

**BIG LAKE PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

MAY 6, 2009

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Kirby Becker, Ketti Green, Doug Hayes, Scott Marotz, Patricia May, and David Schreiber. Commissioners absent: Duane Langsdorf. Also present: Senior City Planner Katie Larsen and Economic Development Assistant Sandy Petrowski.

3. ADOPT AGENDA

Commissioner Hayes moved to adopt the revised agenda distributed at the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Green, unanimous ayes, agenda adopted.

4. OPEN FORUM

Chair Becker opened the Open Forum at 7:02 p.m. No one came forward for comment. Chair Becker closed the Open Forum at 7:03 p.m.

5. APPROVE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 4, 2009

Commissioner May motioned to approve the February 4, 2009 Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Hayes, unanimous ayes, Minutes approved.

6. BUSINESS

6A. PUBLIC HEARING: BIG LAKE SHOPPING CENTER SIGN VARIANCE

Senior City Planner Katie Larsen reviewed the 04-21-09 Planning Report regarding the variance application received from Mr. Chuck Hultman, of Big Lake Hardware Hank, for a 39 foot high, 200 square foot (per side) shopping center sign to be located at the Big Lake Shopping Center on Rose Drive. The proposed sign would hold ten (10) tenant signs, compared to the current sign which holds four (4) tenant signs, and would be 39 feet in height (compared to the current sign which is 35 feet in height). Planner Larson reported that Mr. Hultman was present to answer questions of the Board.

Chair Becker opened the public hearing at 7:14 p.m. No one came forward for comment. Chair Becker closed the public hearing at 7:15 p.m.

Commissioner Becker motioned to recommend approval of the sign variance for the Big Lake Shopping center as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Green, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

Planner Larsen stated that this item will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at their May 27th meeting.

6B. PORTABLE SIGNS (DISCUSSION ONLY)

Planner Larsen discussed with the Commission the black signs with fluorescent letters that are currently placed within the City. She noted that the City's current Ordinances define this type of sign as a portable sign, which is allowed to be used for up to one (1) year. The discussion was being brought forth to obtain the Commission's input on whether the portable sign code should remain as it is or if it should possibly be modified to allow portable signs a shorter period of time (i.e., 60 or 90 days, or an intermittent period of time that it is allowed to be up and then a period of time it must remain down).

After a brief discussion on the possible timeframe options for the use of portable signs and whether or not it is beneficial to allow a portable sign to be used for a year or if such a sign should fall under the category of a permanent sign, Commissioner Schreiber asked if staff could speak with business owners to obtain their opinions on use of a portable sign as well as contacting business which rent the signs on a weekly/monthly basis to get their input.

It was the consensus of the Board to direct staff to survey local business owners as well as businesses that rent out the portable signs for input and to research the sign codes of several metro area cities and bring back all of the obtained information to a future Planning Commission meeting for further discussion

7. PLANNER'S REPORT

7A. COMMUNITY PROJECT UPDATE REPORT

Planner Larsen stated that this report is to provide an update of projects that have previously passed through the Planning Commission for review/action so that they are aware of where the project currently stands or the final outcome of the project. The projects included in the April 24th Community Project Update Report were: Wright's Crossing Third Addition (33-unit townhouse development – Duffy Development); Town Square Apartments (Briggs Properties); Commerce Park; Marketplace East/Big Lake Rail Park; the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP); and the TOD Committee.

7B. TWO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS PER MONTH REMINDER

Planner Larsen reminded the Commissioners that beginning this month, the Planning Commission will be meeting twice a month, with the next meeting being May 20th.

8. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Schreiber discussed the current payment that the Commissioners receive for service on the Planning Commission and stated that, in the current hard economic times, that it might be a good example if the Commission volunteered to either reduce their monthly salary for a short period of time.

Commissioner Marotz suggested that the Commissioners could consider making a donation to a specific department or project (i.e., Parks Dept., Fire Dept.)

It was the consensus of the Board to direct staff to investigate the pay for the Commission as well as other Boards, and to look into the legal aspects of potentially changing the salary for the Commissioners. Staff will bring information on this issue back to a future Planning Commission meeting for review and further discussion.

9. OTHER

9A. PURCHASE OF LAPTOP COMPUTERS FOR CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION USE

Planner Larsen reported that in an effort to reduce the cost and paper waste of providing a hard copy of Council, Planning, and BLEDA reports/packets, the City Council authorized the purchase of laptops for use during monthly meetings. The Commission discussed the importance of having a copy of agenda items available to assist in the review of planning issues. It was noted that, beginning at the next meeting, the Commissioners would still have hard copy of the meeting packet available at the meeting but they would also be receiving an electronic copy of the packet via e-mail the Friday before the scheduled meeting.

9B. SET SPECIAL GATHERING FOR MAY 27, 2009 TOD WORKSHOP

The Northstar Corridor Development Authority has invited the Planning Commission Members to attend a workshop on May 27th on transit-oriented development (TOD) around the Northstar Commuter train stations.

Chair Becker motioned to set a special Planning Commission gathering on May 27, 2009 from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for the TOD Workshop located at Coon Rapids City Hall. Seconded by Commissioner Hayes, unanimous ayes, motioned carried.

Chair Becker briefly discussed the goals that the Commission set at the end of last year (i.e., items the Commission would like to/need to address in the comp plan, territorial land use plan, etc.).

10. ADJOURN

Commissioner Green motioned to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner May, unanimous ayes, motion carried.