

MINUTES OF THE ZONING COMMITTEE
Thursday, June 2, 2011 - 3:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 3rd Floor
City Hall and Court House
15 West Kellogg Boulevard

PRESENT: Commers, Fernandez, Kramer, Merrigan, Nelson, and Wickiser
ABSENT: Spaulding (excused), Wencil (excused)
STAFF: Josh Williams, Samantha Langer, Patricia James, and Peter Warner

The meeting was chaired by Commissioner Kramer.

Gary Blair - 11-141-752 - Establishment of Legal Nonconforming Use for outdoor storage in a semi trailer, 1121 Minnehaha Ave E, NE corner at Frank

Josh Williams presented the staff report with a recommendation of approval with conditions for the establishment of nonconforming use permit. Josh Williams also stated District 4 recommended approval, and there was 1 letter in support, and 0 letters in opposition.

Upon inquiry from the Commissioners, Mr. Williams stated that the only other example of a semi trailer being used for storage, that he knew of, would be at Seven Corners Hardware. He also explained that the trailer is painted matte white and is well maintained.

The applicant, Gary Blair, 1769 Reaney Avenue, Saint Paul, stated he has been doing business in Saint Paul for over forty years. The trailer was on the property when he purchased it thirty five years ago. The building is not adequate to bring in rolls of carpet, and the trailer works very well for temporary storage, until it can be installed. He stated without the use of the trailer, he wouldn't be able to stay in business. Mr. Blair stated the trailer is not skirted because it would create problems. He explained that an enclosed area could be a shelter for rodents and stray cats and dogs. There is a lot of trash and abandon couches and mattresses on the other side of the alley, and the trailer blocks this view from their customers. Carpet Court maintains the property very well, and received an award in 2008, for creating an outstanding business garden from the City of Saint Paul's division of Parks and Recreation. They have plans to spruce up the property more this year. Mr. Blair explained that their employees have been with the company for a very long time. They have always worked well with the City.

At the questions of the Commissioners, Mr. Blair explained transferring deliveries from a truck to the trailer is very easy because of the similar height, and they do not have a forklift. He explained that personally he doesn't think that skirting the trailer with lattice would be a good idea. The lattice would be broken, and enclosing the area could make it a place where trash collects, and a possible shelter for stray animals. He would like to keep the area simple, plain and clean. The building has never had graffiti, but the trailer has, and they remove the graffiti the next day. They work very hard at keeping their property nice.

No one spoke in support or opposition.

The public hearing was closed.

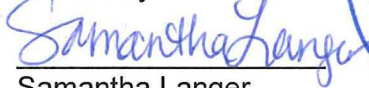
Commissioner Anthony Fernandez moved approval of the establishment of nonconforming use permit without the condition of adding lattice and vegetation. Commissioner Jon Commers seconded the motion.

After further discussion regarding the trailer being removed, once Mr. Blair is no longer the owner of the business, and upkeep of the property, conditions of approval were added. 1) The semi trailer storage is allowed as an accessory structure and use for a carpet and flooring business. When the use changes, the legal nonconforming status of the semi trailer will cease. 2) The semi trailer must be kept in good condition, painted a neutral color, and kept free of rust and graffiti. 3) The area surrounding the semi trailer shall be kept free of litter and debris.

The motion passed by a vote of 6-0-0.

Adopted Yeas - 6 Nays - 0 Abstained - 0

Drafted by:



Samantha Langer
Recording Secretary

Submitted by:



Josh Williams
Zoning Section

Approved by:



Richard Kramer
Chair