Long to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals held on July 1, 2015. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Mientkiweicz, Long, Morris, Zilka, and Chandler. Nays – None. Motion Carried.
5. Petitions
- A. BZA-2015-013; **Double D Welding; 28510 Hildebrandt**. A variance to *Section 48-7 of the Sign Ordinance* is requested to allow a 50-square foot pylon sign. The Ordinance allows a pylon sign of up to 40-square foot per side (80 square foot total area). DP# 80-050-99-0009-700

Douglas Fountain of Double D Welding stepped forward as the petitioner.

- Mr. Fountain explained that before they were aware of needing a permit to place the new sign in front of the building, his son Justin had created the sign. They are a fabrication shop and once the permit was pulled they were informed it was 10 feet to big.
- Mr. Fountain passed out a picture of the sign with landscaping to each of the board members.
- Mr. Chandler questioned if the sign was up.
- Mr. Fountain stated no it is not.
- Mr. Mientkiewicz noted that he went to the building to look at the sign inside.
- Mr. Fountain commented that he is happy to be a part of the Romulus business community and it has been a pleasure to work with the different city departments as everyone has been so helpful.
- Mr. Chandler stated the building looks very nice.
- Mr. Fountain appreciated the compliment.
- Mr. Mientkiewicz said he looked at some of the other signs up on Hildebrandt they seem larger than this sign.
- Mr. Chandler asked if the board members had any questions.
- Mr. Zilka asked Mr. Fountain if he was aware of the three (3) conditions that are called for in the Planner's report.
- Mr. Fountain stated he is aware of the conditions.
- Ms. Maise questioned if a site plan was submitted to the Building Department for review with the occupancy permit.
- Mr. Fountain stated yes he has submitted the site plan and there are only a couple of issues to be done including repairing the eve draws and tuck mortar on the brick work, before they can receive the full C of O.
- Mr. Zilka questioned the standing water on the driveway.
- Mr. Fountain replied there is a drain and a culvert and he believes when the road was redone there was something not properly done.

- Mr. Fountain stated he was wondering who to call to see if this is something the city is responsible for.
- Ms. Maise stated she would pass this on to the DPW.

Chairman Chandler closed the petition portion of the meeting.

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

Chairman Chandler asked if anyone wished to speak on the matter to please step forward and no one came forward.

Chairman Chandler closed the public comment portion of the meeting and opened it up to discussion from the board members.

Motion by Zilka, supported by Morris to approve **BZA-2015-013; for Double D Welding at 28510 Hildebrandt** to allow 50-square foot sign subject to:

1. All conditions of Table 48-7 for pylon signs must be met including:
 - a. The sign shall be setback a minimum of 15 feet from the property line.
 - b. The height of the sign shall not exceed 15 feet.
2. If required for the re-occupancy, the site plan must be submitted to the Planning Department for ARC review and approval prior to issuance of the sign permit.
3. Landscaping shall be provided around the bottom of the sign.

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

- B. **BZA-2015-014; Storage of America; 11285 Middlebelt.** A front yard setback variance from *Section 11.12(a)(3)* of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a 31.16-foot front setback; a front setback of 60 feet is required. A variance from *Section 11.12(a)(3)* of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a 15-foot side yard setback from a residential use; a setback of 75 feet is required. A variance from *Section 14.02 (b)(4)* is requested to allow the parking space width to be reduced from 10 feet to 9 feet. DP# 82-094-99-0018-000.

Alan Sawatha, engineer on the project came forward on behalf of Storage of America.

- Mr. Sawatha explained the need for the variances. He stated this is a unique property as they lost a lot of land due to the drain that runs the length of the south side of the property. Having to put a buffer against the drain and the detention pond and the buffer surrounding that also used developable property. Meeting the required setbacks would make most of the land undevelopable; the amount of buildings to be built wouldn't make financial sense.
- Mr. Sawatha stated the property to the north is vacant and not zoned residential. With regard to the front yard, instead of meeting the setback from the street they would be willing to increase the amount of landscaping and buffer the view from the street instead of the 60 foot setback.
- Ms. Maise noted that the third variance for parking width setback was picked up in the review after the public notice went out and that is why they didn't have that listed. As Mr. Sawatha has explained there are some challenges with this site and they did have to give up some property because of the drain and the required buffers and increased setbacks based on the use.

- Mr. Sawatha stated there are not a lot of visitors; it is rare to have 2 cars at the same time.
- Mr. Chandler asked how many employees are there.
- Ms. Maise noted it is an unmanned property there is no employees on site and she asked Mr. Sawatha to explain how the kiosk works.
- Mr. Sawatha said the kiosk system has a camera and a monitor with a 2-way video communication with a full time 24-hour customer service center that will connect the customer to a live person that walks them through the process of renting a unit. The kiosk will dispense a lock and a code to enter the gated area.
- Mr. Sawatha stated there is a maintenance person that visits on a daily basis to inspect the property and to ensure the units that are being rented are the ones being used.
- Mr. Chandler questioned the security of property.
- Mr. Sawatha replied that the property is fenced and has an electronic sliding gate. The customers receive a code for the main gate to enter the property.
- Mr. Sawatha stated the company is using this on a few facilities mostly in the mid-west, the closest facility using the same system is in Novi.
- Mr. Morris commented that we have entered the 21st century.
- Mr. Chandler stated he is used to the old way of having a caretaker house with an occupant running the storage yard and facility.
- Ms. Maise noted that they would have a lot of cameras to keep an eye on things.
- Mr. Sawatha stated with the tightness of the amount of buildings on the site, the company would rather have more units to rent instead of an office. This is why they have chosen to use this system, as well as it is proving to be very reliable.
- Ms. Maise added that the Planning Commission granted conditional approval subject to Board of Zoning Appeals approval and the site plan being revised which can be handled administratively.
- Mr. Zilka stated that one of the members from the Planning Commission went to visit the site in Novi and didn't see any problems with it.
- Ms. Maise included that it will be a nice development with the additional landscaping and masonry material on the buildings and the ornamental fence. With the buffer around the drain it creates a great deal of screening.
- Mr. Chandler asked how soon they plan to start construction.
- Mr. Sawatha stated as soon as they can pull permits.
- Mr. Chandler questioned the notification that was sent out to the airport and how that affects them and he wanted to confirm they were notified.
- Ms. Maise stated yes they were notified since the abutting property is owned by the airport. She continued that the city has a very good line of communication with the Airport Authority and when there are things of interest, such a variances they follow-up however on this one they did not.
- Mr. Sawatha added that he spoke with someone at the airport in the permits office regarding the detention pond and as long as there was no permanent water, there were no problems with that as far as the height of the buildings.

Chairman Chandler closed the petition portion of the meeting.

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

Chairman Chandler asked if anyone wished to speak on the matter to please step forward. No one came forward.

Chairman Chandler closed the public comment portion of the meeting and opened it up to discussion from the board members.

Motion by Mientkiewicz, supported by Zilka to approve the following variances for BZA-2015-014; Storage of America, 11285 Middlebelt conditioned upon a revised site plan:

1. A front yard setback variance from *Section 11.12(a)(3)* of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a 31.16-foot front setback; a front setback of 60 feet is required.
2. A variance from *Section 11.12(a)(3)* of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a 15-foot side yard setback from a residential use; a setback of 75 feet is required.
3. A variance from *Section 14.02(b)(4)* to allow the parking space width to be reduced from 10 feet to 9 feet.

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

6. Old Business - None

7. Communications – None

A. City Planner’s Status Report

- Ms. Maise stated that there will be a meeting in September.

B. Discussion

- Mr. Morris questioned if there were any news on the outlets.
- Ms. Maise stated that they are awaiting outside agency approval from FEMA and the FHA.

C. Adjournment

Motion by Mientkiewicz supported by Long to adjourn at 7:24 p.m. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Mientkiewicz, Long, Morris, Zilka and Chandler. Nays – None. Motion Carried.



Donald Morris, Secretary
Zoning Board of Appeals