

City of Excelsior
Hennepin County, Minnesota

Minutes
Planning Commission

Monday, November 25, 2019

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wallace called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Wallace, DiLorenzo, Harrison, Hersman, Noll

Commissioners Absent: Holste, Craig

Also Present: City Planner Becker and City Attorney Staunton

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) Planning Commission Meeting of October 28, 2019

Motion by DiLorenzo, seconded by Hersman, to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes of October 28, 2019 as amended. Motion carried 5/0.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a) Variance Requests for 181 George Street– (PC No. 19-13)

Becker presented the report. Noll asked if any other exterior portion of the house is being changed. Kelvin Retterath, applicant, clarified that there was an addition that was done on the property years ago along with a number of retaining walls. He said that a foundation wall was being added. He said that there would be interior improvements done to the home, along with demolition of the porch above the carport and carport itself. Cara Black, homeowner, explained that she is doing these improvements in order for the house to be preserved for years to come as well as explained the difficulty she has with the carport being located in the location it currently is located.

The Commission applauded Black's efforts to keep and improve the house. Harrison was also thrilled about improvements but had concern regarding the driveway coverage. Motion by Harrison, seconded by DiLorenzo, to recommend approval of the variance requests from the minimum rear yard setback and maximum impervious surface for the property located at 181 George Street. Motion carried 5/0.

b) Residential Districts Ordinance Amendments

Becker presented the report. There was discussion if detached garages should be included in calculations. Noll thought that they should not be included, as a detached garage does not contribute to the mass and scale of a structure. He thought that basements should be included, especially in the case of walkouts. Harrison does feel

that detached garages should be included, as they contribute to the mass within the lot. She liked the provision from the City of Minneapolis that required that basement's floor area be included if the finished floor of the first story is 42 inches or less from natural grade for more than 50 percent of the total perimeter. Wallace wanted to keep the building coverage requirement in order to prevent large basements on a property. It was agreed that the basement language from the City of Minneapolis should be included, but they believed that the percentage of building that is over 42 inches exposed should be counted toward Floor Area Ratio. They did not believe that existing grade should be taken into account, as altering the grade would cover the building. The 42 inches should not include window wells. There was discussion that everything is heated should be included in the calculations, but then it was discussed that language should be changed to call it habitable space. Detached garages should not be included in Floor Area Ratio because building coverage would take care of this. The ordinance should require that cantilevered spaces should be included in both Floor Area Ratio and building coverage. Greg Miller, 335 College Avenue, discussed the Floor Area Ratio of the Cities of Minneapolis and Greenwood. He also discussed recommended stepbacks and contextual height requirements.

c) Comprehensive Plan Amendment – East Side Subarea Plan and Land Use Chapter

Jennifer Zechmeister, Owner of Adele's, is concerned about the language within the plan and any limits to the property. She was of the understanding that the plan was a vision and not something that would be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

Beth Maloney, representative of Maynard's restaurant, brought up discussions at the last meeting regarding the use of the word preferred and the relevance of the East Side Subarea Plan as it pertains to Zoning.

Miller wanted to ensure that the value of commercial properties was not being diminished with the proposed language.

Wallace is of the opinion that the East Side Subarea Plan should be a vision for development and perhaps used as a guide for Planned Unit Development within the area as opposed to an adopted document. He suggested using the language requiring third story development along Excelsior Boulevard to be stepped back from the front façade. The Commission in general felt that none of the wording within the East Side Subarea Plan was meant to change the zoning.

Harrison felt that the notes from the placemat that were not included within the Chapter should be included within the text portion of the chapter, including most of the general notes section. Wallace felt that the Council should be consulted on their comfort level of removing the placemat. It was ultimately decided that language from the placemat should be placed within the chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and that the placemat should be removed.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Harrison, seconded by Hersman, to adjourn at 9:42 pm. Motion carried 5/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Becker
City Planner

DRAFT