

Plan Commission Moves Forward with Inspiring Hope Ministries

By Cameron Bren

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MIDDLETON—The family of local artist Alex Haunty want to create a creative workspace for young adults with disabilities at the former Life-time Eyecare Center building located at 7425 University Ave.

Parents of Alex, Mary Beth Haunty and Tom Haunty, presented their proposal to the plan commission seeking site design and sign modification. The proposal makes exterior modifications to the building to improve accessibility and visibility from the interior. There is also a plan to build a large shed behind the building to store materials.

“Inspiring Hope Ministries is about helping adults with disabilities build meaningful lives,” Mary Beth said. “This is about creating a space to allow for meaningful, creative and accessible opportunities for community integration in our city.”

Mary Beth says the primary goal would to assist people with disabilities after they graduate from high school and are in transition period trying to find a place in the community.

The secondary goal is to create opportunities for creative arts, field trips, learning opportunities.

Mary Beth said her disabled son, Alex, has become a locally renowned artist commissioned for work by the American Family Children’s Hospital, Overture Center and recognized by the legislature at the Capitol. Now he wants to share his experience with disabled young people.

“He is creating accessibility for people with disabilities to have access to the arts,” Mary Beth said.

Mary Beth said the age 18 is often a point when people with disabilities are ready to learn, but have not had the opportu-

nity that other students have had with creative arts.

Plan Commission member Kurt Paulsen asked for more details about the modifications to the exterior of the building. Mary Beth said the idea was to have full accessibility at both entrances of the building.

“We would like to be a state of the art accessible building so that we can promote accessibility for people with disabilities,” Mary Beth said.

The architect for the project pointed out the owners would also like to add a window to the front façade for visual contact from the front office.

Plan Commission member Leif Hubbard made a motion to approve the site design and signage modification and authorize staff to work with builder on design of the shed. The motion passed unanimously.