



Sheldon Neeley
Mayor

CITY OF FLINT
FLINT ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
MATTHEW TELLIGA, CHAIRMAN

FLINT ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Meeting Minutes
May 16, 2023

Board Members Present:

Matthew Telliga, Chair
Jerry Kea, Vice-Chair
Ari McCaskill
Ramie Yelle
Florlisa Stebbins
Lauren Coney
Derek Dohrman
John E. Hardy II

Staff Present:

Tom Sparrow, Assistant City Attorney
William Vandercook, Zoning Coordinator
Max Lester, Planner I

Planning Commission Representative:

N/A

Absent:

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Telliga called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Roll was taken, and a quorum was present. The meeting was held in the Dome Auditorium in the South Building of Flint City Hall as well as via Zoom meetings.

Matthew Telliga, Chair – appearing in person
Jerry Kea, Vice-Chair – appearing in person
Ari McCaskill – absent (arrived later in the meeting)

Lauren Coney – appearing in person
Florlisa Stebbins – appearing in person
John E. Hardy II – appearing in person
Derek Dohrman – appearing in person
Ramie Yelle – appearing in person

ADOPTION OF May 16, 2023, AGENDA:

Chairman Telliga asked if there were any changes to the agenda.

Commissioner Coney made a motion to approve the agenda of May 16, 2023 as presented.
Commissioner Stebbins supported the motion.

M/S – Coney/Stebbins

The motion carried via voice vote.



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ADOPTION OF April 18, 2023, MINUTES

Chairman Telliga asked if there were any changes to the minutes of April 18, 2023.

Commissioner Coney motioned to approve the minutes from April 18, 2023 as presented.
Commissioner Stebbins supported the motion.

Chairman Telliga asked for a roll-call vote.

Commissioner Stebbins, yes
Commissioner Hardy, yes
Commissioner McCaskill, absent
Commissioner Yelle, yes

Commissioner Dohrman, yes
Commissioner Kea, yes
Commissioner Coney, yes
Commissioner Telliga, yes

M/S – Coney/Stebbins

7 – yes 0 – no 0 – abstain

The motion carried.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Chairperson Telliga Read the Rules of the Public Forum. No one spoke.

Commissioner McCaskill arrived at 6:08 PM.

REPORTS:

No reports.

COMMUNICATIONS:

No Communications.

PUBLIC HEARING:

ZBA 23-8: 205 Flintstones, LLC/Mark Johnson requests a Non-Use Variance from Zoning Code Sections 50-155, 50-156, and 50-157 at 927 S. Saginaw St. Flint, MI 48504 (PID 41-18-180-009).

Chairperson Telliga explained this case is postponed.

ZBA 23-9: Catholic Charities of Shiawassee and Genesee Counties/Joshua Stanton requests a Use Variance to allow for a pylon sign in a GN-1 zoned district at 729 E. Stewart Ave. Flint, MI 48505 (PID # 47-31-155-030).

Mr. Vandercook read the Staff Report and Standards for Approval for ZBA 23-9.

Chairperson Telliga asked Attorney Sparrow if a two-thirds vote is required of the present members or the charter members. Attorney Sparrow stated he believed it was two-thirds of



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charter members. Commissioners discussed if this would be seven or eight members, deciding the calculation comes out to seven members voting for a motion to pass.

Joshua Stanton, Facilities Coordinator of Catholic Charities presented the case. Mr. Stanton stated he believes the need this sign to attract people safely to the location, which is a long-standing soup kitchen operating for over twenty years. Mr. Stanton noted the City has a right-of-way extending over the sidewalk into the parking lot. Mr. Stanton noted residents have trouble locating the facility, noting there is a clinic nearby with signage, and that they would like to make the location as noticeable as possible for those needing their services.

Mr. Stanton introduced Nick Trifon from Signs by Crannie to explain the sign details. Mr. Trifon explained the right-of-way presets a hardship to the property owners in where ground signage can be located. Mr. Trifon noted the changeable copy portion will be beneficial to pedestrians.

Chairperson Telliga asked staff for confirmation on whether the current ordinance allows this property to have a sign on the building and a tombstone style (monument) sign. Mr. Vandercook confirmed. Chairperson Telliga asked if tombstone style signs are not allowed in an easement. Mr. Vandercook answered that no signage is allowed in the right-of-way.

Mr. Stanton added that a monument style sign did not make sense for this property due to the right-of-way necessitating it be setback far into the property.

Chairperson Telliga asked what the proposed height of the pylon sign is. Mr. Trifon answered about sixteen feet.

Commissioner Dohrman asked if there is a possibility of placing a sign on the building. Mr. Stanton responded that due to the layout and design of the building, the sign would not be visible going down the road and would not be worth the cost involved with producing and installing the sign.

Chairperson Telliga opened the floor to the Public Forum. No one spoke. Chairperson Telliga closed the floor to the Public Forum.

Mr. Stanton asked for the variance to be approved to allow them to better assist the community.

Chairperson Telliga expressed concern that most communities stopped allowing pylon signs and in this case it would be visible within a residential neighborhood.

Commissioner Kea noted that he is concerned about the neighborhood as he believes the sign could be placed on the building. Commissioner Kea also noted he has issue with approving a variance for something that is not allowed in the ordinance.

Commissioner Yelle stated he does not believe a decision would set precedence as each case must stand on its own due to the unique circumstances of each case.



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Commissioner Stebbins posed the question of whether this sign is specifically intended to be seen by the residents of the neighborhood to attract those needing the services provided.

Commissioner McCaskill said his only critique is that the current zoning ordinance does not allow for rebuild of residential property and their decisions should not negatively impact residential properties.

Mr. Vandercook noted the zoning ordinance allows some leeway for non-profit and government uses within less intense zoning districts that is not reflected in the signage section.

Commissioner McCaskill made a motion to approve **ZBA 23-9**: Catholic Charities of Shiawassee and Genesee Counties/Joshua Stanton requests a Use Variance to allow for a pylon sign in a GN-1 zoned district at 729 E. Stewart Ave. Flint, MI 48505 (PID # 47-31-155-030) based on the following findings of fact:

- Complies with Standard 3 because the requested use will not cause a substantial detriment or alter the existing character of the surrounding area.

Commissioner Coney supported the motion.

Commissioner Dohrman asked for clarification on the number of votes needed to pass. Mr. Vandercook responded that the math comes out to seven votes required.

Chairperson Telliga called for a roll call vote.

Commissioner Stebbins, yes
Commissioner Hardy, yes
Commissioner McCaskill, yes
Commissioner Yelle, yes

Commissioner Dohrman, yes
Commissioner Kea, no
Commissioner Coney, yes
Commissioner Telliga, yes

M/S – McCaskill/Hardy
7 – yes, 1 – no, 0 – abstain
The motion carried.

ZBA 23-10: Dantzler Designs, LLC/Sequoia Prince-Dantzler requests a Use Variance to allow for Entertainment, Live (Non-ARU) in a TN-2 zoned district at 2549 Corunna Rd. Flint, MI 48503 (PID # 40-23-202-001).

Chairperson Telliga asked staff to start with reports and to note what uses would be allowed under the use designation if the variance is approved.

Mr. Vandercook answered that Entertainment, Live (Non-ARU) does not allow for special regulated uses such as a dance club, adult entertainment, or liquor uses. This use does allow for auditorium, banquet hall, club/lodge, music hall, and theatre.



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Mr. Vandercook read the Staff Report and Standards for Approval.

Commissioner Telliga asked if granting the variance would allow alcohol on the premises. Mr. Vandercook answered that it would not allow for alcohol or any other additionally regulated use.

Commissioner Dohrman asked staff what the commercial uses to the west are zoned. Mr. Vandercook replied they are zoned CC – City Corridor.

Sequoya Prince Dantzler presented for her business Dantzler Designs, LLC. Ms. Dantzler noted other halls have issues with fighting, alcohol, and marihuana use, and as a minister she wanted a safe space for low intensity events. Ms. Dantzler stated she would like to use the space for kids' birthday parties, dinners after church, bridal showers, small educational sessions, and similar events. Ms. Dantzler stated she did not want any alcohol or marihuana on the premises. Ms. Dantzler also wants clients to be able to take their time decorating the space rather than focusing on high traffic turnover, unlike other halls in the City.

Chairperson Telliga noted there is a five-year parking agreement in the packet, with the five years being required by the ordinance. Commissioner Kea noted the church has the right to evaluate the lease every year. Commissioners discussed whether the lease was a one-year or five-year lease. Ms. Dantzler noted the reason for that review is that she has obligations to keep the parking lot clean and ensure there is no drinking or smoking on the premises by her clients.

Commissioner Yelle commented on the future plans for the property, which includes a kitchen and playground, among other things. Commissioners Yelle commended her for these goals noting it could be a benefit to the community.

Chairperson Telliga opened the floor to the Public Hearing.

Erin Boyce spoke in support, noting that when she moved in the property was an eye sore and she has seen the work that has been put into the property to clean it up. Ms. Boyce is happy to see the improvement to the property and the applicant's stance against drugs, alcohol, and fighting.

Bethany Hazard spoke in opposition, stating this property was a laundromat at one point and that she sees good intentions but expects the location to turn into something else. Ms. Hazard stated a dollar store in the area turned into a business with a liquor license.

Greg Morale spoke in support. Mr. Morale stated he has lived in the neighborhood for two to three years and has worked with the community watch group. Mr. Morale feels it is good to keep progress moving forward in the neighborhood. Mr. Morale was concerned at first but is supportive after hearing the details and believes this type of space is what the community needs.



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Mr. Vandercook read a letter dated May 5, 2023. The resident author, Circe, wrote in opposition noting concerns of noise, traffic, and potential violence.

Chairperson Telliga closed the floor to the Public Hearing.

Ms. Dantzler responded that she will not allow anyone in with alcohol or marihuana, with the intent to have security available to keep people out who will not follow rules and escort guests to their cars. Ms. Dantzler reiterated that this is a commercial building that is currently unused.

Chairperson Telliga asked when she purchased the building. Ms. Dantzler answered February 2022. Chairperson Telliga noted when the building was purchased this use was allowed.

Commissioner McCaskill noted that if the building was a laundromat, the backwall may be a solid firewall. Commissioner McCaskill also noted that traffic and density improves public safety rather than vacant buildings.

Chairperson Telliga added that the uses allowed now versus when it was purchased are very limited.

Commissioner Yelle asked for confirmation on how long the business can stay open. Chairperson Telliga stated until 12 AM. Mr. Vandercook recommended setting the closing time to match that of the neighboring CC – City Corridor district.

Commissioner McCaskill made a motion to approve **ZBA 23-10: Dantzler Designs, LLC/Sequoia Prince-Dantzler requests a Use Variance to allow for Entertainment, Live (Non-ARU) in a TN-2 zoned district at 2549 Corunna Rd. Flint, MI 48503 (PID # 40-23-202-001)** based on the following findings of fact:

- Complies with Standard 2 because the property was rezoned TN-2 Traditional Neighborhood Medium-Density by the City of Flint and not by the property owner.

Commissioner McCaskill added the following conditions to the motion:

- The hours of operation are to follow that which are allowed by the adjoining CC – City Corridor district.

Chairperson Telliga supported the motion.

Chairperson Telliga called for a roll call vote.

Commissioner Stebbins, yes
Commissioner Hardy, yes
Commissioner McCaskill, yes
Commissioner Yelle, yes

Commissioner Dohrman, yes
Commissioner Kea, yes
Commissioner Coney, yes
Commissioner Telliga, yes

M/S – McCaskill/Telliga



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8 – yes, 0 – no, 0 – abstain

The motion carried.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT:

No report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Appointment of Planning Commissioner to ZBA

Max stated staff does not have an update at this time due to lack of staff and increased workload, especially given the recent retirement of the Director of Planning and Development.

Commissioner Kea noted he is a quantitative person, not qualitative.

ZBA Commissioner Expired Terms and Vacancies

Max stated they have looked back for records of reappointments and have not found any resolutions for reappointment for Commissioner Kea. Max stated staff requested the most up to date information on Commissioner terms previously and no new reappointment was noted.

Commissioner Kea stated his Council Representative let him know it was all squared away after the previous meeting in April, with the reappointment extending to 2026.

Commissioner Hardy expressed that he was informed by his Council Representative that he was also reappointed despite district boundary changes.

Chairperson Telliga offered to reach out to Council members to make progress on appointments and reappointments.

NEW BUSINESS:

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner McCaskill made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Hardy supported the motion.

M/S –McCaskill/Hardy

The motion carried via voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34pm.