

**Heather Hanover**  
*Chair*

**James Eshelman**  
*Vice-Chair*

**Commissioners**

**Scott Dzurka, Mayor**  
**Eric Hufnagel, Commissioner**  
**Mark Holden**  
**Melvin Renfrow**  
**Eric Harger**  
**Brian Mills**  
**Vacant**



**PLANNING COMMISSION**

**APRIL 9, 2025**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the St. Johns Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Hanover at 5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Heather Hanover, Mark Holden, Brian Mills, Scott Dzurka, Eric Hufnagel (arrived at 5:33 pm), James Eshelman

Members Absent: Melvin Renfrow, Eric Harger

Staff Present: Chad Gamble, City Manager; Mindy Seavey, City Clerk; Eric Ensey, McKenna

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Commissioner Holden seconded by Commissioner Eshelman to approve the agenda as presented.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Mills, Dzurka, Eshelman

NAY: None

Motion carried.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MARCH 12, 2025 MEETING**

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Mills to approve the minutes as presented.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Mills, Dzurka, Eshelman

NAY: None

Motion carried.

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Chairperson Hanover asked if there were any public comments.

There were none.

**5. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**A. Special Land Use – 1201 S. US 127 BR/Red Wing Plaza**

Motion by Commissioner Mills seconded by Commissioner Eshelman to open the public hearing.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Mills, Dzurka, Eshelman

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The public hearing was opened at 5:33 p.m.

Commissioner Hufnagel arrived at 5:33 p.m.

Eric Ensey, McKenna, discussed the special land use for a restaurant; zoned GC, requirements SUP (Special Use Permit) for drive through facility; and this is also tied to a site plan application on the agenda.

Chairperson Hanover asked if there were any questions from the Planning Commission.

There were none.

Chairperson Hanover asked if there were any public comments.

There were none.

Motion by Commissioner Mills seconded by Commissioner Holden to close the public hearing.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Mills, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The public hearing was closed at 5:35 p.m.

B. Rezoning – 700, 702, 706, 708, 710, 712, 800, & 802 W. State Street from GC, General Commercial, to MU, Mixed Use, and 110 Piston Ring Pl. from I-2, Industrial-Liberal Performance, to MU, Mixed Use

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Mills to open the public hearing.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Mills, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The public hearing was opened at 5:36 p.m.

Eric Ensey, McKenna, said it is the north side of State Street, but also includes 110 Piston Ring Place.

There was a discussion of:

- Communication with the property owner regarding the payment for rezoning being on hold.
- With this change of zoning, a house could be rebuilt if it burned down.
  - Under current zoning, you could not rebuild.

There was no one in the audience for public comments.

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Holden to close the public hearing.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Mills, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The public hearing was closed at 5:38 p.m.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS:**

### **A. Special Land Use Recommendation to City Commission – 1201 S. US 127 BR/Red Wing Plaza**

Eric Ensey, McKenna, discussed the site plan and special use.

Motion by Commissioner Eshelman seconded by Commissioner Mills that the planning commission recommends approval of the special use permit to the city commission.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Mills, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman

NAY: None

Motion carried.

### **B. Site Plan Approval – 1201 S. US 127 BR/Red Wing Plaza**

Eric Ensey, McKenna, discussed: the applicant is proposing 3 different tenant suites, one for a drive through restaurant; review by McKenna is in your packet; missing information from the applicant; zoned GC; existing building complies with height and setback requirements; 36 parking spaces on site plan, need more information to verify; needs to show required ADA spaces (2); parking lot surface is in poor condition, need clarification; loading space, needs signage and striping; site plan did not provide a landscaping plan; need submittal of lighting plan; requires sidewalks on US 127 as well as Scott Road; and they recommend conditional approval with 8 conditions.

There was a discussion of:

- Landscaping.
  - Credit for existing landscaping and the need to verify what is there meets the code.
- The property line and separation from the adjacent property.
- The fence.
- Site plan presented as the current property exists.
- The parcel area to the south that comes to a point.
- Community sign (city welcome sign) on the property.

Brian Wiggins, Architect, was present. He said they don't know the exact use of the other two spaces right now. They think the 36 parking spaces is realistic. They anticipate a pizza restaurant with no seating for one of the other two units; and the other one would be a hair salon or nail salon.

Luk Dedvukaj, President of the company, discussed the sidewalk. He said he is putting close to \$1 million in to put in the store and his landlord doesn't want to spend any money.

There was a discussion of:

- The upgraded trail system along the back part of that property.
  - Proposed trail system coming down 27.
- Talking about the US 127 corridor with MDOT and multimodal facility addition of sidewalk would probably not add any value.
- The curb on the Scott Road side.
  - GIS was pulled up and showed sidewalks on the Scott Road side of the property and curb.

Mr. Wiggins asked about signage for the new plaza and the restrictions.

Eric Ensey, McKenna, said there is an administrative site plan process for signage that could be approved later.

There was a discussion of:

- What drives the amount of parking spaces required.

- We need to look at worst case scenario for parking since we don't know the use of the other 2 units.
- Flow of the drive-thru traffic.
- Bringing site plan back to the May 14<sup>th</sup> planning commission meeting.
  - Chad discussed city commission meets on April 28<sup>th</sup> and can have the Special Land Use on that agenda.

C. Master Plan Amendment Discussion – 700/800 Block of W. State Street and 110 Piston Ring Place

Eric Ensey, McKenna, discussed the master plan amendment for these properties. He said they are looking for consensus.

There was a discussion of:

- Mixed use does not allow industrial.

D. Rezoning Recommendation to City Commission - 700, 702, 706, 708, 710, 712, 800, & 802 W. State Street from GC, General Commercial, to MU, Mixed Use, and 110 Piston Ring Pl. from I-2, Industrial-Liberal Performance, to MU, Mixed Use, and 110 Piston Ring Pl. from I-2, Industrial Liberal Performance, to MU, Mixed Use

Eric Ensey, McKenna, discussed existing zoning; would all be mixed use district; rezoning helps those properties on State Street if something happened and they would need to rebuild; reasonable transition between uses; and recommend approval to the city commission.

There was a discussion of:

- Legal non-conforming use.

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Dzurka that the planning commission recommend the rezoning to the city commission.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Mills, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman

NAY: None

Motion carried.

E. Zoning Ordinance Amendment Discussion – Draft Regulations for Vendor Trucks

Eric Ensey, McKenna, discussed proposed amendments to the zoning ordinance to allow vendor trucks on private property; propose to add a new section for vendor trucks as an accessory use.

There was a discussion of:

- Fee for food trucks.
- Current process for food trucks.
- Administrative site plan review fee.
- Difference between having a vendor truck on private property vs. public property.
- Festival exemption.
- Protection of existing vendors; health department paperwork; and insurance.

**7. OLD BUSINESS:**

A. Master Plan - Recommendation to City Commission for Distribution

Eric Ensey, McKenna, discussed asking for your recommendation to the city commission for approval of distribution of the master plan; this is a procedural step; 63-day period for public comment; send plan out to various stakeholders; and if you see any changes needed we can modify.

There was a discussion of:

- The process.

- Updates that need to be made; not acknowledging the work we have already done; language in terms of the vision.
- Updates and bringing this back to the next planning commission meeting.

## **8. COMMITTEE SITE PLAN APPROVALS - NONE:**

## **9. CITY COMMISSION UPDATE – MAYOR DZURKA:**

Mayor Dzurka discussed the March city commission meeting: animal feeding ordinance public comments; TNR (Trap, Neuter, Release) program; Fantasy Forest Groundbreaking on April 15<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m.; PSD (Principal Shopping District) started process to renew the fees to continue to develop the downtown (special assessment district).

## **10. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Eshelman said he thought the 5-year plan was well laid out; speed limit on 27 changing; and he got through the first 100 pages of the master plan draft.

Commissioner Mills discussed competing against other cities, we want to help developers, opportunity for us to dedicate staff to help them fill out the application right.

City Manager Gamble discussed providing guidance.

Commissioner Mills discussed 27, the corridor is an eyesore; welcome signs when traveling; and attracting people here.

Mayor Dzurka said Bruce DeLong has a vested interest in the M-21 and Scott Road intersection and trying to slow traffic down there.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Mills that the Planning Commission adjourn the meeting.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Mills, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 p.m.