

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL
LITTLE CANADA, MINNESOTA**

AUGUST 14, 2019

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a regular meeting of the City Council of Little Canada, Minnesota was convened on the 14th day of August, 2019 in the Council Chambers of the City Center located at 515 Little Canada Road in said City.

Mayor John Keis called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. and the following members of the City Council were present at roll call:

CITY COUNCIL:

Mayor	Mr. John Keis
Council Member	Mr. Tom Fischer
Council Member	Mr. Christian Torkelson
Council Member	Mr. Mike McGraw

ABSENT:

Council Member	Mr. Rick Montour
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ALSO PRESENT:

City Administrator	Mr. Chris Heineman
Parks & Rec/Comm. Services Mgr.	Ms. Bryce Shearen
Finance Director	Ms. Brenda Malinowski
City Clerk	Ms. Heidi Heller

MINUTES McGraw introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

***RESOLUTION NO. 2019-8-90 – APPROVING THE MINUTES OF
THE JULY 24, 2019 REGULAR MEETING AS SUBMITTED***

The foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Fischer.

Ayes (4).

Nays (0). Resolution adopted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS Keis reported there were 21 Night to Unite parties that the City Council visited. Torkelson thanked the residents for donating school supplies.

The Parks & Rec/Community Services Manager stated that Movie in the Park is tomorrow night that will be showing How to Train Your Dragon. He noted that the last Astronomy in the Park will be next Wednesday night at Pioneer Park.

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McGraw stated that Midwest Gymnastics in Little Canada has been training St. Paul resident, Sunisa Lee, who qualified for the national team.

**PUBLIC HEARING –
VARIANCES TO
ALLOW ADDITIONAL
SIGNAGE AT 3354 RICE
STREET; APPLICANT:
CARIBOU/ALLIANT
ENGINEERING**

The City Clerk explained that Caribou Coffee at 3354 Rice Street is seeking variances to allow additional signage on their property due to the re-alignment of the I-694 and Rice Street bridge, and Country Drive. She stated the property is on the corner of Rice Street and Country Drive with two street frontages. She stated that Ramsey County purchased and removed the former Vadnais Inn that was adjacent on the north side, and Caribou was able to acquire some excess land from the County that will allow for a parking lot expansion. She explained that there is currently wall signage only on the west elevation, along with a 15-foot tall free-standing pylon sign at the corner of Rice Street and Country Drive. She noted that there are also four directional signs for the drive-thru lane entrance, height limit and menu board, and all of the existing signage meets the City Code requirements.

The City Clerk explained that once the I-694/Rice Street reconstruction project is complete, this property will be a stand-alone parcel entirely surrounded by roadway, and adjacent to a round-a-bout that completely changes access for the site. She reported that the Rice Street access will be removed and there will be a new right-in, entrance-only access on the north side of the property. She stated that due to the complete change of the area's roads into round-a-bouts, Caribou is concerned about customers figuring out how to access their site.

The City Clerk explained that the total amount of signage allowed is 15% of the front building face, and two sides of the building can be counted for corner lots. She stated that based on two building faces, this property is allowed a total of 317.25 square feet of signage. She noted that the sign code allows counting two building faces for properties with frontage on two streets, but has no allowances for a property that has four sides of street frontage since it so seldom occurs. She explained that the applicant has requested a variance to allow wall signage on all four sides of the building since the roadway will surround the site and all sides of the building will be highly visible. She noted there is currently a 61.3 square foot wall sign on the west side facing Rice Street, and the applicant is proposing the same wall sign on all four sides of the building for a total of 245.2 square feet.

The City Clerk reported that the applicant is also proposing to install a new 15-foot tall, 84 square feet, free-standing pylon sign along Rice Street, a little further north than the existing pylon sign, and Caribou is requesting to also keep the existing pylon sign. She explained that Staff has been working with Caribou and communicated to them that City Staff

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does not recommend a second pylon sign, especially along the same corridor. She stated that as an alternative, Caribou requested they be allowed to keep the existing pylon sign in place until the completion of the Rice Street and I-694 construction which should be done by Fall 2020. She noted that Caribou intends to install the new signage in the next couple of months and feels that keeping the existing pylon in place will help customers learn where to turn during the roadway changes.

The City Clerk reported that the applicant is also requesting five more small informational signs in order to direct traffic at the entrance and exits. She noted there are currently four small signs in the drive-thru lane which will remain. She explained that the City Council can approve additional directional signs, so a variance is not needed for these. She explained that the Council is asked to consider how many sides of the building should be allowed to have wall signage, the total amount of signage allowed for the property and if a second pylon sign should be allowed. She noted that the additional issue to consider would be if a second pylon is not approved, could the current pylon remain until Fall 2020. The City Clerk stated that since the Zoning Code does not give direction for properties with more than two street frontages, City Staff would suggest that if the Council is supportive of more signage, they consider an alternate amount of total allowed signage, such as 400 square feet. She stated that the Planning Commission recommend signage be allowed on four sides of the building, up to a total of 400 square feet, and that the existing pylon sign can remain through construction, but must be removed by September 30, 2020.

The City Clerk stated that the property will become very unique after the road reconstruction project is complete, and none of the changes were created by the landowner. She explained that southbound Rice Street customers will need to know there is a Caribou and where they are going prior to entering the round-a-bout, because if they miss the right turn in the round-a-bout, they will not be able to get to Caribou without going further down Rice Street and turning around. She reported that Staff does support increased signage on this property, but not the second pylon sign.

Emily Heuring, Caribou Coffee, stated that this location has been a very good store for them and it is larger so it also has community rooms. She noted that the road construction has been very tough on them, and sales are down 50% which will likely continue through at least the end of the year. She explained that round-a-bouts require a learning curve for drivers and that Caribou would prefer to have both pylon signs. Ms. Heuring stated that was correct as they feel the existing sign would help customers know to turn on to Country Drive Connection and keep the area safer.

Fischer stated that he agrees this site and traffic will be a challenge and he supports the additional directional signs on the site. He is agreeable to the

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wall signs on four sides of the building but does agree with a second pylon sign. McGraw agreed that he was also not in favor of the second pylon sign and would be agreeable to wall signs on three sides. Keis stated that he was not sure how much traffic would see the sign on the east side.

McGraw asked if Caribou would want more time to keep the existing pylon up. Ms. Heuring stated it would be helpful to be able to keep it up longer. Keis stated he cannot justify two pylon signs on the same side. McGraw stated that he could see allowing the existing sign to stay up another few months, such as until February 2021. Torkelson stated that he is in favor of the sign also on the east side, since any traffic coming from that direction would not know what this building is. Fischer noted that there are no homes affected by the additional signage, so he is fine with allowing signs on four sides. Torkelson noted that a few residents from Cardigan Ridge may be able to see the signs.

Keis opened the public hearing. No one from the public spoke.

Upon motion by Keis, seconded by McGraw, the public hearing was closed.

Fischer introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

***RESOLUTION NO. 2019-8-91 – ALLOW 9 DIRECTIONAL-
INFORMATION SIGNS, AND APPROVE VARIANCES TO ALLOW
A TOTAL OF UP TO 400 SQUARE FEET OF SIGNAGE AND WALL
SIGNS ON 4 SIDES OF THE BUILDING AT 3354 RICE STREET
FOR CARIBOU COFFEE, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING
CONDITIONS:***

- ***THE FREE-STANDING SIGN MUST COMPLY WITH THE PROVISIONS OF ZONING CODE CHAPTER 903.110.E.5.c FREE-STANDING SIGNS***
- ***THE EXISTING PYLON SIGN AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER MAY REMAIN IN PLACE UNTIL FEBRUARY 28, 2021***

The foregoing resolution was duly seconded by McGraw.

Ayes (3).

Nays (1). McGraw. Resolution declared adopted.

McGraw introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

***RESOLUTION NO. 2019-8-92 – DENYING A VARIANCE TO ALLOW
A SECOND FREE-STANDING SIGN AT 3354 RICE STREET***

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The foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Fischer.
Ayes (4).
Nays (0). Resolution declared adopted.

**CONSENT
AGENDA**

Fischer introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

***RESOLUTION NO. 2019-8-93 – APPROVING THE CONSENT
AGENDA WHICH CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING:***

- *APPROVAL OF THE VOUCHERS;***
- *APPROVE A CHANGE ORDER FOR THE LITTLE CANADA FIRE
STATION REMODEL PROJECT***
- *APPROVE PARTIAL PAY REQUEST #2 TO STANDARD
CONTRACTING FOR THE SPOONER PARK IMPROVEMENTS***
- *APPROVE PARTIAL PAY REQUEST #2 AND #3 TO COBRA
CONTRACTING FOR THE LITTLE CANADA FIRE DEPARTMENT
REMODEL PROJECT***
- *APPROVE PROPOSAL FOR HEALTH INSURANCE
REIMBURSEMENT***

The foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Keis.
Ayes (4).
Nays (0). Resolution declared adopted.

**2ND QUARTER
FINANCIAL
REPORT**

The Finance Director reviewed the second quarter financial report. She explained that the City received the first half tax payment in July and the percent of expenditures to budget is at 47.99%. She reported that permit revenue is at 138% of the budget amount and charges for services are lower due to limited park shelter rentals at Spooner Park during the improvement project. She noted that 2019 expenditures continue to fall within budget amounts, but staff is watching the emergency Twin Lake pumping costs, and an additional \$13,000 was spent due to the winter conditions.

ADJOURN There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

John T. Keis, Mayor

Attest: _____
Christopher Heineman, City Administrator