

Board of Zoning Appeals  
January 19, 2017  
Minutes

Vice Chairman Semans called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM. The following members were present: Dr. William Semans, Mr. Kevin Zeiher, Mr. John Mears, Chairman John Feick and Mr. Walt Matthews. Also present were Ms. Casey Sparks from the Planning Department, Mr. Justin Harris from the Law Department and Debi Eversole as Clerk from Community Development.

There were four voting members present. Chairman Feick stated he would be abstaining from tonight's vote.

Mr. Mears moved to approve the minutes from the November 17, 2016 meeting. Mr. Feick seconded the motion. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Vice Chairman Semans swore in audience and staff members that wished to speak for or against the agenda item.

Ms. Sparks stated that The Boeckling Historic Properties, LLC had submitted an application for a variance of 15' to the required front yard setback for a monument sign to be located at **614 Columbus Ave.** The applicant is proposing a 0' front yard setback for a sign. As the board is aware the applicant submitted an application in November and at that time the Board denied the variance request and moved to approve a variance of 7' from the front property line. The applicant indicated that there are existing utility lines along the property which would not permit a sign on either side of the property. Staff recommendation does not change from the previous application. Staff recognizes that this sign will be an improvement to this site and will provide adequate signage for the proposed use. Staff does believe that it would be difficult for a sign to be located 7' from the front property line and the location approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals would restrict visibility. Staff would recommend approval of the 15' variance for a sign located at 614 Columbus Ave.

Mr. Zeiher asked if Staff had a chance to check traffic patterns entering and leaving the property to see if there would be any obstruction from the north or south. Ms. Sparks stated that she did drive to the property and entered and exited the driveway to see if there were obstructions. She did not see any.

Thomas Bodner with Boeckling Properties stated that he is the applicant. His intent is to restore the building and keep the use as it has been, a banquet hall with office space above. He has been approved through Economic Development for a grant for signage. He then received approval through Landmarks Commission for his repairs and signage. He has worked with Planning Staff on the proposed signage. He stated that the current sign is unattractive and he is trying to improve the appearance of the property. Further, he stated that he does not believe that the approved 7' variance would provide proper visibility. There are utilities to the north and south that would prevent him from placing the sign in those areas. He is also concerned for pedestrian safety if the sign is not placed correctly.

Gene Goff, 610 Columbus Ave wondered if there would be removable letters similar to the existing sign. He also wondered if an agreement is not made, could the existing sign have to

stay. Ms. Sparks stated that there is documentation of approval for the existing sign and it could stay if an agreement is not made.

Rosanne Bodner, 4211 Maple Ave, Castalia stated that the restoration of the Boeckling Building would be a wonderful addition to the economy in Sandusky. She stated that the monument sign would make the building look more professional and will not pose a safety hazard for traffic or pedestrians.

Loretta Riddle, tenant of the building stated that she is in support of the effort and money that Mr. Bodner has put into the building. She sees the work and progress being done every day.

Vice Chairman Semans asked if there was anyone in the audience that wished to speak against the application. There was no one present to speak against the application.

Mr. Harris indicated that the Planning Department had received a letter from Mrs. Jean T.S. Feick stating her opposition with the request.

Vice Chairman Semans asked for clarification of Section 1111.05 of the Codified Ordinances, which was referenced in the letter. Mr. Harris explained that Staff believed that there was a substantial difference in the application from the standpoint that Mr. Bodner offered testimony, and attempted to honor the two wishes of the Commission from the last meeting. He did survey the areas that the Commission suggested and brought back his findings.

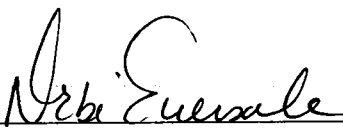
Mr. Bodner asked to address item #2 of Mrs. Feick's letter. He stated that he had applied for the building/sign permit prior to starting construction. When he checked back, he was told that the plan review was approved and he needed paperwork back from the planning office and all indications beforehand were that there would not be an issue with his request. He then started the work but stopped the work after the last meeting. It was never his intention to bypass the process.


Mr. Zeiher moved to approve the application for the 15' variance to the required setback for placement of a sign. Mr. Matthews seconded the motion. Chairman Feick abstained from the vote and the motion carried with a vote of 4/0.

As of this date, there are no applications for a February meeting.

Vice Chairman Semans adjourned the meeting at 5:05PM.

Approved:

  
Debi Eversole, Clerk

  
Dr. William Semans, Vice Chairman