

CITY OF PORTLAND
MUNICIPAL BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES
September 3, 2024
5:00 PM

Call to Order

Chairwoman Gail Gentry call to order at 5:10 P.M.

Roll Call

Present: Chairwoman Gail Gentry, Vice Chairman Tom Driscoll, Hector Graves, Robert Tooker

Absent: William Perry

Also Present: Nate Heisler, City Planner, Jackie West, Planning Asst, Tracey Griffin, Planning Asst

PUBLIC COMMENTS

In accordance with Tennessee Public Chapter No. 300, public comments are allowed when those comments are germane to actionable agenda items, except where otherwise prohibited; and the number of individuals speaking may be limited to ensure opposing viewpoints are fairly represented.

Chairwoman Gentry opened the public comments stating if you want to speak on an agenda item, please sign your name and address on the sign in sheet, you will have five minutes to speak.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to: Approve

By: Hector Graves

Second: Robert Tooker

Yes: Chairwoman Gail Gentry, Hector Graves, Tom Driscoll, Robert Tooker

Absent: William Perry

Approval of minutes:

Motion to: Approve the May 7, 2024, Minutes

By: Robert Tooker

Second: Hector Graves

Yes: Chairwoman Gail Gentry, Tom Driscoll, Robert Tooker, Hector Graves

Absent: William Perry

PUBLIC HEARING

1. John David Chambless (applicant) requests a sign variance for a square footage sign increase: location 1048 Magnolia Springs Road, Portland Tn. (Tax Map 016, Parcel 031.07) 6.36 +/- acres. Zone RM-1 (Residential).

Public Comments Period:

Mark Harrison -Request that the Board denies the variance.

OLD BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

1. John David Chambless (applicant) requests a sign variance for a square footage sign increase: location 1048 Magnolia Springs Road, Portland Tn. (Tax Map 016, Parcel 031.07) 6.36 +/- acres. Zone RM-1 (Residential).

During the discussion the City Planner stated the property is off Hwy 109 & Magnolia Springs Road, Zoned RM-1 and the proposed signage is 78 sq. ft. The Planning Commission does not review proposed signs, its staff reviewed.

The applicant stated the placement of the signage would be on the north side of the entrance outside of the public ROW and double-sided sign. The size is Industry standard for us. The Purpose is for driver legibility to identify the entrance, it will have the name of the property a telephone number and the required Handicap & Equal Opportunity Housing emblems.

The City Planner stated we had some apartments off Hwy 52, apply for the same type of sign and their application was denied. Magnolia Springs development started in 2006, and our sign ordinance was amended and adopted in 2009 that is the cause of their bigger signage. With the ordinance, the city wanted to see smaller signs in residential areas. The intent was to have the larger signs in the commercial districts.

Some of the concerns are the sign being 6 ½ times the size, if this variance is approved, it could open a Pandora's box for other apartments and would be setting a precedent and any existing apartment or future apartments would have.

Because this property came through a straight rezone of R1 in 2018 it came in as a site plan. We now use PUDs for apartments and the plans and signage comes in as a package.

Motion for Disapproval	Approved
By:	Robert Tooker
Second:	Hector Graves
Yes:	Gail Gentry, Tom Driskell, Robert Tooker
No:	Hector Graves
Absent:	William Perry

Chairwoman Gentry ask for a Roll Call vote.

YES: 3

NO: 1

ABSENT: 1

ABSTAIN: 0

Motion carried 3-1.

The Applicant questioned if any other size could be approved and was told that We need to follow our Ordinance.

City Planners Comments

The City Planner wanted to let the board know that we have been working on our comprehensive plan for the city, and we have had a few meetings in the last couple of weeks wanted to let you know that we are ramping up to start working on policy and hopefully we will have policy and maps by the end of the year or early next year. Pay attention to the Planning Commission, by the end of the year or early next year and I have seen a couple of you at the meetings, thank you for attending.


Zoning Board Member Commented the Following:

It's about setting precedence and consistency; I agree, maybe that is small but it's what the city has agreed on. I just didn't feel there was a special circumstance for this one to apply for a bigger sign and I know there are bigger signs built in other cities, but this is what makes Portland, that's what gives it the ability to be unique.

Jackie West closed the meeting by announcing that this would be her last BZA Meeting and that she would be retiring at the end of the month.

Adjournment

Hector Graves made motion to adjourn at 5:24 pm, Robert Tooker gave a second.



Chairwoman

03/04/25

Date



Recording Secretary

03/04/25

Date