MEETING MINUTES
OF THE
PLAN COMMISSION
OCTOBER 3, 2019 – 7:00 P.M.
LINCOLNWOOD VILLAGE HALL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6900 NORTH LINCOLN AVENUE
LINCOLNWOOD, ILLINOIS 60712

MEMBERS PRESENT:
Chairman Mark Yohanna
Sue Auerbach
Steven Jakubowski
Adi Kohn
Don Sampen

MEMBERS ABSENT:
Henry Novoselsky
Anthony Pauletto

STAFF PRESENT:
Steve McNellis, Community Development Director
Kathryn Kasprzyk, Community Development Coordinator

I. Call to Order
Chairman Yohanna noted a quorum of five members and called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of Minutes

Motion to recommend approval of the September 4, 2019 Plan Commission Minutes was made by Commissioner Sampen and seconded by Commissioner Jakubowski.

Aye: Sampen, Jakubowski, Kohn, and Yohanna
Abstained: Auerbach
Nay: None
Motion Approved: 4-0

VI. Case #PC-06-18: Zoning Code Text Amendment — Sign Regulations for Large-Scale Developments, Freestanding Sign Location, Portable Sign Requirements, and Temporary Signage

Chairman Yohanna announced Case #PC-06-18 for consideration of a Village Board Referral of Zoning Code Text Amendments proposed to modify the permissibility and requirements for certain signage including: 1) permitting Electronic Message Center signs, with specific regulations, for
properties and/or developments deemed to be “large-scale”; 2) amending existing regulations related to Temporary Signs for Special Events and Grand Openings; 3) permitting Temporary Sign Coverings/ Panels on Freestanding Signs; 4) amending required setbacks for Temporary and Permanent Freestanding Signs; and 5) amending existing regulations related to specific design limitations for Portable Signs.

Development Director McNellis reviewed the background and staff direction from the June 5, 2019 Plan Commission meeting. He noted that the discussion this evening, as has been the case for the last few meetings, relates only to Electronic Message Center (EMC) signs, as the review of Temporary Signs concluded earlier this year. Direction to the staff regarding EMC signs included preparing a listing of the number of properties in the Village that are greater than five acres; a survey of comparison communities related to the permitted height and area of EMC signs, illumination and brightness, permissibility of animation and minimum transition times; as well as acceptable zoning districts within Lincolnwood; and examples of local EMC signs.

Items previously agreed upon by the Plan Commission included the following:

- **Definition**—“A digital sign, located on the premises of the business(es) it advertises, capable of displaying words, symbols, figures, or images that can be electronically or mechanically changed by remote or automatic means and which advertises goods and services that are available at that location”;
- Permit EMC signs only on free-standing monument signs and require a “Special Sign” approval; and
- Illuminated signs shall be turned off between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. unless engaged in the operation of its business with employees on the premises, consistent with existing Code requirements for illuminated signs.

There was discussion whether or not static signs should be exempt from Special Sign approval. There was also discussion regarding the proposed definition language. It was suggested by Commissioner Kohn to omit the words “can be” after “images that” and change the word “changed” to “change”.

Development Director McNellis reviewed in detail the previously-stated items that required further research and follow up.

**Depiction of Properties Greater than Five Acres in Size**—If the threshold is seven acres in size as being permissible for EMC, instead of five, there would be approximately seven properties in total where these signs would be permitted.

**Height, Area, and Coverage in Comparison Communities**—Staff provided a summary of five comparison communities. These communities included Skokie, Niles, Lincolnshire, Des Plaines, and Glenview. These communities generally permit EMC signs that are taller and have larger sign areas than what Lincolnwood is proposing. Examples of EMC signs were shown for review and comparison.

**Sign Illumination/Brightness, Animation, and Transition Time**—Staff noted that animation is not permitted in four of the five communities and, with the exception of Glenview, the transition time varies from ten to twenty seconds. To measure brightness levels, Staff provided reasons for utilizing footcandles versus Nits, as referenced from the International Sign Association (ISA).
Footcandles account for ambient light, whereas Nits measures only the amount of illumination from the sign. The ISA recommends brightness levels no greater than 0.3 footcandles over ambient light.

Proposed Zoning District Permissibility – Staff believes EMC signs should be prohibited in residential areas, with the addition of restrictions for EMC signs facing residential areas. EMC signs should be permitted only through the Special Sign review process in the B-1, B-2, B-3, O and S Zoning Districts, as well as the Retail Overlay area of the Light Manufacturing & Business Zoning District (MB).

Staff noted the seven properties, greater than seven acres, where EMC signs would be permitted, if that minimum lot size was adopted. If the threshold was lowered to five acres, four additional properties would be allowed EMC signs. Staff noted that to date the Lincolnwood Town Center is the only property that has shown interest. Commissioner Sampen stated five acres, not seven, would be a more appropriate size. After considerable discussion, there was a general consensus that seven acres should be the standard.

Staff’s recommendations for approval include the following:

- Define Electronic Message Centers (EMC) as “A digital sign, located on the premises of the business(es) it advertises, capable of displaying words, symbols, figures, or images that can be electronically or mechanically changed by remote or automatic means, and which advertises goods and services that are available at that location”;
- EMC signs are permitted only on monument-type ground signs;
- EMC signs shall comply with Zoning Code Section 11.07(6) related to hours of operation;
- Monument signs for multi-tenant properties, incorporating EMC, shall be permitted to be up to 18 feet in height and total sign area up to 100-square feet;
- EMC signs on multi-tenant properties are permitted to be no greater than 50% of the total permitted area, up to a maximum of 50-square feet;
- EMC signs on single-tenant properties are permitted to be no greater in size than 40-square feet;
- Prohibit animated or moving images;
- Static images must remain visible for a period of no less than ten seconds before transitioning to a new static image;
- The illumination/brightness level of EMC signs may not exceed 0.3 footcandles over ambient lighting conditions, as measured at distances noted in the attached table (Attachment #4);
- All EMC signs shall be equipped with a sensor or other device that automatically determines the ambient illumination and is programmed to automatically dim to a reading that is no greater than 0.3 footcandles over ambient lighting;
- EMC signs are considered Special Signs and permitted only in the B-1, B-2, B-3, O Office, S Schools, and the Retail Overlay in the M-B Zoning District, and only by approval through Section 11.10(4) of the Zoning Code;
- EMC signs are permitted only on lots seven acres or larger in size. Properties that are under common ownership, contiguous to one another, and of the same or similar use may be considered a single lot for purposes of EMC permissibility; and
- EMC signs must face away from and may not direct light onto any residentially zoned lot or lot improved with a residential structure.
Chairman Yohanna asked if there was anyone from the audience who would like to address the Plan Commission. Let the record state no one came forward. With no further discussion, Chairman Yohanna requested a motion.

**Motion to recommend approval** of a Text Amendment to Article XI, Signs, of the Village Zoning Code to modify the permissibility of Electronic Signs, in accordance with staff’s recommendations, including changing the definition of electronic message center signs consistent with Commissioner Kohn’s recommendation, and adopting a minimum lot size of seven acres for properties that would permit EMC signs, was made by Commissioner Jakubowski and seconded by Commissioner Auerbach.

Aye: Jakubowski, Auerbach, Kohn, Sampen, and Yohanna
Nay: None
Motion Approved: 5-0

V. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Plan Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, November 6, 2019.

VI. **Public Comment**

Chairman Yohanna asked if there was anyone from the audience who would like to address the Plan Commission. Let the record state no one came forward.

VII. **Adjournment**

**Motion to recommend adjournment** was made by Commissioner Sampen and seconded by Commissioner Kohn. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Aye: Sampen, Kohn, Auerbach, Jakubowski, and Yohanna
Nay: None
Motion Approved: 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Kathryn Kasprzyk
Community Development Coordinator