

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
MONDAY, November 2, 2015
MINUTES

The Rochelle Planning and Zoning Commission met at 6:00 p.m. November 2, 2015 in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 420 N. 6th Street, Rochelle, IL 61068. Present on Roll Call were Board members: McNeilly, Shaw-Dickey, Snyder-Chura, Johns, Colwill, and Chairman Thiele. Absent: Carson and Huddleston. Also present were Kip Countryman, Michelle Pease and Michelle Knight. There was a quorum of six present.

Minutes: McNeilly moved and seconded by Colwill, **“I move minutes of the August 3, 2015 Planning and Zoning meeting be approved.”** Motion passed by voice vote without dissent.

Public Commentary: None.

Commissioner Comments: None

Business Items:

1. Case PZC 9-15, Special Use Permit for 1310 N. 7th Street, Keith Scott. The applicant owns approximately 0.86 acres at the address above which is zoned B-2 Commercial Highway. Currently, it is improved with a former restaurant (Pizza Hut) which has since been redeveloped at another location. The property fronts Illinois Route 251 North on the East side, and North 8th St on the west side. The petitioner is seeking a special use for outdoor storage. The petitioner plans on using the former restaurant as a similar use, and the additional parking area not required for the restaurant, to be used in conjunction with his towing business. The area will contain perimeter fencing, pervious paving, and the storage of vehicles consistent with a towing business. The property is currently zoned B-2, Highway Commercial, and “Storage Outdoor” is a permitted use in this zoning district if a special use permit is issued.

Staff recommends perimeter screening for outdoor storage that meets the requirement for outdoor storage found in Section 110-347. Such storage shall be effectively screened from adjacent public streets by a solid fence, compact hedge or similar opaque landscaped element. Such screening shall be placed along property lines or, in the case of screening, along a street, at least 15 feet from the street right of way or adjacent property line. A louvered fence shall be considered solid if it blocks direct vision. The petitioner is proposing a solid wood fence 6 feet tall on the East and West of the property facing a street, running north and south, and a louvered chain link fence on the side lot running East and West. The petitioner is proposing prairie grass in the green space on the south and north property line. Staff is asking for a 20 foot Utility Easement on the North and South Property lines, 20 feet wide running from the East property line, to the West. Staff is also asking that the vehicles being stored will be on the lot no longer than 30 days, at such time the vehicle will be removed, to allow for another vehicle.

Staff has some concerns that using a portion of the property to store operating and non-operating vehicles would be detrimental to surrounding property values or will impede the normal development of surrounding properties. On the one hand, the storage of operating and non-operating vehicles is more suited to the City’s Industrial districts. In particular, the City’s zoning code allows for auto wrecking in the I-2 and I-3 areas, and the proposed use at least partially fits the definition of Auto Wrecking. On the other hand, the property is surrounded by car lots, both new and used, as well as car servicing stations, and indoor storage. In addition, the definition of Auto Wrecking seems to suggest that the only use is for non-operating vehicles, and would include allowing the storage of vehicle parts, tires, etc. Motion made by Snyder-Chura and seconded by Colwill, **“I move the planning and zoning commission recess into a public hearing for the case PZC 9-15.”** A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: McNeilly, Shaw Dickey, Snyder-Chura, Johns, Colwill, and Chairman Thiele. Nays: none. The Planning and Zoning commissioners had much discussion on the proposed special use. Colwill stated that he has already had citizens complaining to him about the storage of such cars and that they can attract rodents and other problems. The entire commission had concerns over the appearance of such car storage and the effect it could have on surrounding properties. As a condition of the special use, the City is requiring that cars be removed within 30 days. Mike Meyers with Sawicki’s spoke about their concern of the appearance of such storage and that Sawicki have recently invested a large amount

of money into their property, which is a corridor to the City. Mr. Meyers also stated that if a car is towed into Sawicki, it is a long process and takes at least 90 days to get the title to the car to be able to remove it. This then would create more work on City staff to monitor that cars be moved within the 30 days, per the special use requirement, which could be extremely difficult if it takes up to 90 days or more to receive the title to the car. Motion made by Colwill and seconded by Shaw-Dickey, "**I move the planning and zoning commission return to open session.**" Motion passed by voice vote without dissent. Motion made by Colwill and seconded by Snyder-Chura, "**I move the planning and zoning commission recommends to the city Council to Disapprove the Special Use Permit and for Case PZC-9-15.**" A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: McNeilly, Shaw Dickey, Snyder-Chura, Johns, Colwill, and Chairman Thiele. Nays: none. Motion passed 6-0.

Discussion Items:

Building Codes. Kip Countryman explained that there is a joint co-op. of about 13 local bodies that have been working towards making a regional building code for the surrounding areas. The main idea of the co-op. is to be uniform throughout the area and to be using more updated codes. A final draft for Rockford was going before their City Council this evening. Rochelle is working on the draft to go before Rochelle City Council.

Kip shared some updates about the Rochelle Foods expansion, which allows the City to apply for a grant to finish S. Main St. He also shared about the progression of the Rochelle Community Hospital, Bright Farms, and that the Dollar Tree has opened.

Diane requested a discussion item for next month's meeting in regards to the light from the greenhouse. Vicki suggested adding a discussion item in regards to a color palette for the City, as other Cities have this type of ordinance in place.

Adjournment: Motion made by Colwill, seconded by McNeilly "**I move the planning and zoning commission meeting be adjourned**". The Planning and Zoning Commission adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Michelle Knight
Administrative Assistant, City of Rochelle