CITY OF CONWAY
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
THURSDAY, JULY 26, 2018
CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM – 229 MAIN STREET – 5:30 P.M.

Present: George Ulrich, Travis Dannelly, Charles Byrd, James Shelley, Blake Hewitt, Davis Inabnit

Absent: Catherine Dingle

Staff: Jessica Hucks, Zoning Administrator; Barbara Tessier, Secretary

Others: Anthony Jasiak, Tripp Nealy, Steve Usry, Robert Hucks

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. APPROVAL OF JUNE 28, 2018 MINUTES

III. VARIANCE REQUESTS

A. Coastal Carolina National Bank (CCNB): The applicant, Steve Usry, agent for Coastal Carolina National Bank, requests a variance from the strict application of the City of Conway Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), from Article 6, Section 6.5.1 – Upper Main Street Overlay District (MSO) and Article 8, Section 8.2.11 – Queuing Lanes, Table 8.2: Queuing Lane Requirements, for a proposed building at 900-C Main Street (TMS: 123-14-18-006 / PIN: 33813010029).

Dannelly recused himself from this item as he lives within the 200’ of the proposed bank. Hewitt, as Vice Chairman, then acted in Dannelly’s stead.

Prior to discussing the agenda item, Hewitt read the 4 criteria that must be met before a variance could be granted. Those are:

1. There must be extraordinary or exceptional conditions pertaining to the particular piece of property,
2. That the extraordinary or exceptional conditions do not generally apply to other property in the vicinity,
3. That because of the extraordinary or exceptional conditions, the application of the ordinance would effectively prohibit or unreasonably restrict the utilization of the property,

And;

4. The authorization of a variance will not be of substantial detriment to the adjacent property or the public good and the character of the district will not be harmed by granting a variance.
Hucks said CNB proposes to construct a bank at the corner of Ninth Ave and Main Street. The existing building will be demolished and the new building will encompass the existing footprint, with the addition of a drive-thru facility. The bank will utilize the existing parking.

Hucks said the applicant wished to keep the existing buffer widths where they exist, plant required plants where area permits, and to omit plantings in other areas. Hucks said they also requested to reduce queuing lane requirements from 4 to 2 car lengths.

Hucks said the CAB had approved the demolition of the existing building at their May 9, 2018 meeting.

Hucks said she had met with Nancy Lee of McAlpine, whose office building located adjacent to this building. She said Lee had concerns about the backing out of vehicles and there not being enough room.

Hewitt asked about the setbacks and Hucks said the setbacks were being met. She said if the buffers were to be installed, there would not be enough room.

Hucks said the applicant cites the following reasons for which the variance should be granted:

1. The property has a unique shape as a result of a subdivision in 1988 whereby it shares a common private driveway with 2 other properties. It is totally surrounded by permanent vehicular roads (travel ways) which limit parking to one location that fronts on Main & Ninth.
2. The property shares common areas with the two other properties, including landscaping, utilities and roads. However, the property has the majority of the Main & Ninth street frontage where buffering requirements are the most stringent.
3. Strict application of the ordinance would unreasonably restrict or prohibit use of the property, as it reduces the buildable area significantly and would therefore be unable to provide adequate banking facilities and safe customer access. The queuing requirement is excessive in today’s community bank uses that enhance public accessibility and safety.
4. The proposed development will maintain existing access and use of the adjacent properties without harm. It will be in character and keeping with the architecture of the area as witnessed by the initial approval of the Community Appearance Board.
5. The variance is being requested in order to provide functional, accessible, safe and adequate banking services to meet known community needs and expectations.

Steve Usry, the representative for the bank, said that the TRC has asked for a barrier to be installed at the drive-thru and they were going to install a
soft roll curb. He said it would not damage the vehicles moving through the lanes.

Usry said they also planned to move the building closer to Ninth Ave and by doing so would gain about 5’ in additional width at the drive-thru. Usry said that there was very little drive-thru traffic.

Robert Hucks, who was with the bank, said they were excited to be opening a branch on Main Street. He said with today’s technology, the bank itself was really just used if a customer needed to see someone. He said a study the bank did showed that with over 2,000 customers at the main office in Myrtle Beach, there were only about 7 cars per hour using the drive-thru. He said they did not anticipate any queuing issues.

Byrd asked about the stormwater. Usry said he had spoken to Kevin Chestnut, the City’s Public Works Director, and because the footprint would be the same, there would be no additional stormwater concerns.

There was discussion about putting more plans in a smaller. J. Hucks said the City had an arborist and they should contact her.

Inabnit made a motion, seconded by Byrd, to grant the variance as stated in the application. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried. Dannelly had recused himself from discussion and voting.

B. Grand Strand Auto Auction: The applicant, Charles Easler, requests a variance from the strict application of the City of Conway Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), from Article 11, Section 11.3.1 — Sign Regulations by Zoning District, Table 11.1: Sign Standards by District and Section 11.4.1 — Wall Signs, for property located at 1716 Husted Rd (TMS: 151-42-01-054 / PI 38300000348).

Hucks said the signage was all installed without a permit, and they were now requesting a variance to have 3 signs for this tenant space, which is more than allowed, and to allow for a second wall sign on a building face that does not have a public entrance and is also not located on a corner lot.

Hucks said this property was zoned Heavy Industrial (HI). This zoning permits a maximum of two signs per tenant space and a maximum sign area of 200 sq. ft. per tenant space. Hucks said Grand Strand Auto Auction counted as one tenant space, as there are no other businesses located within this building nor were there separate units. She said that the ordinance required wall signs to be located on a building face that has a public entrance. Only one wall sign per side of a façade per tenant will be allowed. A second wall sign will be allowed on another façade if the building is located on a corner lot or if there is a second public entrance. Additionally, wall signs may not exceed 15% of the building face where the sign is attached or 100 sq. ft., whichever is less. Without knowing the façade
measurements for each side of this building, staff is unable to know conclusively whether the sign(s) installed meet the size requirements, however both sides are likely large enough to permit a wall sign up to 100 sq. ft. Based on the measurements provided, each wall sign is approx. 60.5 sq. ft. They are vinyl letters applied to the metal awning of the building. This lot is not considered a corner lot or building, and there is only one public entrance.

Both wall signs total approx. 121 sq. ft. Max sign area permitted per tenant space is 200 sq. ft. Staff is also aware of an unpermitted freestanding post sign on this property that also needs to be reviewed by staff. The square footage of that sign must be taken into consideration with the variance request, along with the fact that a variance will also be needed for the total number of signs per tenant space allowed.

Hucks said the applicant cites the following reasons for which the variance should be granted.

1. The extra signage is needed for customers to be able to locate them.
2. Extraordinary conditions which pertain to this property are particular to this property in that the property adjacent to this one is owned by a partner and will remain vacant.
3. Strict application of the ordinance would not unreasonable restrict or prohibit the use of the property.
4. Granting the variance will not hard adjacent property, the character of the area or the public good.
5. The variance is initiated because of logistics, so that customer transport companies can find them easier.

Inabnit said he thought there was a door around the back of the building. Hucks said she did not know if it was a public entrance. Jasiak, who was representing the business, said it was a public entrance.

Inabnit asked if the freestanding sign had been there for the previous business. Hucks said she did not know. Jasiak said it would not be an issue to remove the freestanding sign.

Ulrich asked Hucks if removing the freestanding sign would remove the need for a variance. Hucks said it would not. She said the issue would still be two wall signs.

Ulrich made a motion, seconded by Inabnit, to grant a variance to allow the two wall signs, but the freestanding sign would have to be removed. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried.

IV. PUBLIC INPUT

There was none.
V. BOARD INPUT
There was none.

VI. STAFF INPUT
There was none.

VII. ADJOURN
There being no further business to come before the Board, Inabnit made a motion, seconded by Hewitt, to adjourn the meeting. The vote in favor was unanimous. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Approved and signed this 23rd day of August, 2018.

Travis Dannelly, Chairman