

MINUTES
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
August 26, 2024
5:30 P.M.

LOCATION:
City /County Meeting Room
905 West Avenue

MEMBERS PRESENT: Curtis Baker, Sharon Bryant, Michael Careccia, Tammy Greene, Marta Lazo, Lucy McCarl, Tim Scobie, Edward Terry, Dontrell Parson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kyle Case

STAFF PRESENT: Hannah Williams, Lauren Hartley, Matt Duchan

Chairperson McCarl called the meeting to order and determined a quorum was present.

MINUTES:
Board Member Scobie made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 22, 2024, seconded by Board Member Parson. All were in favor, none opposed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. ZOA# 1-24 Electronic Message Boards in residential

Applicant:	Doug Perkins, Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church
Owners:	N/A
Location:	Citywide

The applicant is proposing amending Appendix A, Article XI, section 1108 (c) of the Lenoir Zoning Ordinance related to Electronic Message Board in residential districts.

Recommended Action: Pending board discussion and motion, call for a public hearing at City Council on September 17, 2024.

Hannah Williams, Planning Director presented text amendment ZOA# 1-24 for Electronic Message Boards (EMB) signs in residential zoning. Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church has submitted this request for a text amendment to state:

1108 Signs In Residential Districts - In residential zoning districts (R-R, R-20, R-15, R-12, R-9, and R-6), signs must conform to the following:

(c) Electronic Message Boards and internal illumination of signs are permitted in residential districts

Mrs. Williams read the definition and regulations from the Lenoir sign code for Electronic Message Boards stating these signs are prohibited in residential zoning districts. The church is located in the R-6 (multi-family) zoning district. If this amendment is granted, it would apply to

all properties in residential. Staff provided an alternate proposal request by staff stating:

1108 Signs In Residential Districts - In residential zoning districts (R-R, R-20, R-15, R-12, R-9, and R-6), signs must conform to the following:

(c) Electronic Message Boards and internal illumination of signs are prohibited in residential districts. For religious and civic institutions located in residential districts, up to 50% of the sign copy area of the monument sign may be an Electronic Message Board.

(i) EMBs must be oriented to face away from any adjacent residential property.

(ii) EMBs must be programmed to shut off between the hours of 9PM and 7AM.

Mrs. Williams read 2 consistency statements for motion to approve and motion to deny the request for the record.

The applicant, Doug Perkins at 845 Corpening Place approached the board. He attends Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church where Ike Perkins, his father is the pastor. The church was in the market for a new sign to enhance their religious spirits and get their message out. The church is in a residential area, but there are not many houses surrounding it. They do not plan to have any flashing lights or movement with the sign. Mr. Perkins stated he believes this is a good amendment to consider and thanked the board for their time.

The board discussed the time restrictions, message type, and lighting or lumens.

Rev. Roger Beck at 4638 Blair Drive approached the board. He is the senior pastor at Meadowbrook Baptist Church. The church previously had a marquee sign, but was able to buy an EMB sign with a memorial that was given. The church went through a sign company but they failed to get the proper permit. Rev. Beck stated he is all for the text amendment and EMB signs being allowed in residential, these signs are much easier to get the message across. He stated, you never know when God is going to use a word to speak with someone, our church doesn't want to be a nuisance to the community and will abide to any rules.

Tim Baker at 207 Ridge Street NW is the associate pastor at Meadowbrook Baptist Church. Chairperson McCarl asked if the sign could be programed to be turned off at sundown. Mr. Baker replied yes and stated at this time the sign does scroll but can be changed to make it stationary. The light is not bright and doesn't emit out. The church would have an issue with the sign not being able to face any adjacent residential property. The church does have houses around it, but they have not received any complaints. Mr. Baker asked if it would be possible for the City of Lenoir to adopt the same ordinance used for Caldwell County, he read the ordinance to the board. Chairperson McCarl stated yes, they would look into it.

Board member Baker brought up the lumens in EMB signs and how to incorporate that in the text amendment.

Board Member Baker made a motion to approve the alternate request with (i) removed as presented. Board Member Scobie seconded the motion.

Hannah Williams stated she is not prepared to discuss lumens at this time, but could research it.

Board Member Lazo made a motion to amend the appending approval and to remove (i) and (ii) in the alternate request as presented. Board Member Baker seconded the motion.

A discussion ensued about the brightness, lumens and time restrictions of the EMB signs being in residential zoning.

Board Member Bryant made a motion to table the text amendment request until September 23, 2024 for more information on lumens and light restrictions. Board Member Careccia seconded the motion, which was voted upon and passed unanimously.

Planning Director, Hannah Williams continued with her presentation on Electronic Message Boards. There is conflict in the sign code. The B-3 zoning does not allow EMB signs, in the code it states to refer to the B-6 zoning for ground mounted signs. The B-6 zoning does allow for EMB signs. Hannah gave these proposed ordinances:

Electronic Message Boards are prohibited or permitted in B-6.

Electronic Message Boards are prohibited or permitted in the National Register Historic District in Downtown Lenoir

Electronic Message Boards are prohibited or permitted in O&I, B-1, and B-5

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Staff provided an updated list of issued zoning permits to the board, as general information.

ADJOURNMENT:

Having no other matters to bring before the Board, Chairperson McCarl adjourned the Planning Board meeting at 6:54 p.m.

Lucy McCarl
Chairperson

Hannah Williams
Planning Director