

City of Norwich
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
Norwich City Court

July 17, 2017
7:00 PM

Present: R. Mirabito, D. DeForest, S. Prentice, J. Roque, H. Graves, M. Parker

Absent: K. Campbell, J. Miller,

Staff: Mayor C. Carnrike, J. Lawrence, A. Donnison

I. Call to Order:

Chairman R. Mirabito called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM. Newest member present, Mark Parker, was introduced and welcomed by all board members.

Minutes of February 11, 2016 were approved on a motion made by S. Prentice. Seconded by H. Graves. Ayes all.

II. Sign Ordinance Review:

The Zoning Board of Appeals has requested the City of Norwich Sign Ordinance, Section 465-35, Identification reviewed. This request is caused by the multiple requests by business owners who would like their phone number on their business signage, which at this time is not permitted by right. The process to do so (unless you have been grandfathered in prior to the current Sign Ordinance being adopted) is that you would apply for a variance from the ZBA. The cost for that hearing to the often new local business owner is \$250.00.

Below is what is allowed on a business identification sign currently:

IDENTIFICATION SIGN

A sign whose copy is limited to the name and address of a building, institution, or person and/or to the activity or occupation being identified on the premises where the sign is located.

The size of any signage is dictated by the sign ordinance. The most recent issue that has brought this before the ZBA again is a sign variance request to allow the business phone number for a new hair salon owned by Sandra Price at her new home at 137 East Main St. The ZBA did approve her request.

The request to be discussed and considered by the Planning Commission is to allow a phone number to be included in the business signage by right.

Upon discussion and member agreement that signage should be brought into the current century with most people using email also as a form of contact and websites to promote businesses the following was made:

D. DeForest made a motion to forward to Common Council for consideration the addition to Section 465-35 of the City of Norwich Sign Ordinance under Identification to read:

A sign whose copy is limited to the name and address of a building, institution, or person and/or to the activity or occupation being identified on the premises, *one business phone number and/or a business email address or business website address* where the sign is located.

Seconded by S. Prentice. Ayes all.

III Presentation by Steve Craig:

Mr. Craig, President and CEO of Commerce Chenango, made a presentation, for informational purposes only, which included the history of Development Chenango and explained how they assist with new businesses and help existing businesses to expand. Some assistance is in the form of grant writing while other forms may be a business loan. Mayor Carnrike inquired if there could be a proposal put together that would pick up the slack in the work load that is falling between the cracks since Todd Dryer retired. Mr. Craig stated yes as long as the city specifically states what is wanted.

IV Other Items:

Discussion on the date of next meeting. It will likely be September 18, 2017 if a majority of the members are able to attend. At this time August will not have a quorum for a meeting.

J. Lawrence stated he may be able to have a representative from DEC come to September meeting for a presentation on soil vapor intrusion in connection with the Lee Avenue project.

IV Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned on a motion made by S. Prentice at 8:10 pm seconded by H. Graves. Ayes all.