

**Excerpt from the
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Minneapolis Community Planning & Economic Development (CPED)**

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 30, 2014

TO: Zoning and Planning Committee

FROM: Jason Wittenberg, Manager, Community Planning & Economic Development – Land Use, Design and Preservation

SUBJECT: Planning Commission decisions of August 25, 2014

The following actions were taken by the Planning Commission on August 25, 2014. As you know, the Planning Commission's decisions on items other than rezonings, text amendments, vacations, 40 Acre studies and comprehensive plan amendments are final subject to a ten calendar day appeal period before permits can be issued.

Commissioners present: President Tucker, Bender, Brown, Forney, Gagnon, Gisselman, Luepke-Pier and Slack – 8

Not present: Kronzer (excused)

Committee Clerk: Lisa Kusz (612) 673-3710

3. Eastside Food Co-op (BZZ-6657, Ward: 1), 2529-2551 Central Ave NE ([Mei-Ling Anderson](#)).

A. Rezoning: Application by Paul D. Anderson of WCL Associates, on behalf Eastside Food Co-op, for a petition to rezone the properties located at 2529 and 2535 Central Ave NE from the C1 Neighborhood Commercial District to the C2 Neighborhood Corridor Commercial District.

Action: The City Planning Commission and City Council adopt the findings and **approve** the rezoning petition to change the zoning classification at the properties located at 2529 and 2535 Central Ave NE from the C1 Neighborhood Commercial District to the C2 Neighborhood Corridor Commercial District.

Aye: Bender, Brown, Forney, Gagnon, Gisselman, Luepke-Pier and Slack

Absent: Kronzer

B. Variance: Application by Paul D. Anderson of WCL Associates, on behalf Eastside Food Co-op, for a variance to reduce the minimum window requirement below 40 percent along 26th Ave NE in the PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District for the properties located at 2529-2551 Central Ave NE.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the application for a variance to reduce the minimum window requirement below 40 percent along 26th Ave NE in the PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District at the properties located at 2529-2551 Central Ave NE.

Aye: Bender, Brown, Forney, Gagnon, Gisselman, Luepke-Pier and Slack

Absent: Kronzer

C. Variance: Application by Paul D. Anderson of WCL Associates, on behalf Eastside Food Co-op, for a variance to increase the maximum allowed parking lot frontage along Central Ave NE from 60 feet to approximately 110 feet in the PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District for the properties located at 2529-2551 Central Ave NE.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the application for a variance to increase the maximum allowed parking lot frontage along Central Ave NE from 60 feet to approximately 110 feet in the PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District at the properties located at 2529-2551 Central Ave NE.

Aye: Bender, Brown, Forney, Gagnon, Gisselman, Luepke-Pier and Slack

Absent: Kronzer

D. Variance: Application by Paul D. Anderson of WCL Associates, on behalf Eastside Food Co-op, for a variance to replace an existing two-story building with a surface parking lot in the PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District for the properties located at 2529-2551 Central Ave NE.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the application for a variance to replace an existing one-story building with a surface parking lot in the PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District at the properties located at 2529-2551 Central Ave NE.

Aye: Bender, Brown, Forney, Gagnon, Gisselman, Luepke-Pier and Slack

Absent: Kronzer

E. Variance: Application by Paul D. Anderson of WCL Associates, on behalf Eastside Food Co-op, for a variance to increase the maximum allowed area for a projecting sign in the C2 Neighborhood Corridor Commercial District from 20 square feet to 47 square feet for the properties located at 2529-2551 Central Ave NE.

Action: Notwithstanding staff recommendation, the City Planning Commission **approved** the application for a variance to increase the maximum allowed area for a projecting sign in the C2 Neighborhood Corridor Commercial District from 20 square feet to 47 square feet at the properties located at 2529-2551 Central Ave NE, based on the following findings:

1. The design of the sign will minimize impacts on surrounding properties.
2. The architectural nature of the sign adds interest to the appearance of the building.
3. The visibility of the signage to the south is important.
4. The amount of signage is not that significant so the projecting sign is reasonable.
5. Existing sign could remain in place with nonconforming rights, but new sign would have less impact on the pedestrian environment.

Aye: Bender, Brown, Forney, Gagnon, Gisselman, Luepke-Pier and Slack

Absent: Kronzer

F. Variance: Application by Paul D. Anderson of WCL Associates, on behalf Eastside Food Co-op, for a variance to increase the maximum allowed height of a projecting sign from two feet above the roof line to 7'-2" above the roof line for the properties located at 2529-2551 Central Ave NE.

Action: Notwithstanding staff recommendation, the City Planning Commission **approved** the application for a variance to increase the maximum allowed height of a projecting sign from two feet above the roof line to 7 feet-2 inches above the roof line at the properties located at 2529-2551 Central Ave NE, based on the following findings:

1. The design of the sign will minimize impacts on surrounding properties.
2. The architectural nature of the sign adds interest to the appearance of the building.
3. The visibility of the signage to the south is important.
4. The amount of signage is not that significant so the projecting sign is reasonable.
5. Existing sign could remain in place with nonconforming rights, but new sign would have less impact on the pedestrian environment.

Aye: Bender, Brown, Forney, Gagnon, Gisselman, Luepke-Pier and Slack

Absent: Kronzer

G. Site Plan Review: Application by Paul D. Anderson of WCL Associates, on behalf Eastside Food Co-op, for a site plan review for 5,835 square foot addition to an existing commercial building located at 2529-2551 Central Ave NE.

Action: The City Planning Commission adopted the findings and **approved** the site plan review application to allow a 5,835 square foot addition to an existing commercial building at the properties located at 2529-2551 Central Ave NE, subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval of the final site, elevation, floor, fixture, landscaping, and lighting plans by CPED.
2. All site improvements shall be completed by October 3, 2016, unless extended by the zoning administrator, or the permit may be revoked for non-compliance.
3. The applicant shall submit a revised lighting plan showing compliance with Chapter 535, General Rules of Applicability.
4. All signs shall comply with Chapter 541 of the Zoning Code. All new signage requires a separate permit from CPED.
5. The east wall of the addition facing the parking lot shall contain architectural elements to prevent a blank wall exceeding 25 feet in width as required by section 530.120 of the zoning code.
6. The 26th Avenue Northeast elevation shall contain no less than 20 percent windows that meet the height, transmittance, and other requirements contained in section 530.120 of the zoning code.
7. The curb cut to the public alley along the east property line shall be eliminated.
8. The applicant shall provide no fewer than one additional canopy tree on-site in a required landscaped yard to comply with the minimum tree and shrub requirement.
9. The applicant shall comply with the screening requirements along both the west and east parking frontage areas per section 530.160 of the zoning code.

Aye: Bender, Brown, Forney, Gagnon, Gisselman, Luepke-Pier and Slack

Absent: Kronzer

Staff Anderson presented the staff report.

Commissioner Luepke-Pier: For the sign variances, are we measuring from the roof that's immediately adjacent to the sign up or are we measuring from the higher parapet farther to the left?

Staff Anderson: We'd be measuring from here.

Commissioner Brown: Is the sign that faces north not considered a projecting sign because that area is considered part of the roof line?

Staff Anderson: It will be an attached sign.

Commissioner Brown: Does the property owner have any nonconforming rights to the existing box or cabinet sign on the tower there or does the site plan review simply trigger full compliance with everything including signs?

Staff Anderson: The applicant is proposing to remove the existing signage that I think you're referring to on the south end of the building. As proposed it would be all new signage and it has to comply.

President Tucker opened the public hearing.

Paul Anderson (not on sign-in sheet): I'm with WCL Architects. There isn't a specific hardship that we have with the sign. Here are some photos of the existing sign. That sign is approximately 140-150 square feet. That fin is 17 feet and 8 inches above the roof. Here is what we're proposing. What we have is what we think is elegant and more contemporary. Here we compare the existing to the new with an outline. We think we've reduced the scale and size of the sign considerably. We think we've gone from a backlit box sign, very cheap and run of the mill and come up with something that is unique and fun. We're hoping it turns into a bit of an icon or landmark for people in the neighborhood.

Commissioner Luepke-Pier: Do you have any renderings that would show what a pedestrian experience from the sidewalk would be?

Paul Anderson: I don't have any renderings of that. With the building addition that we're doing, that would cover up most of the existing sign just because the building is set back five feet. If that was out at the property line you really wouldn't see it walking down the sidewalk.

Commissioner Luepke-Pier: But you would see the new sign.

Paul Anderson: Yes, you will see the new sign.

President Tucker closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Brown: I will move staff recommendation for items A, B, C and D (Luepke-Pier seconded).

Aye: Bender, Brown, Forney, Gagnon, Gisselman, Luepke-Pier and Slack

Absent: Kronzer

Commissioner Brown: I will move to approve items E and F (Luepke-Pier seconded). I think with respect to any potential negative impacts of the variance on surrounding properties, those impacts would be very minimal. I think the architectural nature of the proposed projecting sign really adds to the overall quality of appearance of the building and adds interest to a building that otherwise has flat roof planes. With respect to having a practical difficulty, I think it's important for this business to be able to the south. I think from the north they have a little bit better opportunity since that sign facing 26th Ave is a little bit higher. The overall amount of signage is not all that great so I think it's reasonable to allow the projecting sign as proposed.

President Tucker: On the last finding, are you saying it's because of the design of the sign being hollow that it's less of an impact?

Commissioner Brown: Yes. I think the design will minimize any potential impacts.

Commissioner Luepke-Pier: I think if they left the existing signage there, which they could opt to do, that they would have a much bigger sign that has more of an impact on the pedestrian realm than this which is a considerably smaller sign with considerably less impact on the pedestrian environment.

President Tucker: Is it determined that they could have kept that sign?

Staff Wittenberg: I don't know about structurally, but certainly from a zoning regulatory standpoint they could keep the sign in place and have nonconforming rights for that.

Aye: Bender, Brown, Forney, Gagnon, Gisselman, Luepke-Pier and Slack

Absent: Kronzer

Commissioner Brown: I will move staff recommendation to approve item G (Slack seconded).

Aye: Bender, Brown, Forney, Gagnon, Gisselman, Luepke-Pier and Slack

Absent: Kronzer