

Pekin Zoning Board of Appeals
111S. Capital Street
City Council Chambers 2nd Floor
November 9, 2021
5:00 PM

Present: Bill Craig, Chris Deverman, Donald Hild, David Huskisson, Chris Lang, Mary Lanane, Kelly Madden, Steve Thompson.

The regular meeting of the Pekin Board of Appeals was called to order and a quorum was declared. Staff present: Matt Fick, Community Development Director, David Bess, Community Development Block Grant Program Manager, and Kathie Brown, Economic Development Program Support.

MOTION by Commissioner Thompson to approve the November 9, 2021, modified agenda seconded by Commissioner Hild. Motion carried 8-0.

Minutes for August, September, and October were all approved with all members present voting aye.

City Council Action Report – All recommendations submitted by the Zoning Board of Appeals were approved by City Council in October.

Case SU 2021- 15 Public Hearing Opened at 5:08 p.m.

A special use application by Crossroad Properties, LLC for the establishment of an Event Venue in an R-4 One Family Zoning District at 420 Walnut Street and 1111 5th Street.

Bonnie Harken presented public comment regarding the property as the most recent previous owner. She purchased the property in 2012 upon closure of the Henderson Funeral Home in 2010. The funeral home had been in business in that location since 1939. As part of the purchasing process, an SBA Loan was secured for the property which required city approval allowing the business. No documentation can be found on previous special use agreement.

Neighbors discussed what a great neighbor Ms. Harken had been. While there have been some events that ran late and guest may have overstepped property lines and privacy of neighbors, for the most part testimony appreciated the care that had been given to managing this event space yet remained concerned as to how the city can assure similar or better management going forward dealing with issues of noise, lights, traffic patterns, transfer of agreement to subsequent owners, and issues related to alcohol consumption during events.

Board discussion acknowledged concerns regarding appropriate buffers to be established between commercial property and private residency. During a subsequent council meeting, a new ordinance will be voted on to allow historic homes in residential districts to be utilized for special events and gatherings. All the concerns expressed by the public are addressed in the proposed ordinance or managed through other regulations.

Commissioner Madden made a motion to approve the request for a special use permit contingent upon passage of Ordinance No. 3034-21/22 by City Council, motion seconded by Commissioner Hild.
Motion carried 8-0.

Matt Fick reminded board members of the timeline for approval and posting of notices is a 15-day process. While we hope to not make a regular practice of calling special meetings, due to delays in the process we greatly appreciate everyone's willingness to work on behalf of businesses and the community making accommodations in your schedule to keep projects moving forward.

Next meeting will be November 22, at 4:30 p.m. to accommodate council meeting which follows there are two cases which will appear before the board.

Matt Fick introduced the topic of Air BnB's for consideration by the board. Kathie Brown has collaborated with staff to collect examples of how other communities are managing this increasingly popular type of overnight accommodations. While the activity in Pekin has been light, with eight known Air BnB Rentals, there is a need to look carefully at regulation that protects both the visitor and the neighborhood while supporting business development that enhances tourism. Copies of East Peoria's regulations were provided as an illustration of the best practices among communities, as they have set forth clear guidelines and provided notification to key city departments making them aware of this activity. Business registry will provide for life safety measures and provide valuable information that can further be utilized in marketing the community to visitors.

Adjourned 6:05 p.m.

Matt Fick, Secretary

Pekin Planning Commission