

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL WORK SESSION
OF THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN
OF THE CITY OF SUNSET HILLS MISSOURI
HELD ON JANUARY 25, 2022

BE IT REMEMBERED that that the Board of Aldermen of the City of Sunset Hills, Missouri met in special work session via Zoom on Tuesday January 25, 2022. The work session convened at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting began with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Patricia Fribis	-Mayor
Joe Stewart	-Alderman Ward
Ann McMunn	-Alderman Ward I
Christine Lieber	-Alderman Ward II
Cathy Friedmann	-Alderman Ward III
Randal Epperson	-Alderman Ward III
Thompson Price	-Alderman Ward IV
Fred Daues	-Alderman Ward IV
Brittany Gillett	-City Administrator
Bryson Baker	-City Engineer
Lynn Sprick	-City Planner
Jim Hetlage	-City Attorney

Absent : Casey Wong -Alderman Ward II

Planning & Zoning Chairman Terry Beiter was in attendance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Alderman McMunn made a motion to approve the agenda. Alderman Daues seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Gary Vincent of 9456 Sunny Creek Lane read his statement in reference to the City posting all plan submissions to the City website as well as any findings by staff in reference to them. Mr. Vincent expressed concern with the proposed UDO. He asked that the City maintain a code to fit the City.

Mayor Fribis stated she was concerned with the proposed changes. She explained there were several town hall meetings for residents to give their input on the new UDO. She stated the hired consultant, Houseal Lavigne, the majority of the P & Z Commission and staff did not agree with the proposed changes from the Board. She urged the Board to consider what was best for the residents and explained that taking out Planned Development reduced the amount of control the City had. She stated she asked Mr. Baker if he knew of any other cities that had limited PD.

Mr. Baker explained most cities have some combination of planned developments. He stated they are all catered to the specific city. Some cities had combined Pd districts and some had only residential or only commercial. Mr. Baker explained the City was still doing commercial Planned Development, but had removed the residential.

Alderman Friedmann asked for clarification on the previous statement he made on Planned Developments. She stated the understanding was it was currently drafted for commercial only, but petitioners could still request a text amendment for residential developments.

Mr. Baker confirmed that yes that was correct.

UDO WORK SESSION:

Mr. Baker explained they were looking for any changes wanted for any part of the UDO and that sign code was pulled out as a separate item. He also explained a resident had a presentation on the proposed sign code.

Alderman Friedmann stated she submitted a list of revisions to the Board for review.

Alderman Friedmann made a motion to adopt the revisions she had submitted.

Alderman McMunn seconded the motion.

There was brief discussion on whether or not to approve all 18 revisions individually or approve them together.

Ms. Gillett asked if the Board felt they had ample time to review the revisions, they confirmed they did.

Mr. Baker explained after reviewing all of the changes they appeared to be easily made. He stated he felt it was fine to adopt them and then have them reviewed. He stated he did not anticipate any issues with any of the changes, however if there were, they would bring them up at the next meeting.

Mr. Terry Beiter, Chairman of P&Z expressed he felt the consultant should be participating in the work session He spoke on considering city wide interests with regard to the UDO, not personal interests.

There was heated discussion between Alderman Daues and Chairman Beiter in reference to Mr. Vincent's interests in the UDO.

Mayor Fribis called a point of order.

Alderman Friedmann stated Mr. Vincent had worked on the UDO for over three years. She stated he was indispensable and an asset to the City.

Alderman Price asked why Housel Lavigne was not represented at the work session. Mr. Baker explained they did not request them for the work session. They felt the discussion items could be forwarded to the consultant for review.

Ms. Gillett stated it was quite expensive to have them attend the meetings and due to them working through the Planned Development piece, staff felt comfortable continuing on without them at this particular point.

Chairman Beiter made a comment on the discussion. Alderman Epperson called a point of order.

Alderman Price continued with his question. He asked if it would have been better to have met jointly with the P&Z Commission to discuss.

Mr. Baker explained the Board could decide what changes they wanted and it could go back to P&Z once everything had been reviewed.

Mayor Fribis stated Alderman Price made a good point and inquired about having a joint work session.

Ms. Gillett stated they could hold a joint work session once P&Z made their recommendation.

Mayor Fribis stated she felt that was a good idea.

Ms., Gillett reminded the Board the UDO had to go back to P&Z due to the number of changes made. She explained P&Z would make their recommendations and it would come back to the Board for a formal Public Hearing and first and second readings. She asked the Board when they would like to have the joint session.

Chairman Beiter suggested P&Z make their recommendation and then the BOA decide whether or not they wanted to have the joint session at that point.

The Mayor asked if that was agreeable to everyone, all present agreed.

The Board voted unanimously to pass the motion to accept the 18 changes proposed by Alderman Friedmann.

UDO SIGN SECTION:

Mr. Bill Behrens of 8 Collar Court gave a presentation to the Board on the proposed sign ordinance. Mr. Behrens stated he had several concerns with numerous unintended consequences caused by the proposed ordinance.

He explained he felt the new ordinance was much too restrictive and could impede the City retail businesses. Mr. Behrens stated the proposed maximum sign allowance was significantly smaller than the existing size as well as smaller than allowed sizes in surrounding cities. He stated he felt the retailers needed as much help competing with on-line retailers as possible. He explained decreasing their sign sizes put them at a disadvantage and could potentially accelerate retail closures, thereby devaluing commercial real-estate, and decreasing tax revenue.

Mr. Behrens reviewed the restriction of pole signs and how that could hurt specific types of businesses in the City. He also reviewed the sign restrictions for multi-tenant buildings, height restrictions on monument signs, and required materials for them. He further explained the new ordinance would make numerous existing signs non-conforming, including the City's existing signage.

Mr. Behrens thanked the Board and asked them to please review the items so the retailers could be supported.

There was lengthy discussion on the proposed sign ordinance. Mr. Baker explained current signage would not have to be removed, with the exception of pole signs. Existing signs, as well as existing City signage, was conforming until it was removed and replaced, at which time it would need to comply with the new proposed code.

Alderman McMunn asked what the purpose of changing the existing sign code was.

Mr. Baker explained it was part of updating the code and the Board at that time wanted smaller, cleaner signs.

Additional discussion was had on the sign allowance reduction from 10% to 5% maximum as it applied to stand alone businesses. Alderman Epperson stated he did not agree with the proposed changes.

Mr. Baker explained staff was not tied to the changes and it was up to the BOA to make the changes they wanted to see and it would go back to P&Z for review.

Alderman Epperson made a motion to change the stand-alone maximum back to 10%.

Alderman Daues seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Lengthy discussion was had on wall signs and monument signs, their materials and maximum height of 8 feet.

Mr. Baker addressed concerns over tenant listings on the signs. He explained monument signs could have multiple tenants listed., however wall signs on buildings could not be multi-tenant.

Alderman Epperson asked if faux stone was allowed on monument signs. Mr. Baker answered he believed so. Alderman Daues then explained that faux stone was not a material the city wanted to allow as it damaged very easily if ran into. Ms. Sprick explained that all monument signs required permanent landscaping around them, including evergreens and shrubbery.

Additional discussion was had on the image the City wanted conveyed through the allowed signage.

Alderman Stewart asked what the City was trying to accomplish with the proposed changes.

Mayor Fribis explained the City was looking for a stricter sign code at that time and to remove pole signs. Alderman McMunn commented if the City was getting rid of pole signs than the building signs should be larger to balance out the changes.

Mr. Baker explained the size percentage allowed in the new ordinance was the same for wall signs.

Alderman McMunn inquired into the existing pole sign in front of the La Quinta, and why it was blacked out.

Mr. Baker explained that the pole sign was shared with Denny's and when the hotel changed owners and had to update the sign, they were no longer allowed to locate on the pole sign as a new business, since pole signs are not currently allowed.

Alderman McMunn asked if there was anything in code to allow them to be placed back on the sign instead of a blacked-out section on the sign. Mr. Baker explained it was a unique situation and he would look into it.

Alderman Epperson asked Mr. Baker to speak with the City Attorney to see if anything was able to be done about the situation. Alderman Price then stated the City would have to be careful limiting advertising for new businesses.

Alderman Daues stated he agreed with Alderman Epperson and Alderman Price, and that the City needed to update signage as well.

Mayor Fribis explained that the Special Projects Committee had acquired red granite for the sign replacements, but that the project became cost prohibitive and could hopefully be addressed in the near future.

Alderman Lieber asked about the Special Projects Committee and who were the members as it was not on the City committee list.

Mayor Fribis informed Alderman Lieber that it was an informal committee not appointed by the Board that had not met for several years and she would be happy to provide a list to Alderman Lieber.

Mr. Behrens stated he would provide the Board with a list of items he felt should be given a second look in the proposed new sign ordinance. The Board stated they would appreciate that. They also asked to be provided with a copy of the Power Point presentation used.

Ms. Gillett stated staff would send that with the list from Mr. Behrens. Ms. Gillett asked if the Board was in favor of a follow up work session after the information from Mr. Behrens or if they were comfortable sending it to P&Z.

Alderman Stewart asked if staff could put Mr. Behrens comments into a red line version they could review, and then have a workshop. The Board agreed. Ms. Gillett stated they should be able to review in February.

ADJOURNMENT:

Alderman Epperson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderman Stewart seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Deputy City Clerk
Lori Stone