

**CITY OF ITHACA**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**  
Tuesday, January 10, 2017  
7:00 PM

The regular meeting of the Ithaca Planning Commission was called to order at the request of the Commissioners by City Manager Chris Yonker at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Present: Commissioners Mark Barrows, Dale Sherman, Doug Wright, Jerry Timmons, Jim Gruesbeck and Mayor Tim Palmer

Staff Present: City Manager Chris Yonker and Deputy Clerk Cathy Cameron

Absent: John Wilson

Audience: Erika Ross, Elizabeth Earegood and Scott Johnson

Motion by Wright, second by Barrows to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held December 13, 2016; motion carried.

**Public Comments**

Manager Yonker asked to receive public comments; none were given.

**Public Hearing: Isabella Bank, 1402 East Center Street**

Variance request submitted by Isabella Bank, 1402 East Center Street, for new sign placement.

Motion by Barrows, second by Timmons to open the public hearing at 7:05 p.m.; motion carried.

Manager Yonker stated the request is for a seven-foot setback from the MDOT right-of-way, allowing placement of the new pylon sign to be set in the same location as the existing sign. Commissioner Wright inquired if the digital message feature would be still or flashing. Representatives from Isabella Bank stated that messages would be changeable, but stationary (no scrolling, flashing, etc.) with an auto dimmer feature.

Motion by Timmons, second by Wright to close the public hearing at 7:10 p.m.; motion carried.

Motion by Wright, second by Barrows to approve the variance with a setback of seven feet off Center Street for new sign placement at Isabella Bank; motion carried.

**Request for Setback Variance for Proposed Covered Deck & Stairway: 525 East Emerson Street**

Manager Yonker presented the variance request made by Scott Johnson to construct a covered deck and stairway/ramp at his house located at 525 East Emerson Street. The proposed conceptual design does not meet the setback requirements as the house is on a corner lot. Barnes Street setback requires a 27 feet setback but only has 15 feet. By definition a covered deck is acceptable as long as the sides are not enclosed at any further time which would change the definition to being classified as a structure. Discussion was held with consensus being that a covered deck with proper foundation can be defined as a structure.

Motion by Barrows, second by Sherman to set a Public Hearing for Tuesday, February 14, 2017 at 7:00p.m., or as soon thereafter as the agenda allows, for a setback variance on the deck and stairway/ramp; motion carried.

**Request for Setback Variance for Proposed Reconstruction of Existing Nonconforming Sign: 116 East Emerson Street**

Manager Yonker presented a zoning analysis of a proposed conceptual design for a reconstructed pole sign located at 116 East Emerson Street. The existing business sign is nonconforming being within the MDOT right-of-way of 41.25' from the centerline. The proposal as presented by the sign company representative was to cut off the top portion of the current poles and attach a 5'x5' sign board or sign enclosure onto the poles above the existing brick flower planter. In order to meet the proper setback, the non-conforming reconstructed sign would have to be closer to the building. Discussion followed, with the Commissioners tabling the proposed reconstruction of the current sign until the owner of the building files an official request for a variance.

**Countywide Master Plan Progress**

Manager Yonker informed Commissioners of the next Master Plan meeting scheduled for Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. at Pine River Township Hall.

**Zeeland Farm Services Progress**

The City Manager updated the Commission on the progress of the 435-acre redevelopment. Current plans are to have water and sanitary sewer utilities available to the site by October of this year.

**Transmittals**

The Commission received the City Manager's Activity Reports to the City Council for December 16 and December 30, 2016.

**Public Comments**

Manager Yonker asked for any additional public comments, none were given.

Motion by Timmons, second by Sherman to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 p.m.; motion carried.

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Dale Sherman, Commission Secretary

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Cathy Cameron, Recording Secretary