

PRESENT Norman Machelor, Doreen Albee, Joe Sorce, Josh Janese, Rick Haight, Shannon Fundis, Donna Vazquez

EXCUSED Nick Schaeffer, Building Inspector/Zoning Officer Candella

CALL TO ORDER Chairman Machelor called the meeting to order at 6:47pm.

RESIDENTS **Local Business Owners – Sandwich Board Signs**

Chairman Machelor stated that this is not a public hearing; we are not required to listen at this time. We will entertain and listen to three people, with a time limit of two minutes each to express your concerns. This matter is not for the Planning Commission to discuss; the proposed law permitting sandwich board signs by application describing a hardship and special circumstances and board approval was sent to the Village Board of Trustees to make a decision.

Resident and business owner, Ron Craft, said that his business has done well over the years but not anymore. There are sandwich board signs permitted in other towns. We need to have something to draw people into the shops. This is a good city, but we are on the verge of losing its retail.

Viva Nostalgia owner, Roger Passero, said most people who walk by the stores are on their phone; I will watch 30 people walk by, and only three will look at the store, the rest are on their phone. I have an a-frame sign against the building to list everything that I sell. We are fighting to get people into the stores; those signs slow people down and gets them to come in.

Lewiston Love owner, Leandra Collesano, said that her store had the best business during the Covid-19 pandemic. People are not supporting local anymore like they used to. A sandwich board sign works wonders and draws people in, it should be considered a useful tool on Center Street. My business didn't make it, we are closing, and I know others are struggling too.

Machelor said we are not a business advisory committee; The Planning Commission's purpose is to apply the Village Code to projects brought to us. We have worked on this for months, trying to allow these signs to be permitted in the village. Somebody has to police this; I have spoken to other municipalities who had to hire an extra person just to enforce the rules and regulations for these types of signs. The law proposed to the Village Board of Trustees says sandwich board signs are not permitted unless you can justify to the Planning Board why you need it and what your hardship is; then we can recommend to the Village Board of Trustees and they can make a decision to approve or not. The public hearing for this proposed law will be on Tuesday, June 20, 2023. Please come to the meeting to speak about your issues.

Doreen Albee added that the existing Village Code does not allow any sandwich board signs in private or public areas; this endeavor is to try to help the businesses.

Mayor Welch said we have to change the law to allow these, as it is written now, we are unable to approve these signs because they are not permitted. But there does need to be rules and regulations. Hopefully we can come up with a compromise. We relaxed the law and allowed them during Covid, but Covid is over. We are trying to change the law to help you.

Passero agreed that the signs need to be put in a proper place and seek approval. Business owners have to do the right thing and police it too.

Joe Sorce said that is why we are at where we are now.

Josh Janese said we have five drafts with healthy dialogue over the past few

months and have been addressing inequities. We might not be business owners, but we have been trying to look at this from a business owner's perspective. This conversation has been going on.

Machelor thanked the business owners in attendance, and said I hope you do go to the public hearing and give the Village Board of Trustees the best solutions you have on how to get this done.

MINUTES A motion was made by Doreen Albee seconded by Josh Janese and passed with four yes votes to approve the April 10, 2023 minutes. Rick Haight abstained.

OLD **125 S. 1st Street & 65 Center Street – Retaining Wall**

BUSINESS Chairman Machelor stated that no new plans were submitted in time for the proposed retaining walls. Machelor stated that as the code was written, they were not thinking of including regulations about a fence being placed in the middle of an asphalt lot; there is an interpretation problem, so we have to go off our current regulations regarding height. Fences should not be any taller than four feet in a front or side yard, and no taller than six feet in the rear. If you came to us with a plan for a four-foot high sturdy fence we would have a difficult time prohibiting this; you have submitted a drawing today for a seven-foot high fence.

Applicant, John Kinney, said that he was asked by the Village at the last meeting to come back with a softer look, I have proposed a four-foot high wall with a three-foot architectural fence on top of that. I can't just put up a fence with four wheel drive trucks and snow plows driving through them.

Kinney's attorney asked if Kinney could fill out an application for a building permit to install a four-foot fence. Mayor Welch said no, that would also have to go to all boards for approval. Welch suggested that Kinney put up a two-foot block and a fence on top of that instead of a 4-foot wall.

Kinney said after 22 years, I have been asking as politely as possible for pedestrians not to trespass; I have a responsibility to my tenant and myself to use and protect my parking. I am here doing what a responsible business owner should be doing; your laws are minor actions.

Machelor said if you had submitted a plan to us, we wouldn't have liked what you proposed; it is unnecessarily large and intrusive. The Historic Preservation Commission reviews the aesthetics for the Village of Lewiston, and wanted you to soften the initial look you proposed, not make the fence taller.

Doreen Albee said to Kinney that you did not stay for the Planning Meeting on May 10, 2023 to present to us. What we need is a complete application for a revised plan; we cannot make judgement on what we haven't seen. I understand your concerns, but we do need a completed plan in advance to review to do fair justice for you. Albee told Kinney to review Appendix B Section 10 – Fences, walls and hedges, of the Village Code when working on a revised plan.

Kinney said I shouldn't have to do this; I have neighbors that force one to do this.

A motion was made by Doreen Albee seconded by Joe Sorce and passed unanimously to table this, pending a submission of updated plans for 125 S. 1st Street and 65 Center Street, and an application for the proposed retaining wall at 115 S. Water Street.

415 Ridge Street – Sign Application

A discussion ensued on the dimensions and placement of the proposed ground sign. It was clarified that the ground sign would be a 32SF single face, non-illuminated sign, with only the letters to change on the inside to display different events going on.

A motion was made by Joe Sorce seconded by Rick Haight and passed unanimously to approve the sign application for an 8ft x 4ft, 32SF, ground sign, to be placed 10ft from the property line, and not to exceed 8ft in height.

NEW
BUSINESS

761 Cayuga Street #4 – Sign Application

A motion was made by Josh Janese seconded by Doreen Albee and passed unanimously to approve the sign application as presented for Satori, located at 761 Cayuga Street #4.

900 Center – Sign Application

A discussion ensued on the proposed sign for Sue’s Frame of Mind. The proposed sign would be 16 inches from the side of the building, and the Village Code has a 24-inch requirement. Shannon Fundis informed the board of the Historic Preservation Commission’s recommendation to approve the sign centered over the door for aesthetic purposes.

A motion was made by Doreen Albee seconded by Joe Sorce and passed unanimously to approve the sign application for Sue’s Frame of Mind, located at 900 Center Street, with the sign centered over the doorway.

DEPUTY
CHAIR
REPORT

Doreen Albee mentioned upcoming training opportunities; there is an in person training in Albion on Tuesday, June 27, 2023 from 5pm-9:15pm. You would be able to achieve four hours of training credit in one evening. Applications must be submitted by email this Friday, June 16, 2023. NCCC trainings have not been announced yet. Also, there is a virtual training on July 12, 2023 from 12pm-1pm that Shannon Fundis sent out.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by seconded by and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:46pm.

Shannon Fundis, Clerk