



City of Ann Arbor
Formal Minutes - Final
Planning Commission, City

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
<http://a2gov.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Tuesday, April 1, 2014

7:00 PM

City Hall, 301 E. Huron Street, 2nd Flr.

10-b 14-0540

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment regarding Drive-Thru Facilities - Amendments are proposed to add a definition of a drive-thru facility and allow accessory drive-thru facilities as special exception uses in the O (Office), C2B (Business Service) and C3 (Fringe Commercial) districts, as well as provide basic layout requirements. Drive-thru facilities currently are allowed as special exception uses without any further requirements in the C2B district and as permitted uses without any further requirements in the C3 district. This amendment will make permitted and special exception uses consistent with City master plan recommendations and the intent of the affected zoning districts. Staff Recommendation: Approval

Rampson presented the staff report.

PUBLIC HEARING

Nothing no speakers, the Chair declared the public hearing closed.

Moved by Adenekan, seconded by Peters, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the amendments to Chapter 55, Sections 5:1, 5:10.12, 5:10.21, and 5:10.23, regarding Drive-Thru Facilities.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Clein asked if this amendment would affect carwashes and oil changes.

Rampson said no, since carwashes are a separate use.

Clein asked if the word 'motor' should be added before vehicle.

Rampson said that for clarity she felt it would be good to add the word 'motor' before vehicle since that was where the issue laid.

Westphal asked if the restriction could be done through adding a driveway width restriction.

Clein moved to add "motor" in front of vehicle in the definition, Peters supported.

Yeas: 9 - Bonnie Bona, Wendy Woods, Kirk Westphal, Diane Giannola, Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Clein, Sabra Briere, Paras Parekh, and Jeremy Peters

Nays: 0

Bona said she felt the issue is a driveway, not sidewalk, and felt like this is a simple solution.

On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried on the added amendment.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Bona suggested that one of the projects where the Ordinance Revisions Committee noted they would have liked to have this tool was on the Plymouth Road drive-thru, in front of the hotel, where the drive-thru goes all the way around the back doors face the front. She asked staff to explain how this would have helped that project.

Rampson clarified that since it was a Special Exception Use it would have been a discretionary decision based on the list of standards that would need to have been met. She pointed out that the Tim Horton's on Ellsworth would need to have been altered since the drive-thru window is located facing Ellsworth and would not have met this standard.

Bona agreed that if they would have created design requirements, people would spend time trying to get around them. She felt using the Special Exception Use tool was the best way of dealing with these and not prioritizing the vehicular experience over pedestrians.

Peters said that turning these requests into special exception use requests and laying out what things we can evaluate, one can help proactively get better designs from developers.

Woods said there are some facilities where there are problems with drive-thrus, like Walgreens at Huron Parkway and Washtenaw, and the traffic is difficult for cars and pedestrians. She said there are some towns where they have drive-thru funeral homes, and asked if that might need to be added to the amendment.

Rampson said the drive-thru would be the component that triggers a Special Exception Use allowing for various uses, such as dry-cleaners, etc.

Westphal asked if there was a threshold for the amount of reliance on the drive-thru that would trigger the request.

Rampson said no, it would be irrelevant.

Peters said he is a fan of taking this approach rather than prohibition, which will allow freedom for businesses with specific needs.

Westphal asked if someone is undergoing renovations, how would this be treated.

Rampson said for all existing projects going through site plan amendments it would be considered pre-existing special exception use, and for those required to go through City Council approval, they would need to reestablish the need for the Special Exception use.

Westphal asked if a bank is undergoing renovations, how would it work.

Rampson said if they were moving the canopies they could do it administratively and it wouldn't need a full Commission evaluation, but if a bank came in and the scale of their project was beyond minor changes, they would need a full review for the added use.

Clein said this is a good, reasonable tool, which raises the bar and allows them to scrutinize them a bit more.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.

Yeas: 9 - Bonnie Bona, Wendy Woods, Kirk Westphal, Diane Giannola, Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Clein, Sabra Briere, Paras Parekh, and Jeremy Peters

Nays: 0