



MINUTES

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

**CITY HALL EAST ANNEX BUILDING
2434 VERMONT STREET
BLUE ISLAND, IL 60406**

Acting Commissioner Chairman Johanson called the meeting to order at 7:43 PM.

I. Roll Call

Present

James Johanson
Eric Frausto
Vonda Hardy
Joseph Martin

Staff

Howard M. Coppari, Development Manager
Mark Miller, Special Project Coordinator
Liz Flores, Administrative Assistance

Absent

Brandon Richardella
Jeffrey Atwell
Clifford Griffin

II. Approval of Minutes

Vote on the motion as follows: **NO PRIOR MINUTES WERE APPROVED**

| | |
|---------|----------|
| AYES | <u>0</u> |
| NAYS | <u>0</u> |
| ABSTAIN | <u>0</u> |
| ABSENT | <u>0</u> |

III. Public Comment

None

IV. Old Business

None

V. New Business

Special Use: 12757 Western Avenue, Blue Island, IL 60406, Jermaine Walker

A special use was applied for a "banquet hall" at the Olde Masonic Hall within the C1: Central Area Commercial Zone.

Minutes for the Zoning Board of Appeals (Continue)

Acting Commissioner Chair Johanson called to order the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. Mr. Johanson introduced Commissioner Martin, Commissioner Frausto, and Commissioner Hardy to Mr. Walker and the general public. He mentioned that the Zoning Board of Appeals had a quorum of four out of seven members. Mr. Johanson asked for everyone to stand up and pledge their alliance to the flag.

Acting Commissioner Chair Johanson introduced the applicant, Jermaine Walker, to the board and briefly stated the intent of the applicant for a catering and/or a banquet hall for the Olde Masonic Hall. Mr. Johanson then called on Mr. Walker to speak on his behalf.

Mr. Walker briefly described his special use in front of the board. Commissioner Hardy asked, "What was the special use for?"

[Jermaine Walker described his special use application in great details in front of the Planning Commission, which three members out of four Planning Commission members were present during the Plan Commission meeting. A lot was discussed on the description of the "banquet hall" use in contrast to the "private clubs and lodges" use. It was debated at the Planning Commission that "private clubs and lodges" was not the best use to classify a "banquet hall," but it was the closest use possible. Plan Commissioner Jason Barry stated that the zoning ordinance was very old and somewhat outdated in its classification, and a re-write is needed for the zoning ordinance. Commissioner Berry suggested that in the future the City should have a "banquet hall" description for 5,000 square feet or less use allowed in a C1 zone.]

Acting Chair Johanson said the Zoning Board did not allow for a banquet hall in a C1 district; therefore, a use was needed to make a use available for Mr. Walker. Mr. Johanson expressed a recommendation from the Planning Commission to make a change, eventually in the future, to allow for a banquet hall to be allowed for 5,000 square feet or less for C1 properties; so in the future, the Zoning Board would not have to hear cases involving a banquet hall as a special use.

Acting Chair Johanson commented that the Planning Commission sent their positive recommendation to the Zoning Board to make a decision on Mr. Walker's application. Mr. Johanson spoke about the current parking situation associated with the Olde Masonic Hall. He stated there are 12 to 14 parking spaces directly behind the building and the City lot, which is south of the property, contains about 57 parking spaces. Mr. Johanson directed Mr. Walker to continue to speak about his application.

Mr. Walker explained that his application process took a long time.

Commissioner Frausto asked Mr. Walker if he was applying for a liquor license. Mr. Walker replied he had no intentions in applying for a liquor license, and he would not allow for BYOB (Bring Your Own Booze) either. [The City does not allow BYOB within its boundaries.]

Commissioner Martin questioned Mr. Walker about the Illinois food handler license, and how he would serve food. Mr. Walker replied that he would not serve food, but people, who rent the banquet hall, can bring their own food.

However, Mr. Walker reiterated he would like to apply for the food handler license anyway. It would make sense for his business.

Minutes for the Zoning Board of Appeals (Continue)

Commissioner Martin asked Mr. Walker if the banquet hall would be located in the lower level. Mr. Walker replied yes. Commissioner Martin then asked who would rent the first floor space, which Mr. Walker replied it would be rented by "other" store front commercial businesses. He had nothing to do with the first floor businesses.

Development Manager Coppari said that Mr. Walker would only occupy a space of 58 feet by 56 feet or +/-3,248 square feet for the banquet hall. Mr. Coppari reiterated that the banquet hall is pretty large, and it would accommodate for 150 people or less. Mr. Coppari asked for Mr. Walker to restate the hours of operation for the banquet hall. Mr. Walker answered that the banquet hall would be open from Tuesday through Thursday from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM, Friday through Saturday from 10:00 AM to 1:00 AM, Sunday from 11:00 AM to 11:00 PM. and closed on Monday.

Commissioner Martin asked Mr. Johanson about the approval process for the special use. Acting Chair Johanson said that the Zoning Board would make a recommendation to the City Council, which would hear the recommendations from both the Plan Commission and the Zoning Board. Mr. Johanson mentioned that both the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals were scheduled tonight to hear Mr. Walker's application to help save time since Mr. Walker has lost a lot of time during the application review process.

Acting Chair Johanson voiced his concerns about the parking situation within that particular area of the city. Johanson explained that a lot of complaints came from the side streets off of Western Avenue, especially in the late hours, concerning people who would leave from another business establishment, directly across the street from the Olde Masonic Hall. Mr. Johanson opinionated that people were a "little loud and a little bit disrespectful to the neighbors and neighborhood." He expressed his concerns, and asked Mr. Walker how he will manage the banquet hall and how he will provide for security outside of the building, especially for people doing the old "drinking trick out of the trunk." Mr. Walker answered that he would provide for security inside and outside of the building, especially in the park lot areas.

Acting Chair Johanson asked if Mr. Walker was a lodge member, and Mr. Walker replied that he was a lodge member. Mr. Johanson asked Mr. Walker if it's true that Masonic Lodges do not allow for alcohol and gambling. Mr. Walker replied yes to Johanson's question that alcohol and gambling was not allowed in the lodge.

Acting Chair Johanson said that two complaints and one police report were discussed in the prior Planning Commission meeting, and he wanted to reiterate to the Zoning Board that Mr. Walker has reassured everybody that they were not his parties, which generated the complaints or police activity. Mr. Johanson cautioned that he wanted his members to be aware of these items if they were discussed at the City Council.

Mr. Walker clarified the complaint issues to the Board. Commissioners Martin and Hardy asked the applicant if he had ever hosted any parties at the Olde Mason Hall. Mr. Walker said no.

However, he did tell the board members that he has been going through the application process since December of 2017. Acting Chair Johanson chimed in and said people who either own or rent the building were probably involved in the problems associated with the two complaints and one police report, and not Mr. Walker.

Development Manager Coppari said that the police report mentioned the name "Charlie" as the person responsible for the problem, which is one of the owners of the building. Mr. Walker confirmed Charlie is an owner of the building, but he was not involved in the listed violations.

Minutes for the Zoning Board of Appeals (Continue)

Commissioner Frausto made a motion to approve the special use. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Martin. The board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the special use request to the City Council.

Acting Commissioner Chair Johanson wished Mr. Walker a lot of success on his business. However, he will watch for problems associated with parking and unruly conduct. Mr. Johanson does not want to see any trouble associated with this business within the neighborhood.

VI. Commissioners Comments

Acting Commissioner Chair Johanson reintroduced Howard Coppari as the new Community Development Manager to the Planning Commission members. Mr. Coppari recently started in Blue Island.

VII. Adjournment

On a motion by Acting Commissioner Chair Johanson, seconded by Commissioner Frausto, the board agreed to adjourn the meeting.

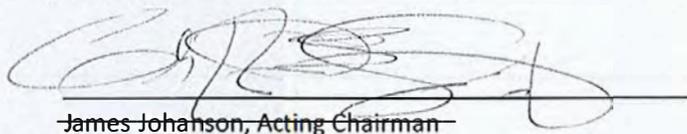
Vote on the motion as follows:

| | | |
|---------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| AYES | <u>4</u> | Johanson, Frausto, Martin, and Hardy |
| NAYS | <u>0</u> | |
| ABSTAIN | <u>0</u> | |
| ABSENT | <u>3</u> | Richardella, Atwell, and Griffin |

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 PM.

These minutes are not a verbatim record of the meeting, but a summary of the proceedings.

10-18-16
Date


~~James Johanson, Acting Chairman~~

Clifford Griffin, chairman, signed the minutes on behalf of James Johanson.