

**CITY OF OAK FOREST**

**PLANNING / ZONING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, April 21, 2021**

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The Planning & Zoning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. with Roll Call.

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Dave Kerr  
Commissioner Wayne Schroeder  
Commissioner Chuck Wolf  
Commissioner Nick Zembruski  
Commissioner Michael Ziak  
Chairman Jim Stuewe  
Staff Member Paul Ruane

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Ken Keeler  
Commissioner Sal Mosqueda

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1. ZC #21-005 Captain Jack's Beverages – Monument Sign Height Variation: **PUBLIC HEARING**  
- The applicant requests review and recommendation of approval of a variation request to allow a sign beyond the height allowance of a monument sign permit and such other and further zoning relief as may be required in the C3 – Central Business District at 15211 S. Cicero Avenue.

Staff Member Ruane led the presentation of the case and reviewed staff report.

Mr. Zembruski asked how tall the existing pole sign is now.

Mr. Ruane responded roughly 25 -30 ft. tall.

Mr. Kerr asked why is the petitioner asking for the sign to be 2 feet taller.

Mr. Ruane said that they were hesitant on the EMC sign being so low to the ground that it wouldn't be visible. Originally they came to us with a plan to place the EMC sign on top of the primary sign. But according to the sign code, we not only don't want the EMC sign to be as big as the primary sign, as well as we want the primary sign to be on top of the EMC sign or accessory sign as it would be thought of.

Mr. Wolf asked what is the allowed width of the monument signs, as the height only allows 10 ft.

Mr. Ruane confirmed the height is 10ft. but the width is not expressly given. The sign is allowed a maximum of 10 ft. in height and an overall 100 SF of signage.

Mr. Wolf asked if the base was figured into the signage SF area.

Mr. Ruane let him know that the base is not part of the signage SF area.

Mr. Ziak asked if in the past we granted Blarney Stone a similar height variation allowance.

Mr. Ruane confirmed that they were saying similarly that they wouldn't be able to view the EMC from its current allowed height.

Mr. Ruane read off the responses to the standards provided from the petitioner.

Mr. Wolf I would prefer the two feet in height in comparison to the two feet in width.

Mr. Ruane displayed the current pole sign used by their store in Worth, IL.

Mr. Zembruski asked if they would have the sign similar to the one in worth with the nautical wheel on top.

Mr. Ruane responded that is not what they proposed as it would count towards the overall height of the sign.

**Chairman Stuewe requested a motion to adopt PZC Resolution 21-08 recommending approval of a monument sign height variation request in the C3 – Central Business District at 15211 Cicero Avenue.**

Mr. Kerr motioned

Mr. Ziak seconded

<b>AYES</b>	<b>NAYS</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>
<b>Mr. Kerr</b>		
<b>Mr. Ziak</b>		
<b>Mr. Schroeder</b>		
<b>Mr. Wolf</b>		
<b>Mr. Zembruski</b>		
<b>Chairman Stuewe</b>		

Motion to approve the variation request at 15211 Cicero Avenue, carried, 6-0-0 with 2 absent.

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2. ZC #21-007 Refuse Containers and Enclosures – Text Amendment: PUBLIC HEARING - The applicant requests review and recommendation of the proposed text amendments to the following provisions of the City of Oak Forest Zoning Ordinance: Section 9-107 (I), Refuse Containers; Outdoor Storage and adding Section 9-107 (J), Outdoor Storage.

Staff Member Ruane led the presentation of the case and reviewed staff report.

Mr. Wolf asked if they are allowed on the side yard of the building.

Mr. Ruane confirmed yes they are allowed, only on an interior side yard though.

Mr. Wolf asked about the shipping container at 151<sup>st</sup> Street and Cicero Avenue in front of the building.

Mr. Ruane answered that they have a temporary allowance to place the container there. The restoration project allows for the temporary placement of the container.

Mr. Forbes confirmed as well, they have one unit left for the old tattoo parlor. State Farm and Discount Smokes have been completed. Once they are done with their construction that will be gone.

Mr. Ruane let the commission know that the outdoor storage isn't limited to just outdoor storage containers but also general outdoor storage. Such as auto uses that allow for storage in the rear.

Mr. Wolf asked as we look into what we have done for refuse enclosures, and what we are doing for outdoor storage, they are related. We are basically taking the screening requirements of dumpsters from before and applying them to outdoor storage. Why doesn't it maintain the same standard.

Mr. Ruane answered that outdoor storage and containers are something that we don't want to see permanent. The businesses intend to keep them permanently, but if we brick these areas in then it will never go away. At least this way when someone new takes over a building they can easily remove a fenced in area.

Mr. Wolf asked if we are allowing these because of the times? Why are we allowing these storage containers?

Mr. Ruane confirmed that the direction from the businesses was that they need more space and short of leaving the City to find a larger location they need additional storage space. Direction was further verified from City Council that they would like to work with the businesses and find a precise way of allowing the use of storage containers.

Mr. Forbes added that we are getting a hand full of requests from businesses, usually their building isn't large enough and they need more room. This offers the business the least expensive option. Instead of putting an addition on their building or moving to a larger store. So this is something that we talked to City Council about and they would like for us to regulate it. Put some rules that will allow these to be permanent but you have to screen them, there is only certain places you can put them. So we need to make rules to regulate them.

Chairman Stuewe asked for clarification of storage between the two text amendments on the agenda tonight.

Mr. Ruane said the ZC 21-007 is in reference to the specific screening requirements similar to refuse containers. ZC 21-008 is in reference to the specific requirements of the shipping containers similar to garages and sheds.

**Chairman Stuewe requested a motion to adopt PZC Resolution 21-09 recommending approval of a Text Amendment to amend Refuse Container and Outdoor Storage requirements.**

Mr. Zembruski motioned

Mr. Ziak seconded

<b>AYES</b>	<b>NAYS</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>
<b>Mr. Zembruski</b>		
<b>Mr. Ziak</b>		
<b>Mr. Kerr</b>		
<b>Mr. Schroeder</b>		
<b>Mr. Wolf</b>		
<b>Chairman Stuewe</b>		

Motion to approve the text amendment to Section 9-107 (I-J), carried, 6-0-0 with 2 absent.

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3. ZC #21-008 Outdoor Storage Containers – Text Amendment: **PUBLIC HEARING** - The applicant requests review and recommendation of the proposed text amendments to the following provision of the City of Oak Forest Zoning Ordinance: Section 9-102 (D.2.c), Outdoor Storage Containers.

Staff Member Ruane led the presentation of the case and reviewed staff report.

Chairman Stuewe asked if Steve Becker from Performance Masters’ plan to place storage containers in the rear of his property for maintenance garages, are we going to regulate that?

Mr. Ruane responded that we still would require them to meet the design review requirements. They would need to clad the container in brick and adding required features of the design review.

Mr. Forbes added that there are two different uses, what Mr. Ruane is talking about now is just for a storage box. What Mr. Stuewe is referring to is a permanent structure. You can make it into a building, by wielding them together and adding heat plumbing and electric, that is different request. If you are going to turn it into an actual building that is habitable space it will require coming into compliance with all standards of the building code.

Mr. Forbes asked correct me if I am wrong Mr. Ruane but this is only for commercial lots. There is already something in the City Code but its only for residential lots. You are allowed to have these on a residential lot for 30 days.

Mr. Ruane responded that this will be only for the commercial districts not industrial districts. In the Industrial Districts I believe they didn’t need them to be screened from each other.

Mr. Wolf asked if the containers can be stacked on top of each other.

Mr. Ruane answered no as the can only be a maximum of 8.5 ft. tall.

Mr. Wolf asked if there is requirements for commercial lot coverage or is it nothing.

Mr. Ruane confirmed that there is no maximum lot coverage for commercial properties. However, they usually find themselves with limitations on parking preventing you from filling the lot with shipping containers.

Mr. Forbes asked if Mr. Ruane could pull up a photo of the storage containers behind Eagle Gun Range. This is located behind the commercial business on 159<sup>th</sup> Street. In the back they have these five shipping containers. Everyone in those condominiums and apartments behind them have to look at that.

Mr. Wolf added that they shouldn't be there.

Mr. Forbes confirmed correct, but City Council said they were okay with that as long as they are properly screened and we have rules regulating that. We have placed a requirements to regulate the containers because City Council wants to allow it.

Mr. Wolf said Outside of the painting of the container to look like the building, these individuals that have their backyards facing this shouldn't see any of those boxes. So if you want to put in a bunch of evergreens and make sure it is screened totally I would be fine with that. But if you are just saying painting and solid fencing is okay.

Mr. Wolf asked right now they would be in violation of the code, correct?

Mr. Ruane confirmed that is correct.

Chairman Stuewe asked if they are being ticketed.

Mr. Ruane answered not currently, this amendment would tell us how to handle this request.

Mr. Wolf asked if this amendment is allowed Eagle would have to remove three of the five containers.

Mr. Ruane confirmed that is correct.

Mr. Forbes added that by it not existing in the code currently that means that they are not allowed to have those containers. So we went to administration and City Council to ask if they want us to get rid of all these or how would you like us to handle these. When we went to City Council they said they were limited quantity, height, and screening. They wanted to allow these containers.

**Chairman Stuewe requested a motion to adopt PZC Resolution 21-10 recommending approval of a Text Amendment to amend Outdoor Storage Container requirements.**

Mr. Zembruski motioned

Mr. Schroeder seconded

<b>AYES</b>	<b>NAYS</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>
<b>Mr. Zembruski</b>	Mr. Wolf	
<b>Mr. Schroeder</b>		
<b>Mr. Kerr</b>		
<b>Mr. Ziak</b>		
<b>Chairman Stuewe</b>		

Motion to approve the text amendment to Section 9-102 (D.2.c), carried, 5-1-0 with 2 absent.

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Chairman Stuewe requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 7, 2021.

Mr. Kerr motioned

Mr. Wolf seconded

Motion to approve carried by voice vote.

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Chairman Stuewe requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Kerr motioned

Mr. Schroeder seconded

Meeting Adjourned at 8:08 p.m.



CHAIRMAN JAMES STUEWE