

PLANNING COMMISSION
Wednesday, November 13, 2013

Chairman Mike Jay called the meeting of the Brainerd Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Noted present were Commissioners Pritschet, Hayden, Jay, Lambert, Norwood, and Cole. Commissioner Plantenberg was noted absent. Also present was City Planner Ostgarden.

#2 Approval/Amendment of Agenda

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS PRITSCHET AND LAMBERT, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

#3 Approve minutes of the regular meeting of October 9, 2013

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS LAMBERT AND PRITSCHET, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 9, 2013.

#4 NEW BUSINESS

a. Trail Planning

City Planner Ostgarden stated because of the trail development in the last year we've had the opportunity to review what we have and what our priorities will be in the next few years. The Planning Commission developed a broad master plan trail map in 2007 that provided a corridor location for future trail construction and what is being used to move ahead with trail development.

City Planner Ostgarden stated there is a bond request in to extend the Cuyuna Lakes State Trail and connect it with the existing trail along College Drive. He reviewed other grants that have provided signage. He noted there are 10 miles of trail in town and approximately 17 miles of marked on-road bike routes in the community.

City Planner Ostgarden reviewed what is in the Comprehensive Plan regarding alternative transportation and the goal in the City Council Strategic Plan regarding a walkable/bikeable community.

City Planner Ostgarden stated there is a plan to work with MNDOT during the reconstruction of South 6th Street from Washington Street to Joseph Street in 2017. He stated there has been a meeting to discuss non-motorized amenities. He stated eh is looking into submitting a grant application to continue bicycle/pedestrian amenities past Joseph Street.

Discussion was held regarding connection of the Industrial Park Trail to the Buffalo Hills Trail.

City Planner Ostgarden reviewed the Mississippi Riverfront project. He stated they are working with the University of Minnesota to create design alternatives. He also spoke about the possible construction of a trail along 28th Street SE during the reconstruction next year.

Discussion was held regarding a trail in NW Brainerd along Riverside Drive and Beaver Dam Road.

City Planner Ostgarden asked the Commission to make a recommendation to the City Council on what trail project they would like to see next.

Commissioner Jay asked the Commissioners to bring a priority list to the December meeting on trail projects they would like to see done in the future.

Commissioner Lambert asked if there has been any discussion with the County or adjacent Townships regarding trail extensions. City Planner Ostgarden stated there hasn't been at this time. He noted there will be discussion with Oak Lawn Township if the Cuyuna Trail extension goes through.

#5 OLD BUSINESS

a. Small House and Infill Development

City Planner Ostgarden stated the infill requirements noted in the R-1 draft would apply for any new infill development in that residential district. He reviewed the draft definition and design standards for infill. He noted the feedback that was received from contractors/realtors was more on small homes than on infill development and design standards.

Discussion was held regarding the height requirement of thirty-five feet and possible draft language.

Discussion was held regarding lot area requirements and setbacks and building on previous footprints. The Commission agreed to add language allowing building on previous footprints within five years for infill development.

City Planner Ostgarden noted there was a discrepancy in language within the Zoning Code regarding dwelling size where one area states 750 square feet and another area states 1000 square feet. He stated this will need to be corrected.

City Planner Ostgarden stated he did get some responses from local realtors and contractors about small homes and the majority had more concerns than support.

Discussion was held on small homes regarding if it should be allowed as infill, dwelling size, accessory structures, design.

The Commission agreed to adjourn this discussion to a workshop.

Mr. Gary Sheeler, 923 Lakeview Lane, asked why this subject is being discussed and who is pushing this through. He stated he feels this is bringing the value of the city down. At a time there were 350 square feet homes in Brainerd, but the Planning Commission and the Council changed that to 750 square feet because they felt the small homes were not working so he's questioning why it is being changed back.

The Commission set a tentative workshop date of December 4 at 6:00 pm.

b. Methadone Clinics

City Planner Ostgarden stated he provided the Commission with draft language options to amend the Zoning Code regarding the location of methadone clinics. He stated he did this by looking at a more generic phrase of substance abuse outpatient clinics instead of specifying methadone clinics, which may cause issues with other types of clinics. He stated the easiest may be to permit methadone clinics as a conditional use in industrial districts.

City Planner Ostgarden stated he received information today from Essentia Director of Medical Services. He reviewed the letter noting how Essentia's clinics/hospital is licensed for methadone. He stated a letter was also received from Teen Challenge regarding how they dispense medicine for treatment.

Discussion was held regarding what language to use to specify this type of treatment.

James Lang, Treatment Director for Minnesota Adult Teen Challenge, stated he agrees with being specific to opiate treatment as that is the concern. He stated we need to be careful when using the language of "out-patient treatment" so it does not affect those clinics that are not part of the concern.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS PRITSCHET AND LAMBERT TO APPROVE SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING FOR DECEMBER 11, 2013 TO AMEND THE ZONING CODE AS FOLLOWS: AMEND SECTIONS 515-61-2 (A)(3), 515-62-2 (E) AND 515-63-2 (E) ADDING LANGUAGE "EXCLUDING OUT-PATIENT TREATMENT FOR OPIATE ADDICTION" AND AMEND SECTION 515-70-5 (H) CLINICS FOR THE TREATMENT OF OPIATE ADDICTION. COMMISSIONER NORWOOD ABSTAINED.

c. Community Centers

City Planner Ostgarden stated this is on the agenda for the Commission to have any discussion after the City Council's decision to not move forward with amending the Zoning Ordinance to include the definition of community centers and to allow them in residential districts. He noted the School District will report to the School Board the outcome of the City Council's decision. He stated there are many entities looking at what the next step may be for the Whittier building.

Discussion was held regarding how to proceed with language for community centers. City Planner Ostgarden noted if the definition is approved it will apply to all zoning districts.

Additional discussion was held on how large a building would need to be to be defined as a community center.

The Commission agreed to move forward with the definition only of community centers at the December workshop.

#6 Commissioners' Questions/Comments

Commissioner Jay stated he would like the Commissioners to put serious thought into trail expansion ideas. Discussion was held on some areas for trail expansion such as the Mills property.

Commissioner Jay stated he agreed with the letter submitted by Ms. Sarah Hayden regarding Quiet Zones. Commissioner Pritschet stated he agrees with the idea, but it was more of a budgetary issue that was not economically feasible at this time.

#7 City Planner's Report

City Planner Ostgarden stated the City Attorney and I have been working on an ordinance that will be submitted to the City Council for consideration regarding level 3 offenders in the community. He stated there were concerns earlier this year about concentrating level 3 offenders in the downtown area and some property/business owners contacted the City Attorney regarding the concerns. He stated the ordinance is modeled after Duluth's ordinance, and will place distance (1000 feet) requirements between the level 3 offender residents in the community (i.e. each offender will have to reside farther than 1000 feet from another).

#8 Adjournment

As there was no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Mark Ostgarden AICP
City Planner

/lt