



City of Aurora

44 East Downer Place
Aurora, Illinois 60505
www.aurora-il.org

Legistar History Report

File Number: 15-00818

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Type: Ordinance

Status: ATS Review

Version: 4

General Ledger #:

In Control: Planning & Development Committee

File Created: 09/03/2015

File Name: Hollywood Casino Aurora / 1-2 W New York Street / New Signage / Special Sign District

Final Action:

Title: An Ordinance Establishing a Special Sign District for Hollywood Casino located at 1 & 2 W. New York Street

Notes:

Agenda Date: 10/15/2015

Agenda Number:

Sponsors:

Enactment Date:

Attachments: Exhibit A Legal Description - 2015-09-03 - 2015.167.pdf, Exhibit B Special Sign District- 2015-09-03 - 2015.167.pdf, FoxWalk Certificate of Appropriateness - 1 W. New York Street.pdf, FoxWalk Certificate of Appropriateness - 2 W. New York Street.pdf, Signage Elevations- 2015-09-03 - 2015.167.pdf, Property Research Sheet - 2015-07-24 - 2015.167.pdf, Plat of Survey - 2015-09-03 - 2015.167.pdf, Land Use Petition and Supporting Documents - 2015-09-03 - 2015.167.pdf, Legistar History Report - 2015-10-05 - 2015.167.pdf, Findings of Fact (Special Use) - 2015-10-05 - 2015.167.pdf

Enactment Number:

Planning Case #: AU22/3-15.167-SSD

Hearing Date:

Drafter: esieben@aurora-il.org

Effective Date:

History of Legislative File

| Ver- sion: | Acting Body: | Date: | Action: | Sent To: | Due Date: | Return Date: | Result: |
|------------|--|------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|------------|--------------|---------|
| 1 | City Council | 09/08/2015 | referred to | DST Staff Council (Planning Council) | | | |
| | Action Text: This Petition was referred to the DST Staff Council (Planning Council) | | | | | | |
| 2 | FoxWalk Overlay District Design Review Committee | 09/10/2015 | Forwarded | DST Staff Council (Planning Council) | 09/22/2015 | | Pass |
| | Action Text: A motion was made by Dr. Marzano, seconded by Mr. Zine, that this agenda item be Forwarded to the Planning Commission, on the agenda for 10/7/2015. The motion carried. | | | | | | |
| | Notes: Mr. Sieben said the Petitioner, Hollywood Casino Aurora, is requesting approval of the FoxWalk Certificate of Appropriateness permit for properties located both at 1 W. New York, which is the casino | | | | | | |

property, and also for a sign at 2 W. New York Street, which is the Civic Center Authority property where the parking garage is. What they wish to do is replace the 2 existing marquee signs with 2 new marquee signs of similar size. This is a side by side. On the left is the existing marquee sign and on the right is the proposed marquee sign. Again, these will be similar size. There is one on both the east and west façade of the casino building. Each marquee sign is approximately 936 square feet, including 178 square foot of high resolution electronic message center to replace the existing manual reader board. This is the ACCA building, the parking garage across the street at 2 W. New York. They wish to match the valet parking blade sign with a similar style sign. Again, this will be virtually the same size and it would match the same style as the marquee signs. Just a little background, the original Hollywood Casino signs were approved as part of a Special Use in 1992 prior to the adoption of the FoxWalk rules. The zoning is Downtown Core. Approval of this change is also going through a Special Sign District process per the sign ordinance. There will be a public hearing that will occur at a later Planning Commission date. I believe that will be October 7th, which will then have an eventual vote by the City Council. The Design Review Committee basically would then be, this action would be a recommendation of this request to the Planning Commission, so there will be no action taken on these COA's until the full City Council action occurs on the Special Sign District. Staff has had discussions with the casino representatives and they have provided the required documents. A little bit of an evaluation, this proposal will upgrade signs that are 23 years old and will utilize modern technology with the use of LED lighting and high resolution EMC's. The colors will be in keeping with the Hollywood brand. They are looking at possibly coming in at a later date to make appropriate changes to the color of the buildings to be in keeping with this new branding and I'll let them discuss that. Staff feels this will be a much more modern, classy and less distracting sign than the current flashing scrolling type of marquee sign currently in place. As you know, the current sign is all full in incandescent bulbs. You go there at night it is quite a show. This will be more in keeping with the intent of the FoxWalk District and is also a very unique nature of the downtown, so our evaluation recommendation is based on Section 4.1 Commercial Signage Regulations of the FoxWalk District that says "FoxWalk Overlay District is intended to be an attractive, inviting pedestrian oriented place. Establishing and maintaining the architectural integrity and historic character of buildings within the FoxWalk Overlay District is essential to accomplishing this objective. The signage shall blend with, rather than dominate, the design of each building." With that being said, unless there are any questions of me, I can turn it over to representatives of the casino and the sign company.

Hi. My name is Sarah Hurley. I'm the President of Matriarch Sign Solutions. We completed this design for Hollywood Casino Aurora at their request to upgrade the exterior of the building and to kind of bring their brand to the exterior of the building. We feel that this design will be an upgrade as far as the look of the building and also in regard to the technology using the LED bulbs, the LED lighting. It will be more energy efficient. It will bring a classy look to the exterior of the building and draw attention.

My name is Toni Johnson. I'm a representative of Hollywood Casino. One of the important things I wanted to point out as Ed did, is these are 23 years old and they are made of metal and they are rusting. The marquee letters also through age they expand and they can fall out, so it is a safety reason, an energy reason, and it is just time to replace the signs.

Mr. Truax said Ed mentioned that you plan on changing the color of the building to match more of the signs. Have you decided on what the color would be?

Ms. Johnson said no. We haven't decided on the color yet. I have to get approval because that's a huge expense, so that would be an approval of those funds from the corporate office and I don't have that yet, but that is something that we're submitting.

Dr. Marzano said I have a question. It is a considerable investment I understand for the casino. What's the estimate for replacing all these signs?

Ms. Hurley said well there are some other costs involved in removing the existing signage. I think the total package price, and I'm sorry I don't have it in front of me, is in the neighborhood of \$500,000.

Dr. Marzano said more than I would have guessed. Thank you.

Mr. Zine said I hope you do go ahead and paint the buildings to match the signs. They need painting more than the signs need changing. I like the design concept of the new signs. I like the color combination a lot better. I really hope that you come back soon. Actually I don't know that we approve color, we don't, but I would like to express my strong desire that you paint the building.

Ms. Johnson said I agree, but that's something that I can't promise. I have to get approval first.

Mr. Zine said understood.

Mr. Sieben said just one other thing I would like to add related to the overall development, as you know, they are replacing the parking valet sign on the parking garage. As you know, on the east side of the parking garage there are 2 smaller marquee signs advertising the Paramount and I believe North Island Center, the Copley Theater maybe, I think, are the 2. We've talked about that too. They do not own those, but they maintain those for the Paramount and ACCA, but that's something also that may be talked about modernizing those in the future too. With that being said, staff does recommend approval of the FoxWalk Certificate of Appropriateness's for the 2 marquee signs and the valet parking blade sign at 1 and 2 W. New York Street.

MOTION OF APPROVAL WAS MADE BY: Dr. Marzano

MOTION SECONDED BY: Charlie Zine

AYES: Clara Diaz, John Jaros, Dr. Marzano, Kevin Ream, Bob Reuland, Don Truax, Charlie Zine

NAYS: None

Aye: 7 Preservation Commission Truax, Diaz, Jaros, Marzano, Preservation Commission Ream, Reuland and Riverwalk Commission Zine

1 DST Staff Council 09/15/2015
(Planning Council)

Notes: Mr. Sieben said this is a Special Sign District for Hollywood Casino. This is to replace their 2 major marquee signs on the casino building at 1 W. New York and also to replace their valet parking sign across the street at 2 W. New York at the parking garage. This went to the FoxWalk Design Review Committee on Thursday night. It was unanimously approved, so their recommendation will go onto Planning Commission. I did tell the casino and their representatives that this would be up next week, so they will be here next week to present this in a little bit more detail. What they basically are doing is modernizing the 22 year old signs they have out there. They can explain it in more detail next week.

1 DST Staff Council 09/22/2015
(Planning Council)

Notes: Mr. Sieben said the Special Use for the Sign District will go to the Planning Commission on October 7th. This was heard before the FoxWalk Design Review Committee on September 10th, I believe it was, and the proposal was unanimously recommended approval by the Design Review Committee and that recommendation will move on as part of the Planning Commission.

Mr. Wiet said was there any discussion of painting?

Mr. Sieben said yes. I actually brought it up. The Design Review Committee also highly encouraged them to move forward in the near future as soon as they can with the overall painting scheme of the casino and the parking deck. They indicated that they are still waiting for the corporate approval to do that. That may be a Phase 2 then to do that after these signs.

1 DST Staff Council 09/29/2015 Forwarded Planning 10/07/2015 Pass
(Planning Council) Commission

Action Text: A motion was made by Mr. Sieben, seconded by Mr. Minnella, that this agenda item be Forwarded to the Planning Commission, on the agenda for 10/7/2015. The motion carried by voice vote.

Notes: Mr. Sieben said this will be going to the October 7th Planning Commission meeting. I make a motion to move this forward. Mr. Minnella seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3 Planning Commission 10/07/2015 Forwarded Planning & 10/15/2015 Pass
Development Committee

Action Text: A motion was made by Mrs. Cole, seconded by Mr. Cameron, that this agenda item be Forwarded to the Planning & Development Committee, on the agenda for 10/15/2015. The motion carried.

Notes: Mr. Sieben said the Hollywood Casino is proposing a Special Sign District for both 1 and 2 W. New York Street. This includes the actual casino on the north side of the street. You can see on the TV screen the existing casino and then the proposed what we call the marquee sign. This would be on the actual casino building on the north side of New York Street and this would be on both the east and the west façade right off of New York Street. Each marquee sign is approximately 136 square feet, including a 178 square foot high resolution electronic message center, which would replace that white existing manual reader board. The other sign that they are proposing on the Aurora Civic Center Authority building on the south side where the parking garage is they propose to change out the blade sign that is currently there. You can see the current sign on the left and then the proposed sign on the

right to match that same color scheme that Hollywood is trying to do. That would be also of similar size to the sign that's there. It would be about 244 square feet. So that's really the proposal. Just a little bit of a background is the casino signs were originally approved as part of a Special Use back in 1992 and prior to the FoxWalk Overlay adoption. Subsequent to that, the City Council approved the FoxWalk Overlay District, which has certain regulations on it with regard to signage. This particular proposal went to the FoxWalk Design Review Committee on September 10th and the proposal for the signage that you see here was unanimously approved by the FoxWalk Design Review Committee. Their recommendation goes to you so I am relaying that information. With that being said, this is a public hearing. Unless there are any questions of me I can turn it over to the Petitioner.

Mrs. Cole said on the east side of the garage on the river side there is a marquee sign and it has information about who is singing at the casino. Is that going to remain the same?

Mr. Sieben said yes. They can mention that. That was discussed. That matches the old style. It's got a manual reader board underneath of it. I think it is for the Copley Theater in North Island Center. It is obviously much smaller than the casino marquee signs. That's been discussed. That is, again, part of ACCA's property. There have been discussions with ACCA about possibly replacing those also in the future, but that is not part of the current proposal.

Mrs. Cole said is the marquee sign on the, if you are going west on new York Street over the canopy area there for handicapped parking and that has who's playing somewhere, is that going to still be there or will that be replaced?

Mr. Sieben said that's the one that's going to be replaced.

The Petitioners were sworn in.

Good evening. Thank you for coming out tonight to hear about this existing project for Hollywood Casino. My name is Sarah DiBartolo-Hurley. I'm the President of Matriarch Sign Solutions. We are a nationally certified WBE company, Women's Business Enterprise. I have 16 year's experience in the sign industry and have worked in many different facets from administration to project development and management to sales and operations management. I've worked with Penn National Gaming to complete several projects for them at their Hollywood Casinos throughout the country. As you can see looking at the old signs, the existing signs are weathered. They are outdated from a design and technology standpoint from their dated look to the changeable message boards to the inefficient marquee bulbs. They also don't fall in line with the customer's brand. We spent several months on the design development process working with Toni Johnson, who is the VP of Casino Operations, to really nail down a modern art deco design that would bring the Hollywood brand and excitement to the exterior of their building. These new sign displays will do just that. They will be more visually appealing. They will bring excitement to the exterior. They will reflect the high end look of the interior of the casino. There will also be cost saving features for the casino in that all of the lighting will be LED, which will create less of an electric draw and also allow for less service issues and old outage. The LED boards will provide a safety feature as well, as you won't have men outside all night or lifts changing the board. They can do it from inside the casino on computers. During the development of this project, we also worked with the LED manufacturer, WatchFire. They came out to the casino and did a live demo with a 16 mm, a 12 mm and a 10 mm LED resolution. The customer opted for a 10 mm, which is actually the newest LED technology and will provide a TV crispness to the boards.

Mr. Engen said does the LED lighting illuminate, with the new sign, illuminate brighter now than the other one or is it the same?

Ms. DiBartolo-Hurley said it should probably be about the same. There will be less chasing bulbs. There will be some bulbs on this display. You can see they run on the left and right of the word Hollywood and to the left and right of the word Casino. The Hollywood Casino letters will be internally illuminated and then some of the cabinets to the left and right, the golden cabinets and the red features will illuminate as well.

Vice Chairman Truax said these look like they are roughly the same size. Is that true?

Ms. DiBartolo-Hurley said yes that is. They are pretty much the same size.

Mrs. Anderson said but they will be a lot more energy efficient, right?

Ms. DiBartolo-Hurley said yes.

The public input portion of the public hearing was opened. No witnesses came forward. The public input portion of the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Sieben said as stated before, the FoxWalk Design Review Committee previously recommended approval and staff also does recommend approval of the Special Sign District for the 2 new marquee signs and 1 valet parking blade sign at 1 and 2 W. New York Street by Hollywood Casino.

MOTION OF APPROVAL WAS MADE BY: Mr. Cole

MOTION SECONDED BY: Mr. Cameron

AYES: Mrs. Anderson, Mr. Bergeron, Mr. Cameron, Mrs. Cole, Mrs. Duncan, Mr. Engen, Mr. Pilmer, Mr. Reynolds

NAYS: None

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Will the establishment of the proposed Special Use be unreasonably detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort or general welfare?

Mrs. Anderson said it will not.

2. Will the establishment of the proposed Special Use be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted?

Mr. Engen said we shouldn't really not see any effects. The signs are the same. It is just a new design of changes after 23 years to update it and make the building look more appealing from the outside. It is a positive effect.

3. Will the establishment of the proposed Special Use substantially diminish/impair property values within the neighborhood?

Mr. Reynolds said the proposed Special Use will not diminish or impair property values.

4. Will the establishment of the proposed Special Use impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding properties for uses permitted by their respective zoning districts?

Mr. Engen said this Special Use should not impede the normal and orderly development of the area. It is just new signs that are going up on the building.

5. Are adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and other necessary facilities provided or shown as being proposed on the site plan for the proposed Special Use?

Mr. Reynolds said necessary facilities, drainage and access roads are already in place.

6. What effect will the proposed Special Use have on traffic or general area? Has ingress and egress been designed to minimize congestion in the public streets? (For automobile intensive uses (including but not limited to gas stations, car washes, and drive through facilities): if there is a concentration of similar uses within 1000 feet of said subject property, there should be consideration as to the negative impact on the traffic patterns and congestion in the area.)

Mr. Engen said we shouldn't see any difference in the traffic pattern. It is already there in place with all the parking lots. There should be no change.

7. Does the proposed Special Use conform in all other respects to the applicable regulations of the zoning district in which it is located, except as such regulations are modified pursuant to the Plan Commission recommendations?

Mr. Engen said this Special Use should conform to all the applicable regulations.

Mr. Sieben said this will go to the Planning and Development Committee meeting on Thursday, October 15th, 4:00 p.m. on the 5th floor conference room of this building.

Aye: 7 At Large Bergeron, At Large Cameron, At Large Cole, At Large Pilmer, Aurora Twnshp Representative Reynolds, At Large Anderson and At Large Engen

