

# City of Zion

## Planning and Zoning Commission

### Meeting Minutes

REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
Thursday, May 2, 2024 7:00pm  
ZION CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

#### I. Opening Protocol

- Call to Order  
Chairman Riley called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.
- Attendance  
Present: Commissioners Champine, Heffelman, Johnson, Massey, Quinn and Chairman Riley. A quorum was present.  
  
Also present: Building and Zoning Director Richard Ianson and City Attorney Erin Kiernat
- Approval of meeting minutes from April 4, 2024  
It was motioned by Commissioner Champine and seconded by Commissioner Quinn to approve the meeting minutes with the following changes:
  - Page 1, Changing Petitioner to Petitioners
  - Page 2, Change Commissioner Riley to Chairman RileyVote: Commissioners Champine, aye; Heffelman, aye; Johnson, aye; Massey, aye; Quinn, aye; Chairman Riley, aye. Motion passes.

#### II. Public Hearings

At this time, Chairman Riley swore in all audience members that would be speaking towards the dockets.

##### 1. **Docket 24-Z-11**

**Petitioner:** Kenneth Biedron

**Request:** Seeking a Variance from Section 102-206 of the Zion Municipal Code for continued of the property located at 1901 Sheridan Road as a single family residence as legal non-conforming.

Mark Shaw, attorney for the Petitioner, stated that his client needs to move to Wisconsin for a new job. His client has lived at the property in question, located at 1901 Sheridan Road, for 23 years. When his client tried to sell the property, it came up that the home was not actually zoned residential. Several potential buyers backed out because they were concerned the property's status would change after purchase.

Chairman Riley asked if the potential buyers would still be interested in purchasing the property if the zoning variance was approved. Mr. Shaw said yes.

Chairman Riley asked whether the home had been inspected and was still in good condition. Director Ianson said the home appears to be in good attention.

Commissioner Heffelman asked what would happen if the future owner wanted to sell the property. Attorney Kiernat said the future owner would have to repeat this process.

After reviewing the Findings of Facts, it was motioned by Commissioner Champine and seconded by Commissioner Heffelman to recommend approval of the Petitioner's request. **Vote: Commissioners Champine, aye; Heffelman, aye; Johnson, aye; Massey, aye; Quinn, aye; Chairman Riley, aye. Motion passes.**

## **2. Docket 24-Z-12**

**Petitioner:** North Shore Sign

**Request:** Seeking a Special Use Permit to install a 12 foot, 11 inch monument sign at the property located at 1634 W. 23rd St.

Matt Laska, Petitioner, said he is requesting a special use permit to increase the height of an electronic message board for a high school campus. The main reasons for increasing the height were to match the style and height of the sign at the other high school campus. Increasing the height will also provide more security by creating more distance between the bottom of the video board and the ground to prevent vandalism. Mr. Laska also mentioned the sign would have programmable settings to control the brightness, timing of messages, and duration of messages depending on daylight or nighttime conditions.

After reviewing the Findings of Facts, it was motioned by Commissioner Johnson and seconded by Commissioner Massey to recommend approval of the Petitioner's application. **Vote: Commissioners Champine, abstain; Heffelman, aye; Johnson, aye; Massey, aye; Quinn, aye; Chairman Riley, aye. Motion passes.**

## **3. Docket 24-Z-13**

**Petitioner:** Billy McKinney

**Request:** Seeking a Variance from Section 102-32 (c) of the Zion Municipal Code to exceed the maximum lot coverage allowed by 1400 square feet for a new garage and driveway at the property located at 2821 Bethel Blvd.

Commissioner Champine asked if there would be any negative impact of approving the variance request to increase the lot coverage for a new garage and driveway. Director Ianson responded that he didn't see there

being a negative impact given that the property lot size is 19,000 square feet and the garage would be in the back of the property.

After reviewing the Findings of Facts, it was motioned by Commissioner Champine and seconded by Commissioner Quinn to recommend approval of the Petitioner's application. **Vote: Commissioners Champine, aye; Heffelman, aye; Johnson, aye; Massey, aye; Quinn, aye; Chairman Riley, aye. Motion passes.**

#### **4. Docket 24-Z-14**

**Petitioner:** Luis & Frances Rivera

**Request:** Seeking a Variance from Section 102-152(2)(a)(4) of the Zion Municipal Code to allow a swimming pool in the side yard at the property located at 3244 Gideon Avenue.

Commissioner Johnson asked if there was a fence surrounding the whole house, or if the applicant was just putting a fence around the side where the pool would be located. Frances Rivera, the Petitioner, said the fence will be around the side where the pool will be located. Commissioner Johnson asked if the pool would be easily accessible for people just walking by. Ms. Rivera said no.

After reviewing the Findings of Facts, it was motioned by Commissioner Champine and seconded by Commissioner Johnson to approve the Petitioner's application. **Vote: Commissioners Champine, aye; Heffelman, aye; Johnson, aye; Massey, aye; Quinn, aye; Chairman Riley, aye. Motion passes.**

### **III. Old Business**

There was none.

### **IV. Docket Updates**

Director Ianson stated that Council tabled Dockets 24-Z8 & 24-Z-9 until June 4<sup>th</sup> pending more information from applicant. Docket 24-Z-10 was approved.

### **V. New Business**

Presentation: Greenbay Road Community Energy Initiative

Colin Walker, Development Manager at ECA Solar and Keri Williams, civil engineer with Atwell, presented a proposed solar project to the Commission. ECA Solar currently has an option to purchase 78 acres of property along Greenbay Road. ECA Solar would use 33 acres for its future solar project. The remaining acreage would be preserved as wetlands.

The solar array would consist of 12,250 solar panels and have a capacity of 4.95 megawatts, enough to power approximately 800 homes. The panels would be single-axis trackers that move with the sun throughout the day.

Gravel access roads into the site and a high knot-wire fence with openings for wildlife are proposed instead of asphalt and a standard chain link fence.

The project aims to minimize disturbance and maintain natural drainage and wildlife habitat under the solar panels. Permits would need to be obtained from Lake County Stormwater Management Commission and IDOT approval for the access point has been received. ECA Solar will be submitting a formal request for variances in June. A project description narrative was provided to the Commission for review.

**VI. Public Participation**

Secretary Bronson stated that a refresher of the Zoning Board's responsibilities will be given at the June 4, 2024 meeting by Attorney Kiernat.

**VII. Adjourn**

It was motioned by Commissioner Heffelman and seconded by Commissioner Champine to adjourn the meeting at 8:15pm. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes recorded by: Sonolito Bronson