

**City of Oconomowoc
Architectural Commission Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2020**

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Members Present: Kurt Schrang (5:01 pm), Kent Johnson, Jeremy Flint, Anne Krogstad and Paul Schultz

Staff Present: Jason Gallo, Kristi Weber and Chris Dehnert

2. Approve the August 12, 2020 Minutes: Motion by Flint to approve the August 12, 2020 minutes; second by Schultz. Motion carried 4-0.

3. The Marketplace – Consider/approve a Master Sign Plan for 130, 132 & 134 E. Wisconsin Avenue:

Weber explained members previously approved an update to this building's façade in June, and this request is for approval of a master sign plan as the building will contain multiple tenants. The main building sign was also approved in June. Weber clarified the 2 proposed wall signs on the E. Wisconsin Avenue façade will be 30" H x 80" W black aluminum and lit by a gooseneck light. There will also be 2 wall signs on the rear elevation to be located above each doorway. Sign E is proposed to be 32" x 32" while sign D is shown as 32" x 15". Staff suggested that both signs on this elevation be 32" x 32". The applicant is also requesting an off-premises sign to be located on the west wall of the Children's Gallery. The property owner of this location has agreed to the sign as long as the building owner of the Marketplace takes care of it. Weber noted any additional signage by the applicant, which he wants to be very simple, will be regulated under the City's sign code. The owner/applicant, Jason Dvorak, said he is very pleased with how everything has turned out on the front and rear elevations of the building. Members noted approval of off-premises signs can be tricky; it's an issue if the off-premises sign is on a front elevation but this sign is acceptable because it will be located in an alley; and the off-premises sign improves the aesthetic view of the façade it will be on. Members also suggested the area should be visible to these businesses if this is the only signage they will have. Dvorak noted he is planning sconce lighting on either side of the signage which will illuminate it but not shine directly on it. He added these businesses arrange private meetings with their clients so there should be limited foot traffic at night. Motion by Krogstad to approve the Master Sign Plan for the Marketplace at 130, 132 & 134 E. Wisconsin Avenue with the recommendations of Planning staff for updating text as presented; the elevation on the lake side may be unlit; and approve the off-premises sign as presented; second by Flint. Motion carried 5-0.

4. St. Paul's Lutheran Church– Consider/approve a Digital Reader Board at 210 E. Pleasant Street:

Weber explained this request is for a digital reader board to be placed in an existing monument sign located a block off the downtown. The sign currently has changeable copy, is internally lit and faces Wisconsin Avenue. Staff reviewed the request and agreed the proposed sign looks good but the issue is with the proximity of the reader board to the downtown. The City's sign code states that signs in the downtown are not to be internally lit. They agreed, however, there is a reader board in the downtown that reflects time/temperature which was approved. Staff recommends denial of the request based on the location of the proposed reader board. Weber noted staff has received multiple complaints on other church reader boards which are located across from a residential neighborhood due to their brightness. Gallo said they have concerns with the precedence this request for a reader board in the downtown could set. He explained the types of complaints they have received, and how they have worked with owners to reduce the brightness of their reader boards. Pat Borgman and Glenn Leidel spoke on behalf of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, noting the history and their goal to update the sign and bring it up to date in order to provide information to the congregation and other members of the community. They agreed to work with the City on any issues that may arise; reduce light levels if necessary; or set hours when it would be allowed to be illuminated. They noted the current sign is illuminated with 2 light bulbs; there are other internally illuminated signs on Wisconsin Avenue; and there have been no safety issues at the intersection of St. Paul and Pleasant Streets. The reader board will be 2' x 3' and they feel most other reader boards are much larger and gawdy. They desire

something small and unobtrusive to get information out to their congregation on weekend and evening activities. Zach Wenger of Lemberg Electric explained the proposed reader board unit is a very smart system; has an automatic eye to know when to dim down or can be turned down manually; the sign will shut off if it malfunctions; light from the reader board will not shine off to the sides; and the reader board cannot livestream events. Members comments included: don't believe a reader board at this location is a problem because it will be located off Wisconsin Avenue, is not directly adjacent to single-family housing, is located next to a high rise with businesses on the first floor and it can be controlled manually; questioned if it is the Church's intent to show videos on the reader board; they have a problem with showing videos or photos on the reader board; concerned with propaganda on the reader board; likes showing photos on the reader board; and likes the sign but content on a reader board is always the issue. Leidel suggested the members could approve the reader board and provide that no pictures are to be displayed on it. He added if the church wanted to show pictures on the reader board at some point in the future, then maybe it could be allowed as a trial. Leidel concluded the church is willing to have the reader board illuminated from 6 am to 10 pm and do whatever else the Architectural members want. Gallo read Section 17.609(4)(a) of the City Zoning Code regarding approval of signs by the Architectural members. He noted each illuminated sign that has been approved in the downtown has history as to why it was approved, and then each request that comes after is addressed case by case though the sign code does not permit illuminated signs in the downtown at all. Motion by Krogstad to approve a digital reader board for St. Paul's Lutheran Church at 210 E. Pleasant Street subject to the following restrictions: no fixed imagery but should only be letters; the digital reader board may only be illuminated from 6 am to 10 pm; the light level of the sign is to be approved by City staff after installation; and any changes to the reader board are to be approved by City staff; second by Schrang. Motion carried 5-0.

5. Reports and comments from the City Planner: None.

6. Reports and comments from the Architectural Commissioners: None.

7. Adjourn: Motion by Schrang to adjourn at 5:53 pm; second by Schultz. Motion carried 5-0.

Chris Dehnert, Deputy City Clerk