

Minutes

1. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Charles Sedgwick at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Members present included Chairman Charles Sedgwick, Member Richard Brazukas and Member Steve Winslow.

Staff: Linda Bohnsack, City Planner. Planner Bohnsack noted that Mr. Reavey and Mr. Brungardt were unable to attend the meeting.

The applicant was represented by Shea McLaughlin of CDL, the company responsible for installing the signs for Dollar General.

3. Minutes

Since the item on the agenda had been tabled at the September meeting, the Chairman requested that the Minutes of the previous meeting be added to the agenda and called for discussion concerning the Minutes. No discussion was initiated.

A Motion to accept the Minutes as written was made by Mr. Winslow and seconded by Mr. Brazukas. Motion approved by ayes.

4. Agenda Item:

- A. Consider a variance from Article 7 Signs of the De Soto Zoning Regulations concerning proposed signage for the Dollar General site. The variance is requested for a 1.4 acre site to be located at the intersection of Lexington and Penner Avenues in De Soto.

Planner Bohnsack noted that the revised Site Plan and Elevation provided on their tables were received the previous day and reflected the conditions/changes specified by the Planning Commission on September 27. She also noted that the staff report had been updated and photos added of various façade designs for Dollar General stores.

Mr. Sedgwick asked the applicant to explain the difference between this submittal and the one presented on September 13. Mr. McLaughlin replied that the size of the propose wall signs had been reduced to under 100 square feet, but that they were still requesting the two wall signs in addition to the ground sign at the entryway. The reduced size of the 2 signs together would equal 155 sq ft and be more representative of the type and size of sign that the Dollar General Company normally specifies for all their stores. The sign designs will reflect the newest design the company offers with the 'pop-out' lettering on a yellow background edged with a gray band.

Mr. Winslow asked about the ground sign. Planner Bohnsack noted that the revised drawings for the ground sign met all the regulations including the necessary 5 foot setback from the property line. She noted that the sign was two faced and in that situation, only the largest face is counted toward the area. If the sign was V-shaped, both sides would be counted. Therefore the sign is only 50 sq ft and does not require a variance due to its proximity to residentially zoned property.

Mr. Winslow asked about lighting and whether the signs were turned off at any time. Mr. McLaughlin replied that Dollar General feels their signs are a major part of their marketing strategy and they are left on at all times. Mr. Winslow asked about light generated by the signs and their affect on neighboring areas. It was noted that a neighbor had complained about lighting on the site. All signs on the sides of the building and in the parking lot will be shielded so light shines directly down onto the site and not off of the property.

Mr. Winslow was concerned that the request for two wall signs was not sufficiently supported. The site has some physical limitations, but is not located on a corner. The location of the entrance at the corner of the building was the design of the applicant, therefore the need for a sign on two sides of the building was created by the applicant. It was noted that the photos of other stores provided by staff showed only center front entrances with one wall sign.

Members also discussed the possibility of setting a precedent by allowing 2 wall signs on this size of building or site, since this is the first commercial building in this specific location and the adjacent properties are expected to develop commercially as well. It was noted that there would be a large ground sign at the entrance to the site as well. Planner Bohnsack provided the recently revised landscape plan for the site, indicating the number and location of trees and shrubs provided.

Mr. Winslow noted that the applicant had not provided sufficient evidence of hardship caused by the site to warrant three large signs on the property. He noted that the elimination of the sign from the north wall would effectively reduce the amount of variance needed due to the proximity of the signs from residentially zoned property. He offered that since it was important for the Dollar General Company to have a certain amount of signage that the size of the sign on the west wall could be increased to fill that need while limiting the site to only one wall sign. The other members agreed.

Mr. Sedgwick called for a vote of the members concerning each of the requested variances. Concerning Variance Request #1, the request for 2 wall signs, all members voted nay on all points. Concerning Variance Request #2, waiver of the 50 sq ft maximum due to the sign's proximity to residentially zoned property, all members voted in favor of the request. Concerning Variance Request #3, allowing a larger sign on the north façade, the Board members suggested that since there would not be a sign on the north façade, that the Variance be for a larger sign on the west façade. All members voted in favor of the Variance.

Mr. Sedgwick stated he would entertain a motion concerning the requested variances. Mr. Brazukas motioned to deny the variance for two wall signs; to approve the variance to waive the 50 sq ft limitation due to the proximity of the sign to residential property; and to approve a variance for a larger sign for the west façade.

Mr. Winslow asked to amend the motion and limit the size of the sign on the west façade

to the size submitted at the September 13 meeting, 4'-6" x 33'-3". Mr. Brazukas accepted the amendment.

Mr. Sedgwick called for a vote of the members. All approved by ayes.

5. Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.