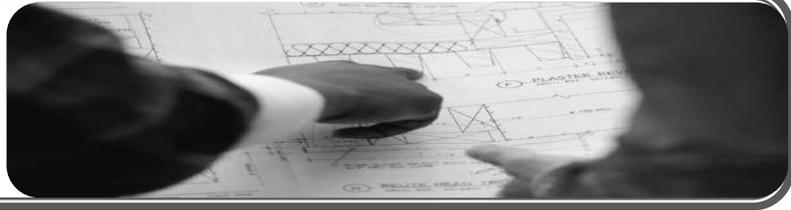


**WARREN CITY  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 18, 2013**



The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held on September 18, 2013, in the Conference Room of the Municipal Building at 7:30 AM.

**ROLL CALL**

Chairman Don Nelson called the meeting to order. Members present were: Charles Conaway, Robert Dilks, Jr., Gregory Fraser, Kenneth Holtz, Donald Nelson, Pat Scutella, and William Tarpenning. David Hildebrand, Planner/Development Administrator, and Teena Leary, Executive Secretary, were present.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence to come before the Commission.

**VISITORS**

Visitors present were Thomas Paquette and Keith Kirsch representing the Crary Art Gallery and Brian Ferry, Times Observer reporter.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon motion by Mr. Dilks and second by Mr. Conaway, the minutes of the July 17, 2013 regular meeting were unanimously approved.

**BUSINESS:**

**CRARY ART GALLERY SIGN**

Mr. Hildebrand stated that the Crary Art Gallery recently installed a wall sign at its location on Market Street which is in an R-3 Zoning District. He further noted that the Gallery would be deemed a public/semi-public use for which a wall sign in this district may be a maximum of four square feet and the new sign is significantly larger. Prior signage at the Gallery was a ground sign for which a permit was issued in 2001.

Thomas Paquette and Keith Kirsch, representing the Crary Art Gallery, addressed the Commission and stated that the intent of the Crary Board was to design a wall sign which would "artistically soften" the stone structure. It was noted that out-of-town visitors to the Gallery often found it difficult to locate and it was believed that the wall sign would alleviate this issue. It was acknowledged that throughout the design process the Gallery Board was not aware that a sign permit would be required and it was stated that the contractor who constructed and installed the sign did not inform the Board of this requirement.

Mr. Hildebrand outlined the options available to the Crary Board in making application to the City of Warren Zoning Hearing Board for a variance to the sign ordinance. He noted that in order for a variance to be granted, the hardship must not be of the owner's making. Mr. Hildebrand also stated that the Planning Commission could choose to consider an amendment to the sign ordinance which would accommodate signage of this nature.

Following considerable discussion, Mr. Fraser made the motion to submit correspondence to the Zoning Hearing Board in support of the granting of a variance. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dilks and carried unanimously. Mr. Nelson indicated that he would draft the correspondence and provide it to Commission members for their approval.

### **RESIDENTIAL USE IN C-1 DISTRICT**

Mr. Hildebrand noted that residential use of a structure within a C-1 Zoning District is currently permitted on only those levels above the ground floor. Multi-family use may be permitted with a special exception. However, there are approximately eighteen structures within this district which existed prior to current zoning regulations and were designed and built to be used solely for residential purposes. One such structure is currently for sale.

Commission members discussed the need for housing in close proximity to the downtown area and the need to preserve historic structures. Mr. Scutella suggested that consideration be given to permitting a structure located within the C-1 portion of the Historic District and designed as a single-family dwelling to be returned to such use.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.