

**BIG LAKE PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**MAY 18, 2016**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Marotz called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**3. ROLL CALL**

Commissioners present: Ketti Green, Seth Hansen, Jennifer Joseph, Scott Marotz, Patricia May, Larry Sundberg, and Scott Zettervall. Commissioners absent: none. Also present: City Planner Michael Healy and Administrative Assistant Sandy Petrowski.

**4. ADOPT AGENDA**

Commissioner Green moved to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Hansen, unanimous ayes, agenda adopted.

**5. OPEN FORUM**

Chair Marotz opened the Open Forum at 6:31 p.m. No one came forward for comment. Chair Marotz closed the Open Forum at 6:31 p.m.

**6. APPROVE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 4, 2016**

Commissioner May motioned to approve the May 4, 2016 Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Zettervall, unanimous ayes, Minutes approved.

**7. BUSINESS**

**7A. PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE AMENDMENT MODIFYING FENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR CORNER LOTS**

City Planner Michael Healy reviewed the Memorandum on the public hearing for consideration of a proposed text amendment to modify the fence requirements for corner lots. He reported that the existing fence restrictions do not pose an issue for most property owners; however, corner lot properties (i.e., properties that front two different streets) have additional restrictions when it comes to fence installation as most of the property has to conform to "front yard" fencing restrictions.

Healy reported that the proposed ordinance amendment has been revised based upon the Commission's discussion at the May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting and includes the following modifications/special provisions for corner lots:

- Reduce minimum setback from 7 feet to 5 feet
- Landscaping requirement has been eliminated
- Any type of residential style fencing would be allowed
- Fence height can be up to six feet tall

Healy stated that the proposed new language for the Special Provisions section under General Fence Regulations would read: "On double frontage lots, the front yard that has no access may have a fence that is less than 75% open to the passage of air and light and up to six (6) feet tall, at a distance of five (5) feet from the property line."

Chair Marotz opened the public hearing at 6:39 p.m.

Mike Bienek, of 5019 Bluff Road, stated that he thought the amendment was dealing with being allowed to build on the property line. He further stated that he had taken down the old fence and was told that he has to put the new fence up with a 7 foot setback, which takes away quite a bit from his backyard. Healy stated that it was initially proposed that way but staff had been given the direction to require a five (5) foot setback. Chair Marotz stated that having a five-foot setback from property line was a compromise that the Commission decided on so that a good portion of the side yard could still be usable but would also cause issues with snow removal or maintenance of sidewalks/roadways.

Chair Marotz closed the public hearing at 6:42 p.m.

Commissioner Hansen motioned to recommend that the City Council approve the amendment as proposed. Seconded by Commissioner Zettervall, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

#### **7B. DISCUSSION: METAL SHED AT 17088 TRILLIUM LANE**

Healy stated that this item is to discuss the intent of the current code, clarify the meaning of the word "compatible" in terms of exterior materials for sheds, and to direct staff as to what type of sheds to allow going forward.

Healy briefly discussed the current wording in the code with regards to accessory structure materials and noted that the term “compatible” is not as clear as what staff believes it should be. He stated that staff is asking for direction on how the Commission would like to define compatible shed materials and if steel siding is to be allowed.

After discussing whether or not restrictions should be put on colors and types of siding materials, as well as various types of steel siding materials, it was the consensus of the Commission that a proposed text amendment to the code should include: 1) the color of the materials should not be restricted; 2) corrugated steel and unfinished sheet metal materials should be prohibited and finished building materials should be allowed.

Healy stated that a public hearing will be scheduled for the next Planning Commission meeting to consider a text amendment pertaining to allowable exterior materials for accessory structures.

#### **7C. DISCUSSION: THROUGH-LOT SETBACK STANDARDS**

Healy discussed the issue of through-lot setback standards that pertain to properties that are flanked by two parallel streets which could leave property owners with little or no usable yard space as these types of properties would be classified as having two front yards and have more restrictive standards. He reported that some of the consequences for such lots are: 1) both roads are considered frontages; 2) front yard setbacks are required for both frontages; 3) there is a 45-foot setback on collector streets; and 4) there is a 50-foot setback for structures on arterial roads. Healy stated that, rather than require owners of these types of properties to go through a variance process in order to be able to use their yard in a normal manner, it may be more efficient to modify the code to better reflect the City’s goals for land use on lots along major streets.

After discussing options for minimum setbacks for structures and fences for properties with two parallel streets, it was the consensus of the Commission to: 1) direct staff to contact Sherburne County to ascertain if there was a need to require that structures be kept 45 to 50 feet away from the collector/arterial road right-of-way lines; and 2) draft a text amendment to through-lot setback standards based on the discussed revisions and bring the amendment back to the Planning Commission during a public hearing at the June 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

#### **7D. DISCUSSION: RV STORAGE STANDARDS**

Healy discussed the current storage standards for recreational vehicles, which are: 1) RVs can be stored in front, side, and rear yards; 2) RV’s stored in front yards need to be set back 15 feet from the street curb and storage is not allowed to encroach sidewalks; 3) only RV’s less than 36 feet long are able to be stored on site; 4) RV’s must be on a surface material

that is durable, weather resistant, and suitable to control dust and drainage. Landscaped yard areas are not suitable for storage; and 5) the designated storage area shall maintain at least a 5-foot setback from side or rear property lines and shall be screened from adjoining properties through either landscaping or fencing.

Healy noted that the last two standards listed above have not typically been enforced in the past, residents are likely unaware of these conditions, and many residents are currently in violation of them. He stated that staff is unclear if these two conditions are something City policymakers would want enforced as it would then be extremely difficult for many residents to store their RV's at their homes.

After discussing potential screening of RV's, the definition of surface material for storing the RV's, and what type of yard parking should be allowed, it was the consensus of the Commission to direct staff to draft a text amendment to the code pertaining to RV storage as follows: 1) allowing the parking of RV's on grass in back yards and the grass must be maintained/mowed; 2) eliminating the "durable material" language for parking RV's; and eliminating the screening requirement language, as discussed.

Healy stated that a public hearing will be scheduled for the next Planning Commission meeting to consider a text amendment pertaining to storage standards for RV's.

## **7E. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

Healy briefly reviewed the following items from Community Development Director Hanna Klimmek's update:

- **BR&E Visits:** Staff has visited a total of nine (9) businesses between April 13<sup>th</sup> and May 2<sup>nd</sup> (i.e., McDonald's, Heritage Montessori School, Coborn's, Anytime Fitness, Keller Lake Commons, Insurance Specialist Team, KleinBank, Trails Grill & Sports Bar, and Options, Inc.).
- **Big Lake Farmer's Market:** Corrie Scott, Farmer's Market Coordinator, started her temporary employment with the City as an intern on 4/29/2016. Corrie is a graduate of Big Lake High School (she served as a Big Lake Ambassador during this time as well) and will be graduating from St. Cloud State University in July of 2016 with a major in Business Management. Ms. Scott will be working 20 hours per week through October 12, 2016, which is when she provides the City Council with her closing presentation. The City is still accepting vendor applications! The Application and Policy Packet can be found on the City web site. CentraCare and the Sherburne County Master Gardeners are planning to be involved again this year to share their expertise with vendors and patrons.

- Code Enforcement: In an effort to clean-up the City, staff is soliciting the complaint-based, re-active code enforcement process. Residents are to report to the City if they have a complaint that is based on a code violation. Trisha Lindahl, Administrative Assistant, is the first point of contact for complaint submittals.

The City has just signed a 1-year service contract with SeeClickFix, which is a web based communication tool that will be set up within the next 10 weeks. This communication tool will provide residents with another option to submit complaints anonymously rather than filling out a form or coming into City Hall.

- Housing Study / SherVision: A Big Lake Comprehensive Housing Study Update kick-off meeting was held at City Hall on Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Staff have been asked to write two separate grants for the SherVision process. Staff is writing a grant application to BNSF and the Federal EDA to support the SherVision efforts.

- Building Permit Activity YTD through April 30, 2016:
  - Single-Family New Builds = 15
  - Residential Building Permits = 78
  - Total Valuation of All Residential Permits = \$8,562,590.17

This item for information only; no action required or taken by the Commission.

8. **PLANNER'S REPORT** – None.
9. **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS** – None.
10. **OTHER** – None.
11. **ADJOURN**

Commissioner Green motioned to adjourn at 7:51 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Zettervall, unanimous ayes, motion carried.