

City of Excelsior
Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes
Wednesday, September 8, 2010
Council Chamber, City Hall, 339 Third Street
7:00 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gephart called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Craig, Jensen, Putnam, Wallace, Gaylord, and Chair Gephart

Commissioner Absent: Busch

Also Present: City Attorney Staunton, City Planner Richards, and City Planner Fuchs

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(a) Planning Commission Meeting of August 3, 2010

Gephart asked if anyone had any additions or corrections to the Minutes.

One typographical change was submitted. It was moved by Commissioner Putnam, and seconded by Commissioner Craig, to approve the Minutes of the Planning Commission Meeting of August 3, 2010, as amended. Motion carried 6/0.

4. PENDING ISSUES/PROJECTS

(a) Appoint Liaison to City Council (September 20, 2010)

Commissioner Putnam will serve as the Planning Commission liaison to the September 20, 2010 Council meeting.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS - (Con't)

(a) None

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

(a) None

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(a) Land Use Options for Galpin Lake Properties

Richards reviewed the staff reports. At the June 8 and July 7, 2010 meetings, the Planning Commission discussed different options for zoning and impervious surface coverage. He highlighted that the proposed R-3 District draft language could be amended to allow additional uses and that the language could be allowable uses of the B-6 District.

Richards said at the July 7, 2010 meeting, the Planning Commission also discussed an historic variance process. He stressed that with the recent Minnesota Supreme Court Case of *Krummenacher v. City of Minnetonka* case he feels uncomfortable with the City potentially using variances for historic properties.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(a) Land Use Options for Galpin Lake Properties

Richards explained that an historic variance process enables a City to consider a use variance to allow for an alternate use of a historic structure that is not allowed within the zoning district. Based on his research, there are not many examples of historic use variances. He highlighted some of the differences between the information from Truckee, California, Auburn, New York and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Richards noted that in during the May Planning Commission meeting there was discussion of possibly considering the use of a coffee shop, residential clinic use, and office space as potential uses for the Galpin properties. He explained that the City recently received an e-mail from the property owner's realtor regarding an inquiry to utilize the property for marine sales.

Staunton explained that when the City reviewed the Wyer Pierce property the City utilized the Planned Unit Development process and Tax Increment Financing. He stated that these have proven to be creative mechanisms when dealing with historic properties.

Gephart stated that the right plan with creative ideas may work. He stressed that he would prefer to see a residential use.

Jensen asked if the property owner is waiting for the City to make a decision. Richards responded that the property owner has the property listed for sale.

Jensen said that the City should take ownership of the house as it would allow the property to be more readily developed. He stated that the impervious surface allowances should be increased to perhaps 65 percent.

Staunton reviewed with the Planning Commission the "Purpose" section of the Planned Unit Development ordinance.

Wallace stated believes the City should look at retaining ownership of the historic structure. Gephart said he also likes the idea of the City keeping the historic structure.

Staunton explained that the City would be able to review a proposal though a concept plan, which would significantly reduce the resources that a developer would need to expend in determining a use on the property.

Putnam asked what the minimum submittal needs are for a concept plan. Staunton reviewed the submittal needs for a concept plan application for a Planned Unit Development. He explained that the benefit of a concept plan is that it allows the City to work with incorporating the existing structure into a development on the site.

Gephart stated that he would prefer to keep the property zoned as R-3 with some allowance provided for impervious hardcover if the structure is incorporated into the development.

The Planning Commission discussed the present zoning, land use designation, building height, setback requirements, impervious surface coverage requirements, and Planned Unit Development standards.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(a) Land Use Options for Galpin Lake Properties

Richards noted that perhaps it would be best to amend the Planned Unit Development standards to provide some allowance for impervious coverage and building setbacks.

Putnam asked what the advantages are with a Planned Unit Development and would that allow for variances. Staunton explained that the process allows for some deviation from the standards with guidance and input from the City.

Richards explained that Wyer Pierce was granted a height variance as part of their Planned Unit Development.

Staunton stated that considering a Planned Unit Development review process may afford the City more flexibility.

Putnam asked any changes would be needed to the City's Planned Unit Development review process. Staunton stated that some changes are warranted to address hardcover and potential uses.

Gephart asked if staff could draft potential language to address this.

Richards asked Commissioners about the recent marine sales request to relocate to the site. Staunton responded that the City has the discretion to review such a request.

Gaylord and Putnam said that they have not heard what the City Council wants for the property. Richards asked the Planning Commission to review the May 26, 2010 memorandum.

Gephart stated that he would like to see a sketch plan of any proposed use for the property.

Jensen said that he would like to see a quality plan.

Richards stated that staff will put together draft language for the Commission to review at its next meeting.

(b) Parking Report Recommendation

Richards provided a brief update on the Albersman and Armstrong, Ltd. parking study. He said that the City Council had authorized them to complete a "payment in lieu of" parking study. He said that the study's purpose is to provide the City with recommendations on parking impact fees or lease arrangements for those developments that cannot provide the required parking on their property. The City Council expects to discuss Albersman and Armstrong, Ltd. findings at the October 4, 2010, City Council Meeting.

Gephart stated his concern with customer parking and asked if signage could be placed to regulate those areas.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(b) Parking Report Recommendation

Richards stated during the June 8, 2010 meeting, the Planning Commission discussed the City of Bozeman's formula for parking requirement reductions within their downtown and they had asked for clarification related to the current parking supply numbers.

Gephart stated that the URS study had indicated similarities and that prior to moving forward an estimate of parking fees should be established prior to discussing parking any more.

(c) Guidelines for Residential Areas

Richards relayed to the Planning Commission that the Excelsior Residential Design Standards Subcommittee has not met. He said that with the current discussions and time considerations with both parking and the Galpin Lake properties it would best to suspend those discussions until January.

Gaylord stated that with the time needed to discuss these other items it makes sense to wait on the guidelines for residential areas.

The Planning Commission discussed variance options related to one and two stall garages and impervious surfaces coverage constraints with 5,000 to 7,500 square foot lots.

Staunton noted that with Excelsior's small lot platted environment it is typically very hard to build and improve upon properties without a variance.

(d) Tree Management

Fuchs reported that the subcommittee is continuing their study of boulevard tree needs, tree policies, reforestation needs, and budgetary and non-budgetary items. He stated that the Tree Subcommittee is scheduled to meet on September 9, 2010.

8. NEW BUSINESS

(a) Dates for Additional Work Session(s)

The Planning Commission decided to hold off on scheduling any additional Work Sessions beyond the subcommittee meetings.

8. NEW BUSINESS

(b) Library Discussion

Staff said that Hennepin County is moving forwards with plans to purchase Lyman's property and build a public library at 337 Water Street. They stated that the property is zoned B-1 Central Business District. The B-1 District does not specifically allow for libraries as a street level permitted use, so a text amendment to the B-1 District, Section 50-2 is needed.

The Planning Commission and staff discussed the current uses in the B-1 District.

The Planning Commission asked to staff to schedule a public hearing for the October 4, 2010, Planning Commission meeting.

9. COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS

(a) None

Fuchs reported to the Planning Commission on recent discussions he has had with Mason Motors regarding the use of the site.

10. MISCELLANEOUS

(a) Recent City Council Actions

Staunton updated the Planning Commission on recent City Council actions.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Gaylord moved, Commissioner Putnam seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Motion passed 6/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald G. Fuchs
City Planner