

MINUTES
AUSTIN CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2015
5:30 P.M.
AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Bremner, Laura Helle, Steve Kime, Jay Lutz, Troy Nelson, Lonnie Skalicky, and Aaron Stewart

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jim Mino and Lynn Spainhower

OTHERS PRESENT: Craig Byram, Holly Wallace and public

Commissioner Kime called the meeting to order and went over the agenda. Commissioner Bremner made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

Ms. Wallace welcomed the new members, Jay Lutz and Aaron Stewart, to the Planning Commission. She continued by thanking Dan Hirst for his years of service.

Commissioner Kime took nominations from the floor for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. Commissioner Bremner nominated Commissioner Kime to Chairperson and Commissioner Helle nominated herself to Vice Chairperson. All nominees were accepted and approved in favor by all members.

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING: To consider the request of Leaning Tree LLC, 329 Main St. N, Suite 102L, Austin, MN, to rezone two properties in the 900-1000 blocks of 16th Avenue NE and 8th Street NE from R-1 “Residential” to R-O “Multi-Family Office.” Much of the area was previously acquired and rezoned to R-O in 2013. The rezoned area is part of the ongoing Hormel Institute expansion.

Ms. Wallace indicated this open public hearing for the rezone of these two properties is part of the ongoing Hormel Institute expansion. The proposed use would be the construction of apartment buildings utilized by institute staff. There are other existing homes to the east that will remain in the R-1 “Residential” District. Exhibit “C” shows two apartment buildings although the projection will be for one apartment building.

Tim Lerud of 903 17th Avenue NE asked if his block, which is located to the south of the property in question, would be built on as well. Ms. Wallace indicated there has been nothing submitted to date.

Commissioner Helle made a motion to recommend the approval of the rezone and Commissioner Bremner seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING: To consider a request from Spencer Medgaarden, 801 1st Ave SW, Austin, MN, for a conditional use permit to engage in auto sales in addition to an existing vehicle repair shop located in a “B-

2" Community Business District. Said action is pursuant to City Code Sections 11.30 Subd.3 (D) and 11.56.

Ms. Wallace indicated to the group the prior use as an automotive repair shop and the area and building have been cleaned very nicely since the owner has obtained the property. Mr. Medgaarden will have the lights on only at night and pointed in a downward direction. He anticipates having six to eight cars located in the lot north of the building with the additional cars which are there to be serviced. Green space will remain to the south of the building to maintain the 20% requirement. Located to the west of the building is a rental property. A landscaping plan will be needed from the property owner.

Commissioner Helle made a motion to approve the conditional use permit taking into considerations the five conditions contained in the staff report. Commissioner Bremner seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING: To consider a request from Northland Investors and Northland Investments, 3112 Golf Road, Eau Claire, WI 54701, for a conditional use permit to erect a freeway oriented sign in a "B-2" Community Business District. This action is pursuant to Austin City Code Sections 4.50, Schedule IV (2); Schedule VI, Subd. 5 (A) (4); and Section 11.56, Subdivisions 1, 2 and 5.

This conditional use permit is for a 55 foot high freeway sign which would be located on the northwest corner of the property. It is requested for the use of advertisement to travelers from the interstate.

Jim Stough of 305 14th Place NW is the property owner to the east of the said requested conditional use permit. He is requesting that the light from the sign does not impede upon his yard in the night and early morning hours and the trees are not removed as he can see the Burger King sign but it is thru the trees. He also indicated a concern with the sign obstructing Mayo One route.

Matt Snyder, a representative from the Northland Investors and Northland Investments referred to the monitor stating the light would not be very bright or illuminate other areas.

Commissioner Bremner made a motion to approve the conditional use permit for freeway sign following the staff recommendations and that Mayo Clinic be notified of the sign. Commissioner Helle seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

SIGN APPEAL: To consider the sign appeal from the denial of a permit to Northland Investors and Northland Investments, 3112 Golf Road, Eau Claire, WI 54701, for the placement of a second freestanding sign for the purpose of business advertisement in a manner similar to other businesses in close proximity. This action is pursuant to Austin City Code Sections 4.50, Schedule IV (2).

This sign appeal is requested by Northland Inventors and Northland Investments as the city code only allows one freestanding sign, a maximum size of 100 square feet and is a recommendation to the City Council. There are other businesses in the area who have received variance for additional advertising signs. Matt Snyder, a representative from the Northland

Investors and Northland Investments indicating the lighting would be illuminated from inside the sign.

Commissioner Helle made a motion to approve the sign appeal meeting the 100 square foot requirement as a recommendation to City Council. Commissioner Bremner seconded the motion and the motion was carried.

SIGN APPEAL: To consider the sign appeal from denial of a permit to Michael Steichen, 908 12th Street SW, Austin, MN, for the proposed placement of signage on an exterior wall that does not face a public right-of-way in a "B-2" Community Business District. Said action is pursuant to Austin City Code Section 4.50.

Michael Steichen is requesting this sign appeal for a sign located in a non-public right-of-way. The sign would be located on the north side of the building and face the business to that location.

Commissioner Lutz made a motion to approve the sign appeal as a recommendation to the City Council and Commissioner Skalicky seconded the motion. All other Commission members voted yay with Commissioner Bremner voting nay.

SIGN APPEAL: To consider the sign appeal from denial of a permit to Tony Roehl, 610 1st Drive NW, Austin, MN, for the proposed placement of signage on an exterior wall that does not face a public right-of-way in a "B-2" Community Business District. Said action is pursuant to City Code Section 4.50.

Tony Roehl is requesting a sign appeal for a sign located in a non-public right-of-way. The sign would be on the east side of the building and face a park area. The Cedars of Austin residents may be affected by the lighting of the sign.

Commissioner Bremner made a motion to deny the sign appeal and Commissioner Helle seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Mr. Byram indicated to the group that any Commissioner can contact any person or business regarding any issues they would like more information on.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Nelson made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Lutz seconded the motion. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 6:43 pm.