

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE  
PIPERTON PLANNING COMMISSION  
July 11, 2023, 6:00 P.M.**

The Piperton Planning Commission met on July 11, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., at City Hall, with Board members: Mayor Henry Coats, Vice-Mayor Mike Binkley, Commissioner Mimi Ragon, and Commissioner Bob Archer. Chairman John Henszey was absent. Fire Chief Reed Bullock, City Planner Brett Morgan, Building Official Elizabeth Reed, and City Recorder Beverly Holloway were also present along with Jim Ragon, Vicki Hancock, Mark Allmon, Michael Tushek, Michael and Betsy Florio (Ameriflo), Michelle Howard-Flynn, Douglas Baker, Jeff Savage, and et al in the audience. City Engineer Harvey Matheny was absent.

**Agenda item 1.** Call to order, establish quorum

**Action taken:** Vice-Chairman Bob Archer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and established that a quorum was present.

**Agenda item 2.** Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag

**Action taken:** Vice-Chairman Archer led in the opening Prayer and Vice-Mayor Mike Binkley led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**Agenda item 3.** Any changes to Agenda; Additions/Deletions; Motion to adopt the Agenda

**Action taken:** There were no changes to the Agenda, Vice-Mayor Mike Binkley moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Mayor Henry Coats. The Motion received all affirmative votes.

**Agenda item 4.** Any changes to the Minutes of the Regular Session of June 13, 2023; Motion to approve the Minutes of the Regular Session of June 13, 2023

**Action taken:** There were no changes to the Minutes of the Regular Session of June 13, 2023, Mayor Coats moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Session of June 13, 2023 as presented, seconded by Commissioner Mimi Ragon. The Motion received all affirmative votes.

**Agenda item 5.** Consideration of Final Site Plan approval of Ameriflo plan

Applicant: Michael J. Florio, President & CEO of Ameriflo; Design: ETI Corporation

City Planner Brett Morgan stated on June 13<sup>th</sup> the proposed Ameriflo site plan was reviewed and approved by this body for Preliminary Site Plan and Design Review of a 110,508 square foot operations facility on lot 4 of the Wittichen Industrial Subdivision. It is a manufacturing building with the office upfront, the warehousing in the back and parking on the sides and on the front. Staging areas also on the sides and a drive that completely wraps the site. The aspects of the site plan are in order as far as meeting the requirements for site planning that Piperton requires absent a few things. The parking spaces are the 10 x 20 which is the 200 square foot minimums that we required. There are a few items from preliminary PC approval on page two of the staff report that need to be addressed: 1) Textual inconsistencies, 2) Handicap parking spaces, 3) Parking island every 10 spaces, 4) Elevations noting wainscotting and 5)

Signage. (2nd Wall sign shown on western elevation). On the textual inconsistencies, I am not going to go through these. These are a few things that the engineer and I found that just need to say the same thing throughout their plans and we will make sure that is done before final sign off on the plans. On the Handicap parking, they show 2 but ADA will require 3 spaces. So, they will have to add another parking space. We do provide in our Design Guidelines that runs of parking over 10 spaces would require an island so you need to turn one of those parking spaces into a landscape island and any place there is over 10 need to be looked at in that regard. I did want to note one thing that I missed in preliminary; this heavy line on the plans is actually a retaining wall with segmented block. It is not high enough that it would require a rail; but there will be a view of this retaining wall because the low side is on the interstate side and so we want to talk a little bit more about that as we move forward. An off-site drainage swale is proposed across lots 2 and 3, to convey stormwater. A meeting was conducted between lot/property owners with general consensus from all parties. There are several areas for storage and mechanical equipment. I have realized that this view from the interstate is right up against the back of this building and I thought we should discuss it. Whether or not we feel like this needs to be broken up a little bit with some additional landscaping. There are existing trees along the interstate that will not be cut down, some will I believe, but I believe there will be a view from that the DRC may want to take into consideration with this approval. Several things that could be done is to plant a few evergreen trees along this top bank even though it is the detention area as long as it is not shrubs or something that drops a lot of leaves.

Commissioner Ragon inquired how long the wall is to which Mr. Morgan stated 200 feet.

Mayor Coats inquired if there will be a sign to which Mr. Morgan stated that is what they are proposing tonight.

Mr. Morgan stated the segment wall is a good-looking wall. It doesn't necessarily need anything in front of it but I am just suggesting ways by which the DRC might want to look at entertaining doing a little something extra in the back for the view from the interstate. It won't be a bad view without it but a little landscaping back there might not hurt.

Commissioner Archer inquired on the height of the wall to which Mr. Morgan replied at its tallest, it is approximately 4 feet and no rail is required. Mr. Morgan stated a view of that wall from the interstate will not look bad it is more the massive wall of the building that I think the Planning Commission may want to consider. There is also the idea that the wainscoting that they have on front could be required on the back wall to give it a little extra texture.

Vice-Mayor Binkley stated softening the back of the building would be okay but I won't say we need to screen it. But adding a few softening height plants would be ok such as 30-foot evergreens.

Mr. Morgan stated we would ask that you add a few evergreens up against the back of the building about 5 or 10 feet from it to soften it up some. A little bit of softening meets the expectations of what the Planning Commission has discussed in the past about this kind of thing and at the same time it is not a huge expense on the development. Just resubmit the landscape plan to me with the changes. The only other

discussion item is the sign issue. We received a new set of signage today. They have submitted for three signs (2 building signs and 1 wall sign).

Mayor Coats inquired on the blue letters.

Michelle Howard-Flynn stated that is our trade mark.

Mr. Morgan stated on the first set submitted; we made the comment that the white lettering with the red does match what the City has been requiring of all commercial and industrial development. White lettering with some coloring allowed of this type before, the next images are what was submitted earlier today showing where the signage is to be placed along the west elevation, east elevation and south elevation. The wall sign on the south elevation will not be allowed if they install on the west elevation (backside) of the building. The plan also shows a monument sign. The change was that the ground mounted sign showed the blue lettering with a halo background. I did speak with Doug today about the fact that the DRC has been requiring for some time now that all commercial and industrial development to have white lettering in their signage. They can consider other colors if deemed necessary. All signs will have the halo glow. The total square footage of the signage (back, front and ground mounted sign) does meet the allowable square footage for signage. As far as the site plan is concerned, if they can adjust a few things regarding parking, and additional landscaping. The engineering plan is fine. If we can get the signage set then staff would recommend approval but it is the DRC deciding what they wish to do about signage.

Vice-Mayor Binkley stated I would like to stay consistent with what we have made everyone else do.

Ms. Howard-Flynn stated these colors are part of our logo, our trade mark.

Mayor Coats stated we understand but if FedEx comes into town, we will have white signage.

Ms. Howard-Flynn inquired if you would be happier if the background was white and leaving the lettering blue?

Vice-Chairman Archer stated the coloring is the issue. We have gone standard with the lighter colors.

Commissioner Ragon stated we have allowed one letter to be their logo.

Michael Florio stated the Power Tel and Pyramex buildings have black, blue and white in their logos.

Mayor Coats stated yes, but that was before we changed our specifications.

Mr. Florio stated when we met in Collierville and you asked me to consider Piperton, we talked about those two buildings and at no time did you tell me yeah but now we're were going to sanitize the logo. That would have been a decision that I would have made. This is a critical part of how we globally market. I have people coming from 80 countries to this building.

Mr. Morgan questioned where the previous signage came from.

Mr. Baker stated the sign vendor was playing with it because there were questions about white lettering.

Mr. Morgan inquired so; you have never had that sign before.

Mr. Florio stated the company had done the signs for the other companies and white is possibly what they are asking for so that is why it was drawn. We have never had a sign like that. That American theme is part of our logo. This would be the only

place where our name doesn't have our company colors. It is everywhere else. We did the backlight to make it stand out and we wanted it to look nice too.

Mr. Morgan stated the backlite sign does put off a white glow around it.

Mr. Florio stated it has LED lights behind it and he did say the letters would be illuminated too because it would bleed through the blue.

Vice-Chairman Archer stated is this a copyrighted trademark?

Ms. Howard-Flynn stated a trademark and when we filed the trademark with the United States trademark office, we specified the colors was part of the trademark/logo.

Vice-Chairman Archer stated if it is a trademark, could we possibly allow this in this instance. We have been very adamant with people coming before us about getting away from all different colored signs. We are trying to standardize what is in the city but everything they have done is very good but I would ask the other Commissioners; would you consider this?

Mr. Morgan stated my concern on the rear elevation is that it doesn't read well at all in the day but at night it will.

Mr. Morgan stated there is precedent for the trademark having color.

Vice-Chairman Archer stated we have reached an agreement on this and we can move forward.

Mr. Morgan stated with these conditions, and of course they will have to resubmit plans for pending changes along with the textual things that we will note. There are 22 basic conditions which would cover all of these but if this body wants to add a condition stating the Ameriflo colors are allowed because of the trademark that would codify it for future reference.

Mayor Coats stated it would be better to do it.

Mr. Morgan stated condition 23 reads Ameriflo trademark colors are allowed for 2 wall signs and 1 ground mounted sign. The building inspector will note if the sign is not on the backside.

**Action taken:** Vice-Mayor Binkley moved to approve the final site plan approval acting as the DRC and the Planning Commission with the 23 conditions, seconded by Mayor Coats. The Motion received all affirmative votes.

#### **Agenda item 6.** Discussion of the previously amended Lighting Ordinance

Mr. Morgan stated when we were dealing with lot 1A of the Gateway Plaza, we started discussing the canopy lighting and how high it was relative to the lighting maximums that our ordinance said. That prompted a research effort in which I found some of the original material that had been provided to me by the City Manager when I first started working here. I found that there was a mock up of the lighting ordinance in which the mockup states the lighting under canopy shall not exceed a maintained average horizontal illumination level of twenty (20) foot candles and it had been changed from six (6) foot candles to twenty (20) foot candles. We had said they could do twenty (20) and I was going to have the ordinance changed to twenty based on evidence that we had found. But in going back and doing some review of it. It was found that in 2007, Ordinance 111-07 was approved that did change section 11.1.6 (lighting requirements) however back then the master copy of the zoning ordinance was not updated. So, we are good with the twenty (20) and the master copy has been updated. I wanted to bring you up to speed on it. I have called the applicant and said they are good with reducing their twenty-seven (27) to twenty (20) now. I have called

Mo Hamoud (Piperton Fast Lane), where they had used a maximum of six (6) foot candles under canopy and he has sold the business to Piperton Operations. I have called the Store Manager (Connie Mitchell) and told her that while the canopy is fine to leave it at six (6) but if they want to increase it to twenty (20) by law they can do it. And if they do it to please send me a photometric plan for the file. So, we have updated anybody that was negatively affected which was only one by the miss of the overall zoning ordinance being updated.

**Agenda item 7.** Any other unfinished/new business, questions or matters from the audience

Vice-Mayor Binkley stated I don't know what our ordinance is but we have approved commercial properties that have dead plants. We need to make sure they bring those back up to their original specifications.

Mr. Morgan stated that is something we can do through the building department.

Mayor Coats inquired if there are specifications in the ordinance and inquired if Building Official Elizabeth Reed has spoken with Circle K to which she stated that Thomas (Code Enforcement) has and she will get with him.

Vice-Mayor Binkley stated MCR has all their plants are dead.

Vice Chairman Archer stated once it is approved, it has to stay the way it is approved. They can't just let it be dead.

Mr. Morgan stated we can require them to change the plants out but through this Ameriflo review because Mr. Baker had showed me where they were planning on irrigating. I thought you are required to irrigate wherever there is new planting and I went back to the ordinance and it doesn't really require irrigation wherever new planting occurs.

Vice-Mayor Binkley stated I thought it needed irrigation regardless.

Mr. Morgan stated we have been putting it in the conditions but we need to change the ordinance.

Vice-Mayor Binkley stated we have a handful of places that need to replace the plants and they don't have to plant them as big as they are now but replace with 5-inch caliber.

**Agenda item 8.** Adjournment

**Action taken:** Mayor Coats moved for adjournment, seconded by Commissioner Ragon. The Motion received all affirmative votes, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Holloway, City Recorder

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_