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**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the City of Rensselaer Planning Commission
Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall, 505 Broadway, Rensselaer
March 13, 2006**

RENSSELAER CITY CLERK

Call to Order:

Chairman Matthew Polsinello called the regular meeting of the City of Rensselaer Planning Commission to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call was taken, and it was determined there was a quorum.

Members Present:

Matthew Polsinello, Acting Chairman; Harry Adalian; Edward Burns; Charles Moore; Margaret Zukowski

Others Present:

Dennis Rigosu; Jim Hannan, Hannan's Waste; Dora Petrakopols and Dill Morrone, Bill's Repaire; Marvin Rossman, Performance Motorcycle Service; John Hicks, Corporation Counsel; Marybeth Pettit, Director of Planning; Sarah Stern Crowell, Assistant Director of Planning

Minutes of the February 13, 2006 regular meeting

Harry Adalian made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 9, 2006 meeting minutes. Seconded by Margaret Zukowski. All in favor. Motion carried.

Old Business:

Theodora Petropoulos, Bill's Repairs Unlimited, application for site plan approval for a marine repair shop at 67 Broadway, the former PetroChem site

Mr. Polsinello recapped the conclusion reached at the site visit – that the property could accommodate up to 12 boats, of which two could exceed 10 feet in height. Mr. Morrone added that he may store an additional 4-5 boats in the garage. Ms. Pettit asked if the 3 bay garage is up for lease. Mr. Morrone said that his partner has put it up for lease because of frustration with the permitting process for the marine repair shop, but that at present the plan is for the Bill's Repairs Unlimited to be the only business on the property. He stated that he understands that any additional business on the property would have to go through the variance and site plan approval process. Mr. Adalian stated that if an approval were granted tonight, it would in no way constitute an approval for any use other than the marine repair shop. Ms. Pettit asked if the applicant plans to use the office space in the front. Mr. Morrone replied in the affirmative. – do you anticipate using office space in the front? 2 boats over 10 feet stored behind the 3 car garage. 10 feet include trailer. Ms. Pettit mentioned if any exterior changes must get a certificate of appropriateness and asked if they would be applying for a sign. Mr. Morrone said that at this point there is no plan for a sign.

Mr. Burns made the following motion:

The Planning Commission grants approval for the site plan for Bill's Repairs Unlimited with the following conditions:

- 1. Limit of 12 boats to be stored outside, of which 10 must not exceed 10 feet in height, including trailer.*
- 2. The two boats over 10 feet in height must be stored behind the three-bay garage. EB make a motion to approve the site plan with the conditions.*

Mr. Adalian seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Commission on Economic Opportunity, application for site plan approval for an addition for an elevator required to make their building at 1641 Third Street ADA compliant.

Dennis Cannon, architect for the Commission on Economic Opportunity, presented a rendering of the proposed elevator enclosure as was requested at the last meeting. He also displayed a sample of the material that he proposes to use on the façade. Mr. Polsinello commented that the new tower will be attractive.

Mr. Adalian made the following motion:

The Planning Commission approves the design of the proposed addition to the building at 1641 Third Street as illustrated on the rendering submitted.

Ms. Zukowski seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

New Business

James Hannan, Hannan's Waste Disposal, 6 Tracy Street, application for a variance to allow truck parking for waste disposal business in a Residential Planned Development District

Mr. Hannan explained that they plan to keep three trucks on the site. There is no plan to store open top containers. He stated that the three roll-off trucks will go out every morning, and be back overnight. When asked what the hours are, Mr. Hannan said that they like to get an early start to avoid traffic, so are often out at 6am. The return time varies. Sometimes they are back by mid-morning and at other times they do 10 to 12 hour days. Mr. Adalian asked how many employees would be at the site. The applicant responded: himself, his wife, daughter in law, his son, and two additional drivers (one full-time and one part-time)

Ms. Crowell asked if the trucks would be stored in the garage. The applicant responded that they would be stored in the garage during cold weather, but not necessarily in the summer. The garage does have sufficient space for all three trucks.

Mr. Burns asked whether the trucks would be left idling on the property. The applicant said that DEC regulations limit idling to 5 minutes. Mr. Polsinello asked if the trucks would be on the site carrying garbage or full dumpsters? The applicant explained that at time high winds cause the disposal site to close down, and on those occasions it would be possible that a truck might return to the site still loaded. He added that if a full truck were to be parked on the site overnight, it would be tarped. However, he stated that in most cases these trucks are sent to their South Troy yard, and that they would be willing to agree that no loaded trucks be parked on the property if the board required it. Ms. Zukowski asked if the diesels have to be warmed up in the winter? The applicant stated that they would not have to be warmed up if stored in a garage overnight, and also that the DEC law forbids idling over 5 minutes.

Ms. Zukowski asked about the big pile of bricks on the property. Mr. Hannan replied that the bricks, considered clean fill, are used to stabilize the soil. He explained that the dump the bricks on the driveway, run over them with the truck, and then cover with peastone.

Ms. Pettit asked what route the trucks take when entering and leaving the property. The applicant responded Tracey Street to Broadway then south the 787. Mr. Moore asked how this application is different from the previous application for a variance at this location. Mr Hannan said that this application does not include storage of roll-off containers on site. Ms. Pettit commented that the previous application was turned down in part because of a concern about truck traffic through residential neighborhoods. Mr. Hannan stated that a truck may occasionally be on site with a container on it, but no containers would be stored on the ground. He added that they deal with construction demolition, and there would no be any hazardous waste.

Mr. Polsinello asked what the hours of operation are. Mr. Hannan said that they do not operate after dark. He added that they leave the containers in South Troy, but cannot park trucks there overnight due to vandalism. He stated that they could agree to have no roll-offs at the site at all if that would help with the approval. Discussion of the impact of the truck traffic on the neighborhood ensued.

Mr. Moore made the following motion:

The Planning Commission passes the application for a use variance to store trucks used in operation of Hannon Waste Management at 6 Tracey Street to the Zoning Board of Appeals with no recommendation.

Mr. Burns seconded the motions. All in favor. Motion carried.

Marvin J. Rossman, Performance Motorcycle Service, Inc., 480 South Street, application for a variance for a free-standing sign in a Commercial Industrial zone.

Mr. Rossman presented his plan to erect a freestanding sign on front of his business. He explained that his building is set back from the road and that people do not notice him. Ms. Pettit explained that there is a need to set a positive tone on South Street, which is a gateway to the city, and that it would be preferable to have a lower more attractive sign with external lighting. Mr. Rossman stated that he was concerned about glare on the road from external lighting, The Commission and the applicant discussed freestanding sign alternatives, including the option of an artistic wood sign, perhaps shaped like a motorcycle. The applicant was receptive to coming up with a more interesting and attractive sign. Ms. Pettit suggested that he make an appointment to meet with planning staff to discuss possibilities.

Mr. Adalian made the following motion:

The Planning Commission makes a positive recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals with respect to Mr. Rossman's application for a freestanding sign at 480 South Street with the condition that a more attractive sign be designed.

Mr. Burns seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Adalian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Burns seconded the motion. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marybeth Pettit
Secretary