The Planning and Zoning Commission held a Meeting on September 4, 2019, at the City of DeKalb Municipal Building, 200 South Fourth Street, DeKalb, Illinois. Chair Christina Doe called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM.

A. ROLL CALL

Principal Planner Dan Olson called the roll. Planning and Zoning Commission members present were: Chair Christina Doe, Katharina Barbe, David Castro, Ron Klein, and Max Maxwell. Commissioners Vicki Buckley and Jerry Wright were absent. Principal Planner Dan Olson was present representing City staff.

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA (Additions/Deletions)

Chair Doe requested a motion to approve the September 4, 2019, agenda as presented. Ms. Barbe motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Klein seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Olson noted the August 7, 2019, minutes were not yet available.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Open Floor to Anyone Wishing to Speak on Record)

None

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. Continued Public Hearing – Petition by Mobilitie, represented by Mark O’Brien, for a special use permit for a 10-foot tall cell antenna to be located on top of the building at 100 West Lincoln Highway (Walgreens).

   Principal Planner Olson advised Commissioners the continued hearing for 100 West Lincoln Highway had been withdrawn by the applicant. He noted the petitioner had discussions with Walgreen’s regarding a change in the location of the antenna and they have not provided direction at this time. He said the petitioner may re-apply in the future.

2. Public Hearing – Petition by Corral Dyn, LLC, represented by Marvin Keys, requesting an amendment to the Annexation Agreement and amendment represented by Ordinances 2016-007 and 2016-039 to remove the maximum square footage allowed for "Professional Service Offices" in the ordinances and
to add "armed services recruiting stations" to the list of uses allowed under Professional Service Offices for 2061, 2112, 2115 and 2121 Sycamore Road.

Mr. Marvin Keys introduced himself to the Commission and advised he was representing Corral Dyn, LLC. He provided background on the petition, including historical information relating to the maximum square footage allowed for non-retail uses in the development. He commented on the prior petition which modified the restrictions to increase the amount of space that could be devoted to non-retail uses to 53%. He noted this allowed for Aspen Dental and ATI Physical Therapy to occupy their spaces. Mr. Keys provided information regarding challenges faced by commercial strip centers today with the reduction of potential retail clients and the increase of service-oriented users. He advised the Commission that an armed services recruiting station has indicated interest in the middle space in the north building (next to ATI). He further commented on the petitioners’ request to remove the maximum square footage allowed for “Professional Service Offices” to allow Corral Dyn, LLC to market to more potential clients.

Principal Planner Olson went through the staff report dated August 30, 2019, and commented on the history of the development in terms of annexation and zoning for the two buildings located at 2016, 2112, 2115 and 2121 Sycamore Road. He reviewed the provisions of Ordinance 2016-007, including the professional service office limitation of no more than 33% of the total square footage of both buildings. He mentioned this restriction was approved to ensure the development of the property would generate sales tax income for the City. Principal Planner Olson added the 33% professional service office maximum square footage amount was fully utilized by the Aspen Dental facility in the 2016 Sycamore Road building. He said Ordinance 2016-007 was later amended by Ordinance 2016-039 and increased the maximum amount of professional service office space from 33% to 53%, which accommodated the addition of ATI Physical Therapy (2121 Sycamore Road).

Principal Planner Olson advised Commissioners there was 5,415 square feet unoccupied in the northerly building and the petitioner is seeking to provide a 2,900 square foot tenant space for an armed services recruiting station (2115 Sycamore Road). He continued his comments by stating the petitioner had been trying to market the space to retailers with no success. He further stated staff was recommending approval to remove the maximum square footage percentage for professional service offices requirement, so the petitioner wouldn’t have to return at a later date for another amendment. Principal Planner Olson provided an overview of the site location for the Commissioners and commented on the benefit this amendment will provide for all retailers in the area with the increased foot traffic.

Chair Doe opened up the hearing to public comment. There were no comments from the public, so she turned to the Commission for any questions.
Mr. Klein commented he was familiar with the property having represented the prior owner and stated it was an improvement over what had initially been on the site. He stated he was in favor of the petition as it will allow an empty tenant space to be filled. He added he felt the recruiting station would not be a disadvantage at the location.

Mr. Maxwell commented he supported the petitioner’s efforts in getting the vacant space filled with the armed services facility and hoped they would find someone else to fill the other empty space. He also acknowledged the challenge of finding retail businesses in the current market.

Mr. Castro agreed the retail market landscape had changed dramatically, and DeKalb was no exception. He touched on the City’s motivation with regard to tax revenue and retail-versus-services, and said the City was not an exception in trying to seek a different revenue model to account for the changes happening in retail. He commented he had no problem with adding “Armed Services Recruiting Stations” but wanted to make sure this use was not explicitly excluded from what the zoning requirements currently contain. Principal Planner Olson responded by advising the Ordinance stated professional service uses were permitted and it gave some examples, but it wasn’t clear if “Armed Services Recruiting Stations” was a similar enough use.

Chair Doe referred to Mr. Key’s earlier comments about a use such as hair salons and asked if that service would be permitted. Principal Planner Olson responded that was a good point and stated what services were listed in the Ordinance but noted a hair salon was not listed. Discussion took place between the Commission as to what other types of service uses could be included. Chair Doe addressed Mr. Keys and asked if there were other service uses he would like the Commission to consider. Mr. Keys said it would be difficult to state exactly what other types of services should be considered but agreed an expanded list of uses would be beneficial. Principal Planner Olson stated there was language in the Unified Development Ordinance that could be used and provided a suggestion to the motion language which would address the issue.

Mr. Maxwell asked Mr. Keys if there were any specific types of businesses which had approached his firm about leasing space at this location. Mr. Keys responded by advising discussions had been held within the last six months with businesses such as a hair cutting service and also a cell phone store who also wanted to install an 80-foot antennae. Mr. Maxwell advised he was looking for a suggestion from Mr. Keys as to any other ways to broaden the allowed uses. Mr. Keys responded he felt the addition of other “service facilities” would more than cover any potential tenants.
Chair Doe gave the public one more opportunity to speak. There was none. Chair Doe asked if the Commissioners had any more questions or comments.

Ms. Barbe requested clarification on the motion language. Principal Planner Olson provided information on how to include “service facilities” into the motion. Ms. Barbe made a motion that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend to the City Council approval of an amendment to the Annexation Agreement and amendment represented by Ordinance 2016-007 and 2016-039 to remove the maximum square footage allowed for “Professional Service Offices” in the Ordinances and to add “armed services recruiting stations” and “other service facilities” as stated in the UDO to the list of uses allowed under Professional Service Offices for the property located at 2061, 2112 and 2115 and 2121 Sycamore Road. Motion was seconded by Mr. Castro.

A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Barbe – yes, Mr. Castro – yes, Mr. Klein – yes, Mr. Maxwell – yes, Chair Doe – yes. Motion passed 5-0-2. Ms. Buckley and Mr. Wright were absent.

F. REPORTS

Principal Planner Olson advised the next Planning and Zoning Commission meeting would be Wednesday, September 18th, however no hearings had been scheduled yet. He noted at the upcoming City Council meeting on September 9th, the second reading for the Agora Tower (Mooney property) project will be up for consideration. Principal Planner Olson informed members the updated Zoning and Developments sheet (as of August 27, 2019) had been placed before them on the dais. He then advised members that tonight’s meeting was Katarina Barbe’s last. Principal Planner Olson thanked Ms. Barbe for her service to the Commission and staff had appreciated her support. Chair Doe also provided her thanks and note of appreciation for Ms. Barbe’s services to the Commission and wished her well in the future.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Barbe motioned to adjourn, Mr. Maxwell seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 6:28 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dan Olson, Principal Planner

Minutes were approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission on October 9, 2019.