

## **PLANNING COMMISSION**

**January 9, 2014**

The City of Portage Planning Commission meeting of January 9, 2014 was called to order by Chairman Welch at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. One citizen was in attendance.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Bill Patterson, Dave Felicijan, Betty Schimmel, Wayne Stoffer, Paul Welch and Allan Reiff.

### **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None.

### **MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

Miko Dargitz, Brian Somers and Rick Bosch

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Christopher Forth, Deputy Director of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Services; Michael West, Assistant City Planner; and Randy Brown, City Attorney.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Chairman Welch led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Chairman Welch referred the Commission to the December 19, 2013 meeting minutes contained in the agenda packet. A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Reiff, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was approved 6-0.

### **SITE/FINAL PLANS:**

None

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

1. Special Land Use Permit: Paragon Auto Sales, 7215 South Westnedge Avenue. Mr. West summarized the staff report dated January 2, 2014 regarding the request by Mr. Irfan Gill, on behalf of Paragon Auto Sales, to establish an automobile dealership at 7215 South Westnedge Avenue. Mr. West indicated the site is improved with a 3,072 square foot building and 44-car parking lot and approximately 2,000 square feet of the building was currently occupied by Paragon Leather. Mr. West stated the applicant was proposing to establish the auto sales office in the remaining approximate 1,072 square feet of the building and display vehicles for sale in 15 existing parking spaces located along the southern portion of the site. Mr. West indicated that no exterior site improvements or modifications were proposed with the automobile dealership.

Mr. Irfan Gill, owner/operator of Paragon Leather and Paragon Auto Sales was present to support the application. No citizens were present to speak during the public hearing. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Reiff, to approve the Special Land Use Permit for Paragon Auto Sales, 7215 South Westnedge Avenue. The motion was approved 6-0.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. City of Portage 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration – December Passbook Drawing. Commissioner Felicijan conducted the December Passbook drawing and Valeri Vuk was selected the winner of a radio controlled helicopter from Hobby Sports.

7:07 p.m. - The Commission took a short recess.

7:12 p.m. - The Commission reconvened the meeting in City Hall Conference Room No. 2

Attorney Brown indicated the Planning Commission meeting has been adjourned to Conference No. 2 to discuss proposed amendments to the sign regulations and a copy of the agenda stating such has been posted on the door of Council Chambers informing any interested citizen.

As a follow-up to discussions during the December 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, Mr. Forth distributed to the Commission a table that identified job distribution by sector in Portage from 1980 to 2011.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Ordinance Amendment #14-A, Sign Regulations: Mr. Forth summarized the January 3, 2014 staff report and draft ordinance language regarding proposed amendments to the sign regulations. Mr. Forth indicated the proposed amendments are a result of comments received during the Business Sign Forum, as well as input received from the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and City Council Ad Hoc Sign Committee. Mr. Forth discussed each proposed amendment and the rationale for the change: 1) Section 42-541, Definitions (sign, sign face and electronic message display); 2) Section 42-542(H), Removal of Signs and Section 42-1284, Removal of Hazardous Signs; 3) Section 42-542(I), Electronic or Mechanical Sign Elements (sign transitions, glare and/or brightness); 4) Section 42-542(J), General Requirements; 5) Section 42-543, Signs Permitted in All Districts (public event signs, new business, change in business or going out of business, temporary signs, temporary pedestrian oriented signs, banner signs, holiday decorations, substitution clause); 6) Section 42-544, Nonconforming Signs; 7) Section 42-522, B-2, B-3 and CPD districts); 8) Section 42-132, Special Events; and 9) Section 42-138, Murals.

The Commission and staff discussed various aspects of the proposed amendments. Commissioner Reiff asked why the terms “dissolve” and “fade” have been removed from the Definition section, however, referenced throughout other sections of the ordinance. Attorney Brown and Mr. Forth stated this was done for consistency since other terms referenced in conjunction with Electronic Message Display regulations are also not defined. There being no further discussion, Mr. Forth indicated the public hearing for further consideration of Ordinance Amendment #14-A, Sign Regulations has been scheduled for the January 23, 2014 meeting.

### **STATEMENT OF CITIZENS:**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher T. Forth, AICP  
Deputy Director of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Services