



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota

Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Sq Dr NE
Blaine MN 55449

Legislation Text

File #: RES 14-097, Version: 2

DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS - *Bryan K. Schafer, Planning and Community Development Director*

**GRANTING A 22-FOOT VARIANCE TO THE 30-FOOT FRONT YARD PARKING
SETBACK RESULTING IN AN 8-FOOT SETBACK TO ALLOW FOR 20
ADDITIONAL PARKING STALLS ALONG HIGHWAY 65 AT 1416 93rd LANE NE
BLAINE CENTRAL PLAZA (CASE FILE NO. 14-0020/LSJ)**

Planning Commission (Public Hearing)	05/13/14
City Council (Variance)	06/05/14
Action Deadline	06/09/14

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve the variance. The property owner and the owner of Ole Piper Inn spoke on their behalf.

The owner of the multi-tenant building that is the home to Ole Piper Inn and several other tenants is requesting the approval of a 22-foot variance to the 30-foot front yard parking setback to allow for additional parking stalls to be created along the property's border with Highway 65. This would leave an 8-foot setback between the property line and the curb of the parking area.

The applicant, Classic Construction, provided a narrative on behalf of the property owner explaining why they believe the extra parking is necessary. The proposed plan allows for 20 additional stalls for the property and they indicate they believe more parking is needed for the entire building. They indicate that more parking is needed even though there is on street parking allowed for a portion of Baltimore Street. The site has demonstrated that additional parking is needed in the evenings and on some weekends and while we would not generally consider the site non-conforming in terms of parking, the restaurant/bar combination, with today's more flexible requirements on food/alcohol service, was not calculated in the initial site design.

Within the past year, the City Council has approved a plan that allows parking on Baltimore Street during certain business hours. This allows for approximately 12 on street parking stalls. Council has directed staff to create several on street parking options to allow parking for the

entire length of Baltimore Street. To date these options have not been scheduled for a council meeting.

In this particular case, staff recognizes that additional parking would be beneficial to the site but that recommending approval of the variance is difficult to justify. Staff is requesting the City Council weigh the benefits and rationale for either denial or approval as outlined below.

Staff is not able to recommend approval of the variance based on the following rationale:

1. The City has established setbacks for specific reasons that include safety, preserving green space and aesthetics. Approving a variance for the site could prove to be a safety concern due to the parking lots proximity to Highway 65, it eliminates a good portion of green space in the front yard of the site and it may not be aesthetically pleasing to general public traveling on Highway 65.
2. Granting a variance would confer special privileges on this property owner that have been denied other property owners within the same zoning district.
3. If a variance is granted it could be detrimental to the validity of the Zoning Ordinance.
4. Expansion of the parking area and elimination of the green space (setback) may be problematic for future Highway 65 and 93rd Lane design changes or expansion.

The Planning Commission reviewed the application and voted to recommend approval of the variance based on the following rationale:

1. The City could eliminate the need to provide on street parking if a variance is granted for this property.
2. This is a non-conforming site in terms of parking requirements and the variance would come closer to meeting the Zoning Ordinance requirements for number of parking stalls on site.
3. The City can require the applicant to provide landscaping improvements along Highway 65 to mitigate the impacts of the variance if it is granted to ensure the site remains aesthetically pleasing. Landscaping to consist of 5-6 ornamental trees with shrub beds along the west edge of the new parking.

The attached resolution has been written consistent with the Planning Commission's approval recommendation.

Attachments

Zoning and Location Map

Proposed Site Plan

Memo From Classic Construction

WHEREAS, an application has been filed by Blaine Central Plaza as variance Case File No. 14-0020; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing has been held by the Blaine Planning Commission on May 13, 2014; and

WHEREAS, the Blaine Planning Commission recommends said variance be approved; and

WHEREAS, the Blaine City Council has reviewed said case on June 5, 2014.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Blaine that a variance is hereby approved per Section 30.14 (h) of the Zoning Code to Blaine Central Plaza, with the following rationale:

1. The City could eliminate the need to provide on street parking if a variance is granted for this property.
2. This is a non-conforming site in terms of parking requirements and the variance would come closer to meeting the Zoning Ordinance requirements for number of parking stalls on site.
3. Staff to review landscaping issues with the applicant to create a pleasing design that does not obstruct traffic.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Blaine this 5th day of June 2014.