

**CITY OF SANDSTONE
PLANNING COMMISSION
May 13, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. *This meeting took place via Zoom Video Conferencing.*

ROLL CALL

Members present: Steve Palmer, Randy Riley, Andrew Spartz, Reese Frederickson
Members absent: Rene Stadin
Staff present: Administrator Kathy George
Others: Pine County Courier Editor Alaena White, Walter Klosner

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Palmer, second by Spartz, to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion passed 4-0.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Palmer, second by Spartz, to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2020 Planning Commission meeting. Motion passed 4-0. The Planning Commission did not meet in March or April.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The City received an application for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) from Walter Klosner. He would like to convert a two-family dwelling into a three-family dwelling at 106 Lark Street, which is zoned R-1, Low Density Residential. Klosner has a purchase agreement with property owner Jacob Kruse that is contingent on converting the property into a tri-plex. Three and four family dwelling units are allowed in the Low Density Residential District with a CUP.

A notice of the Public Hearing was published in the 4/30 and 5/7 editions of the *Pine County Courier*. The notice was also mailed to all property owners located within 350 feet of the subject property. One nearby property owner did call and state concern regarding available parking on that block.

City Code requires a minimum parcel size of 9,000 square feet for two-family dwellings, and a minimum of 11,000 square feet for three and four family dwellings. The lot is 6,250 square feet and is, therefore, currently a nonconforming use. A nonconforming use may not be enlarged, but may be continued at the size and in the manner of operation existing on the effective date of the City Code. Therefore, in order to proceed, a variance would also be required.

Motion Spartz, second Riley, to open the Public Hearing. Motion passed 4-0.

Klosner explained that the building has an unfinished basement. He would like to create an efficiency apartment in a portion of the basement. He would comply with appropriate building codes, egress windows, etc. He stated that he works in the construction field and is branching out into the rental market. He lives in Beroun and is married with two kids. Klosner further stated that there is adequate off-street parking on the property. He plans to relocate the fish house that is currently taking up space.

Chair Riley called for any comments from the public. No comments were received. **Motion Palmer, second Frederickson to close the Public Hearing. Motion passed 4-0.**

Commissioners considered the following items regarding the aspect of granting a variance:

- 1) The property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the code. *Commissioners agreed that the use of the property as residential is reasonable.*
- 2) Unique circumstances apply to the property which do not apply generally to other properties in the same zone or vicinity and result from lot size or shape, topography or other circumstances over which the owner of the property has had no control. That the unique circumstances do not result from the actions of the landowner. *Commissioners felt that the size of the lot is not a unique circumstance. The current lot size is only about 50% of what is required by City Code for a three family dwelling. They were not in favor of adding density to this lot due to its size.*
- 3) The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. *Commissioners agreed, again, that a residential use is in line with the neighborhood; however, the lot size is the concern.*
- 4) Granting the variance is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of City Code and consistent with the comprehensive plan. *Commissioners stated that converting this property into a three family dwelling is not in harmony with the City Code, nor is it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, due to the lot size.*

Motion Spartz, second Riley to approve the variance request to create a three family dwelling at 106 Lark Street. Chair Riley called for a vote on the motion. Riley, Spartz, Palmer, Frederickson, voted nay.

Since the Commissioners were not in favor of granting a variance, they determined that a Conditional Use Permit would also not be granted.

These recommendations will be presented to the City Council on May 20th for final action.

NEW BUSINESS None

OLD & CONTINUING BUSINESS

Zoning Ordinance Update: Home Occupations

The Planning Commission has been working on updating the Zoning Code to coincide with the Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 2017. One of the items that required more discussion and research was Home Occupations. The current City Code allows Home Occupations, with certain restrictions, as Interim Uses for both the Low Density Residential District and the Large Lot Rural District. In previous discussions, Commissioners felt that these restrictions were more applicable to the Traditional Residential areas of town and that the Suburban Residential areas should allow for a wider variety of home occupations, including outdoor uses. The feeling was that under certain circumstances it makes sense to allow for the proprietor to have employees, other than family; such as, operating a nursery. They also didn't think the parking restrictions were applicable. Staff was asked to research the issue and report back to the Commission.

Commissioners reviewed the language in the current City Code, along with language from Pine City, Underwood, and Aitkin. They determined to build from the example of Aitkin's code because it provides for four different levels of Home Occupation and also provides general standards/restrictions that apply to each type. The Aitkin code also addresses yard sales and private automobile sales. The following was approved for each district for Sandstone:

District	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Traditional Residential	Yes	Yes	w/IUP	w/IUP
Suburban Residential	Yes	Yes	w/IUP	w/IUP
Historic Downtown	Yes	Yes	Yes	w/IUP
Highway Mixed Use	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Prospective Interchange	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Professional / Light Industrial Business Park	No	No	No	No
Industrial	No	No	No	No
Public Recreation / Open Space	No	No	No	No

Zoning Ordinance Update: Public Outreach

Due to the COVID-19 situation, it will be difficult this summer to have public open houses to begin the process of explaining the proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance. Commissioners decided to start by sending out an every-door-direct mailing showing the current zoning and the proposed new zoning, along with some highlights of each district. Property owners can contact the City Administrator for any follow up questions they may have or to receive more information. This will not replace the public hearings that are required, but will begin to introduce property owners to the new Zoning Districts.

OTHER

Commissioners noted that construction activity has started on the new assisted living facility that is planned on the Sandstone Health Care Center property. Also, construction is well underway for the new Dollar General store. A mini-storage facility will be constructed on the former milk drying plant property.

ADJOURN: Motion by Palmer, second by Frederickson, to adjourn at 7:35 p.m. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy George, City Administrator

DRAFT