

**CITY OF SANDSTONE
PLANNING COMMISSION
October 9, 2019**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Steve Palmer, Reese Frederickson, Rene Stadin
Members absent: Andrew Spartz
Staff present: Administrator Kathy George
Others: Peter Spartz, Alanea White

Effective September 18, 2019, Commissioners Cassie Gaede and Randy Riley agreed to fill the two Council seats vacated by Tim Franklin and Brandon Devlin. The Planning Commission now has four Commissioners and three vacancies.

A quorum was not present at the meeting; therefore, no action could be taken on the Agenda items. However, discussion did occur.

NEW BUSINESS:

Planning Commission Membership. Commissioners discussed the current membership of the Planning Commission. City Code 305.27, subdivision 2, states that the Planning Commission consists of seven members.

Since March, 2018, the Planning Commission has been working with 6 members (Cassie Linder had resigned and was not replaced). Effective September 18, 2019, Planning Commissioners Cassie Gaede and Randy Riley agreed to fill the two Council seats vacated by Tim Franklin and Brandon Devlin. This leaves the Planning Commission with four active members and three vacancies.

There had been talk about reducing the Planning Commission to five members. Additionally, there is concern with two long-standing Planning Commissioners (Gaede and Riley) both leaving the Planning Commission at the same time. It was suggested that the Council Liaison position be eliminated and that one Council Member actually serve on the Planning Commission. Randy Riley has been approached about this idea and may be interested in being the Council Liaison.

Commissioners agreed with reducing the Planning Commission to five members. They also agreed with eliminating the Council Liaison position and having a Council Member serve on the Commission. The City Council will discuss this further at the October 16th Council Meeting.

OLD & CONTINUING BUSINESS

Zoning Ordinance Update

- a. Solar Considerations. The City has been approached by Peter Lindstrom, Manager, Public Sector & Community Engagement, Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) at the University of Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships.

The Clean Energy Resource Teams is heading up an effort in Minnesota to secure no cost technical assistance to aid local governments interested in assisting residents and businesses in utilizing solar power. Mr. Lindstrom asked that Sandstone consider signing on to this opportunity. In May, 2018, the City agreed to participate in this program. Since that time, Mr. Lindstrom has worked with solar specialists at Great Plains Institute to conduct an initial review of our City Code to assess possible obstacles/gaps regarding solar. They have now provided their findings and ask that the Planning Commission review them.

Commissioners reviewed the various comments with regard to the new zoning districts they have been working on based on the Future Land Use Map that was provided through the Comprehensive Plan process.

With regard to the new zoning districts, Commissioners concluded that roof-mount solar could be allowed as an accessory use in the following zoning districts: Traditional Residential, Suburban Residential, Prospective Interchange Development, Professional/Light Industrial Business Park, Historic Downtown, Highway Mixed Use, Industrial, and Public Recreational & Open Space.

Commissioners further concluded that ground-mount solar could be allowed as an accessory use in the following districts: Traditional Residential, Suburban Residential, Prospective Interchange Development, Professional/Light Industrial Business Park, Highway Mixed Use, Industrial, and Public Recreational & Open Space.

With regard to solar gardens, Commissioners concluded that they could be allowed with a Conditional Use Permit in the following districts: Suburban Residential and Prospective Interchange Development.

Various definitions should be added to the City Code as well.

Commissioners agreed with the recommendation that rooftop solar arrays should be added to the list of height regulation exceptions as currently noted in City Code 515.37.5.

Wherever screening is required in City Code, Commissioners agreed that standards could be limited to maintain the design function of roof-mount solar energy systems. For ground-mount systems, Commissioners agreed that screening shall not affect the design operation.

Commissioners did not feel that it is necessary to change impervious surface coverage or size of accessory structures to accommodate solar systems. They also did not see the need to consider parking requirement incentives to encourage solar carports.

With regard to the recommendation to consider incentives or requirements for making buildings meet “solar-ready” standards in flexible zoning areas such as Planned Unit Development District, Commissioners agreed to discuss the suggestion when they review the PUD Code.

- b. The Planning Commission continues to work through updating the Zoning Code. The following proposed new sections have been reviewed: Traditional Residential, Suburban Residential, Historic Downtown, Highway Mixed Use, Perspective Interchange Development, Professional / Light Industrial Business Park, Industrial, Park Recreation / Open Space, Manufactured Home Park Overlay District, Recreational Vehicle Overlay District, and Manufactured Homes (renamed Architectural Standards).

Follow up items, at this point, include:

- Home Occupations
- Fish Houses
- Parking of truck tractors, semi-trailers, semi-tractors, and tractor-trailers in the Residential District
- Definitions – private clubs, places of assembly, truck stops, light industrial,
- What is meant by the reference to the State of MN Vehicle Code (Manufactured Home Park Overlay District)
- What the minimum width of streets should be to accommodate fire trucks
- What is meant by “sheet metal roofs” (Architectural Standards)

Commercial Tier 3 District. On the current Zoning map, there are 7 parcels zoned Commercial Tier 3 District, all off of Eagle Drive. These 7 parcels consist of the old school properties (5 parcels), Arrowhead Transit (1 parcel), and a small parcel owned by MMAP (Mike Johnson). During the current re-zoning efforts, this area has been designated part of the Traditional Residential District. Conditional Uses allowed in the Traditional Residential District include educational and cultural facilities, among other uses. The Arrowhead Transit parcel would not be an allowed use; however, as an existing use it would be allowed to continue. Mike Johnson’s small parcel is adjacent to a larger parcel he owns which is zoned Medium Residential District on the current map and is proposed to be zoned Traditional Residential.

Commissioners discussed whether there is a need to zone these 7 parcels differently than Traditional Residential District. After discussion, consensus was to leave the area as Traditional Residential District. Therefore, the Commercial Tier 3 District will be eliminated.

ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy George, City Administrator