

**CITY OF SANDSTONE
PLANNING COMMISSION
May 8, 2019**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Steve Palmer, Andrew Spartz, Randy Riley, Rene Stadin, Reese
Frederickson
Members absent: Cassie Gaede
Staff present: Administrator Kathy George
Others present: Tim Franklin

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA – The following were given as additions to the Agenda: Tim Franklin, Historic Presentation; John Wright Building Acquisition; Wild River Properties Disposal. **Motion Palmer, second Spartz, to approve the Agenda with the additions. Motion passed 5-0.**

MINUTES – **Motion Palmer, second Spartz, to approve the minutes from the March 13, 2019 Planning Commission Meeting. Motion passed 5-0.** The Planning Commission did not meet in April.

PUBLIC HEARINGS / PRESENTATIONS:

Tim Franklin, Historic Presentation. Franklin was present to review a report he created as part of a History class he is taking at the University of Minnesota – Duluth. He chose the topic of “The consideration of a Heritage Preservation Commission for the City of Sandstone” thinking that his research may help the City with the redevelopment of The Rock (the old high school building). Franklin made a similar presentation to the City Council on April 17th.

Franklin considered the creation of a Historic Preservation District, taking in the many historic buildings in Sandstone. Through his research, he learned that Sandstone does not have a true “historic district” because the buildings are scattered throughout town making it impossible to draw a boundary around them. There would be too many non-contributing buildings in the district. Franklin also learned that in 2012, consultants found that the City’s commercial area lacked sufficient integrity to be listed for consideration on the National Register of Historic Places as a whole. There are several individual buildings that are on the National Register. Franklin also noted that there are many buildings throughout the Country that were made with sandstone quarried from the Sandstone quarry that are on the National Register as well.

Franklin then considered submitting a National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form. However, he found that the paperwork was overburdensome and adds little value to local historic districts. He then went on to research creating a Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC). An HPC can designate their own historic district, with their own rules,

with the focus on retaining the historic character of Sandstone. Franklin found that it takes a really strong grass-roots effort to establish an effective HPC.

If an HPC were created, the City could become a Certified Local Government (CLG), which would open the door to federal grant opportunities. There are several steps and requirements in the process of becoming a CLG. Franklin found that there is only \$100,000 available annually in grant funds for all CLGs.

Franklin noted that the City's Comprehensive Plan suggests the City identify existing contributing historic structures and preserve/rehab those structures. The Comp Plan also states that the City should identify existing contributing historic structures in the core residential neighborhood. It also states that the City should consider creating an historic district and pursue a local historic designation.

Commissioners noted appreciation for Franklin's report, stating that it is a good concept. Some Commissioners had been hoping something like this could happen for years and are interested in getting the storefronts in the Downtown district to look nicer. Some are interested in restoring the Quarry to its original state. Others want to see something done with The Rock. Chair Riley stated that if a group of excited residents wanted to take this on, he would support it.

OLD & CONTINUING BUSINESS:

Zoning Ordinance Update. The Planning Commission continued working on updating the Zoning Ordinance. Now that the core districts have been reviewed in joint session with the City Council, the Planning Commission will turn its attention to supporting sections of the City Code.

A Manufactured Home Park overlay district was discussed. It was noted that there is one manufactured home park in Sandstone (on Jay Street); however, the current Zoning Ordinance does not regulate it. Commissioners stated that a Manufactured Home Park should be listed as a Conditional Use in the Traditional Residential and Suburban Residential Districts. They then went on to review Pine City's ordinance to use as an example. Overall, Pine City's ordinance seems appropriate. There are a few follow up items: finding out what the requirements of the Vehicle Code refers to, and checking with the Pine City Fire Department about road widths. For buffering, the Commission determined to use similar language they have already included in other sections of the new Zoning Ordinance.

The Planning Commission also discussed Section 516 – Manufactured Homes, which regulates individual manufactured homes being placed in town. It was noted that the City is not allowed to have certain criteria for just one type of home. The criteria should apply to all residential structures. The title will be changed to Architectural Standards, and the section will apply to all residential structures. Some changes or follow up to the current section include:

- Requiring roof lines to be at least a 5/12 pitch, rather than a 3/12 pitch;
- Finding out what is meant by “sheet metal roofs”;

- Adding the requirement that the side of the structure facing the street should include a functional front entry and window;
- Adding the requirement that all dwellings being moved into the city shall meet all applicable building codes and conform to the land use ordinance building standards as described in this section prior to being moved into the city.

The Commission then discussed the Recreational Vehicle District, which is currently in the Zoning Ordinance. Like the Manufactured Home Park section, the RV District would be considered an overlay district. In the new Zoning Ordinance language, an RV District is only allowed in the Prospective Interchange District with a Conditional Use Permit. Commissioners noted that through the CUP process, they will be able to refine the requirements based on the actual location chosen for an RV District, if and when that happens. Overall, Commissioners felt that the current language is appropriate, with the following changes:

- Removal of the requirement that *RV parks must have an adequate central community building in a location easily accessed by park users with laundry washing and drying areas and machines, and public toilets, lavatories and showers. The building must have adequate heating and be maintained in a safe, clean, and sanitary condition.* Commissioners noted that if a developer wanted to include these things, that would be fine; however, they did not want to make it a requirement.
- Removal of the minimum lot size requirements. Commissioners stated that they would work with a developer when plans are submitted.
- Under the Utilities section, Commissioners removed the requirement that all RV sites be connected to water and electrical service; replacing it with the requirement that potable water be available.
- Under Storage, Commissioners removed the requirement that large items (boats, etc.) be stored in a separate, secured and screened area.

It was noted that both Manufactured Home Parks and Recreational Vehicle Parks are licensed by the State.

Administrator George shared follow up information with the Commission regarding Wind Turbines. The City Attorney reviewed Section 517 Towers and Antennas as requested and determined that this Section of Code does not apply to Wind Turbines. The Attorney also noted that Wind Turbines are not listed as a use in any of the Zoning Districts. Therefore, she concludes that they are not currently allowed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Acquisition of the John Wright Building

MN Statutes 462.356 states that if the City has adopted a Comprehensive Plan, then no publicly owned interest in real property within the City can be acquired or disposed of until after the Planning Commission has reviewed the proposed acquisition or disposal and reported its findings to the City Council as to compliance with the Comp Plan.

Administrator George explained that the City has been negotiating with the County for the purchase of the John Wright Building, 130 Oriole Street East. She stated that the City's intent is to move the Streets & Parks Department into the building and also use portions of the building for various community purposes.

Commissioners reviewed the current zoning of the property (Large Lot Rural), the proposed zoning under the updated Zoning Ordinance (Industrial), and the zoning on the Future Land Use Map that was established in the Comp Plan (Industrial). Publicly owned buildings would be allowed in either the current Large Lot Rural District or the proposed Industrial District with a Conditional Use Permit. After discussion, **motion by Spartz, second by Palmer, that the Planning Commission finds that the City's acquisition of the John Wright Building to house the Streets & Parks Department operations is in compliance with the City's Comprehensive Plan. Motion passed 4-0, with Frederickson abstaining stating that since he is the County Attorney, he is involved in the transaction on behalf of the County.** Commissioners noted concern with the vague reference to various community purposes and how that use might conflict with industrial / City maintenance activities.

Disposal of the Wild River Properties

Again, in accordance with MN Statutes 462.356, the Planning Commission must review the disposal of properties owned by the City to determine if the action is in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. Administrator George stated that the City's Economic Development Authority is working with a broker to actively market both the Wild River Townhomes and the Wild River Senior Apartment Building for sale.

Commissioners reviewed the current zoning of the Townhomes (High Density Residential), the proposed zoning under the updated Zoning Ordinance (Traditional Residential), and the zoning on the Future Land Use Map that was established in the Comp Plan (Traditional Residential). Three and four-family dwellings and planned unit developments would be allowed as a Conditional Use in the new Traditional Residential District.

Commissioners also reviewed the current zoning of the Senior Apartments (High Density Residential), the proposed zoning under the updated Zoning Ordinance (Historic Downtown District), and the zoning on the Future Land Use Map (Historic Downtown District). In the proposed Historic Downtown District, apartments are allowed as long as they are located above the first floor, behind the storefront, or in the basement. The current use would be deemed a lawful non-conforming use.

Commissioners also reviewed the Housing Goals that were noted in the Comp Plan:

- Eliminate substandard housing.
- Assure that residents have access to safe and affordable housing in good neighborhoods that meet the needs of all community members.
- Make sure there is housing for current and future needs.

It is not anticipated that the use of either property, as multi-family and senior housing, would change when the properties are sold.

Motion by Stadin, second by Palmer, that the Planning Commission finds that the City's disposal of the Wild River Properties is in compliance with the City's Comprehensive Plan. Motion passed 5-0.

OTHER: None

ADJOURN: Motion Stadin, second Palmer, to adjourn. Motion passed 5-0. Time 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy George, City Administrator

DRAFT