

PLANNING COMMISSION
Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

City Planner Ostgarden asked for nominations for Chair of the Planning Commission for 2017.

Commissioners Marohn and Headley were nominated for Chair.

The Commission elected Commissioner Headley as Chair of the Planning Commission for 2017.

Commissioner Marohn was nominated for vice-chair.

The Commission elected Commissioner Marohn as Vice-Chair of the Planning Commission for 2017.

Call to Order

Planning Commission Chair Headley called the meeting of the Brainerd Planning Commission to order at 6:07 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Noted present were Commissioners Headley, Turner, Gorham, Burslie, Marohn, and Lambert. Noted absent was Commissioner Antolak. Also present were City Planner Ostgarden and City Administrator Thoreen.

#2 Approval/Amendment of Agenda

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

#3 Approval of minutes of the regular meeting and workshop held on January 18, 2017

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS MAROHN AND GORHAM, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 18, 2017 REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AND WORKSHOP AS PRESENTED.

#4 NEW BUSINESS

a) Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment – Request to Consider Boarding Schools

City Planner Ostgarden provided information regarding the request to repurpose the former hotel and conference center on South 6th Street for a boarding school. He noted boarding schools are currently not a use listed in the Zoning Code, therefore an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance will be required in order to allow boarding schools.

City Planner Ostgarden also reviewed the zoning text amendment process and the different options available for this request.

- Amend the current B-4 District text to allow boarding schools as a use permitted by right (permitted use)
- Amend the current B-4 District text to allow boarding schools as a conditional use
- Amend a residential zoning district text to allow boarding schools as a use permitted by right (permitted use)
- Amend a residential zoning district text to allow boarding schools as a conditional use

City Planner Ostgarden mentioned he has information from five other cities in Minnesota that currently have boarding school zoning information.

City Planner Ostgarden also noted a definition of a boarding school will need to be added to the definitions section of the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Headley Williamson, Chairman of Exodus Boys Academy, gave a review of why he started the academy and the philosophy behind the school. He discussed why a hotel with land is a good option and how it would be setup.

The Commission asked Mr. Williamson questions about the size of the school, where the students will be from, and concerns with a tax exempt status. Mr. Williamson explained the purpose behind the school and that it will bring jobs to the area in many different ways.

Discussion was held regarding the conditional use permit process and which option would work best for this site.

Additional discussion was held with Mr. Williamson regarding the timeline for the school opening and how that would fit into the process.

The Commission agreed to have a public hearing at the March meeting to consider amending the Zoning Ordinance definitions to include a “boarding school” and to consider amending the B-4 (General Commercial) District to permit boarding schools as either a permitted use or a conditional use.

b) Zoning Text Amendment – Sober Houses – Consider Regulations

City Planner Ostgarden stated this is being brought forth because there is a new sober house being opened in the community. He stated there most likely are other sober homes in the community but it is somewhat of a “protected” use.

City Planner Ostgarden reviewed how other cities are handling regulations where some do not get involved in the regulatory part whereas other cities do get involved in the regulations of sober houses.

City Planner Ostgarden reviewed the federal fair housing act and how it relates to disability, which recovery is considered.

City Planner Ostgarden discussed the regulations that could be imposed and the items the Planning Commission should discuss such as number of occupants, parking, etc.

Discussion was held by the Commission including having discussion with people that are involved in these types of facilities along with the Police Chief.

Ms. Sheila Haverkamp, owner of proposed sober house, discussed their plan and what is involved in setting up a sober home.

Discussion was held regarding how the Commission would like to move forward on this issue. The Commission agreed to hold a workshop prior to next Planning Commission meeting at 5:00 PM to have discussion with individuals involved in these types of uses.

#5 PUBLIC FORUM - None

#6 OLD BUSINESS - None

#7 COMMISSIONERS' QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Commissioner Burslie stated he would like to open discussion on the South 6th Street project regarding the design to see if it can be reevaluated.

City Administrator Thoreen provided a summary of the concerns that have been brought forth regarding the South 6th Street project including the editorial that was in the local paper, the process of the plan approval in 2015, status of the design, and what can be done regarding the project at this time.

Commissioner Marohn stated the new Council should at least be asked where they stand on the project since it's been over a year since municipal consent was given and the Council membership has changed.

Discussion was held regarding the concerns with the South 6th Street project and what can be done regarding the concerns.

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS BURLIE AND GORHAM, DULY CARRIED, TO ASK THE CITY COUNCIL TO CONSIDER REEVALUATING THE SOUTH 6TH STREET DESIGN AND DISCUSS WITH MNDOT THE PROCESS NEEDED TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE DESIGN BECAUSE OF THE CHANGES TO THE CITY COUNCIL ALONG WITH ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RESEARCHED BY THE WALKABLE BIKEABLE COMMITTEE, AND THE CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP IN THE CORE DOWNTOWN PROPERTIES.

Commissioner Burslie stated he feels the information and research done by the Walkable Bikeable Committee was not considered during the City Council's decision. He stated this is good reason to reopen the discussion on the design.

Additional discussion was held regarding the approval process in 2015.

City Administrator Thoreen asked if the motion should be brought to the next City Council meeting. The Commission agreed they would like to see it before the Council at the next meeting.

City Planner Ostgarden clarified to the Commission that direction will come from the Council on how they will be involved in this process.

Commissioner Marohn suggested discussion be held in the next couple months, prior to discussion on the comprehensive plan, regarding the difference between form based and use based codes.

City Planner Ostgarden suggested the Commission receive direction from the Council on whether or not this change is something they would support.

#8 CITY PLANNER'S REPORT - None

#9 ADJOURN

AS THERE WAS NO FURTHER BUSINESS, WITH A MOTION BY LAMBERT AND SECOND BY TURNER, DULY CARRIED, THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Ostgarden AICP, City Planner