

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

JANUARY 10, 2024
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, Eric Harger, Scott Dzurka, Eric Hufnagel, James Eshelman, Brian Mills, Melvin Renfrow

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Mindy Seavey, City Clerk; Chris Khorey, McKenna

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – DECEMBER 6, 2023 MEETING

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

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Zoning Amendments – Downtown Parking

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Dzurka that the planning commission open the public hearing.

YEA: Holden, Harger, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Renfrow

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The public hearing was opened at 5:32 p.m.

Chris Khorey, McKenna, discussed proposed amendments to 155.340 to 155.343 that would alter parking rules in downtown areas. He summarized the amendments and said it would clean up the parking section as well. He discussed: clarification on width of drive aisles; electrical vehicle charging section.

Chairperson Hanover asked if there were any comments.

There was a discussion of:

- Payment in lieu of parking; parking is very expensive; \$15,000 is typical for other communities; objective math numbers for waiving parking spaces.
- 20' drive aisles.
- Overnight parking is available on Spring, Brush and Railroad Streets.
 - It changed recently.
- Off-site parking lot by special use permit
 - Under control of developer?
 - Some type of control, lease or ideally ownership.
 - Having assurances as long as the building is in use?
 - Need an amendment on language.
- Proposed language.
- Concern with requiring ownership of parking lot.
- How far away parking can be located.
- Special use permit.
- Bring back to next month's meeting.
- Concerned about a 20' wide; would like 24' minimum width.

Chairperson Hanover asked if there were any public comments.

There were none.

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Eshelman that the planning commission table the public hearing until the next meeting.

YEA: Holden, Harger, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Renfrow

NAY: None

Motion carried.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Zoning Amendments – Downtown Parking

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Renfrow that the planning commission table this to the next meeting.

YEA: Holden, Harger, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Renfrow

NAY: None

Motion carried.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

A. 709 E. Gibbs/Northwoods Duplexes Site Plan Review

Chris Khorey, McKenna, said there have been two versions since the last meeting. He discussed: increased setback from unit #1, from 15' to 30', will circle back with applicant on that; garages did not have sizes, new draft has 20' x 22'; don't

have height of duplexes; other conditions listed can be taken care of after the planning commission; prepared to recommend a conditional approval of this.

There was a discussion of:

- Garage/driveway parking.
- Backyard setback, unit #1 only?
 - Corner lot, northern property line.

Nick Hancock, representing the developer, was present. He said it should have been 35'; he discussed lighting; and 19' from ground to peak for height of building; no plans to take anything out of the woods; and it will be maintained by the association.

Mr. Khorey said to cross out condition 2b and condition 3 based on what we have heard tonight.

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Renfrow that the planning commission recommend site plan approval to city commission with rear side setback 35' minimum, dimensions of height be included, location for special light fixtures, by-laws and master deed be approved and reviewed by McKenna and city attorney, utility and curb cuts reviewed by public works, reviewed and approved by city consulting engineer.

YEA: Holden, Harger, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Renfrow

NAY: None

Motion carried.

B. Golf Cart Policies and Potential Amendment – Continued Discussion

Chris Khorey, McKenna, said we have information in the packets with advocacy for and against: Mr. Thornton and information from Clinton County Ambulance. He said the planning commission can proceed however you want. Is it something the planning commission wants to pursue?

There was a discussion of:

- It might be moot point if the city commission is not in favor.
 - See if the city commission wants to proceed with risk.
- Safety concerns
 - Video with crash test

Everett Thornton, 1008 Wight Street, was present. He said he appreciated the manager passed his information onto you. He asked if any of the other cities were asked if they had accidents or safety issues.

Commissioner Eshelman said he talked to the mayor of Owosso and he was favorable. There were issues over safety.

Mr. Thornton said there are concerns with everything. He said over the years he has seen people operating their golfcarts through town, most are giving older senior citizens or children rides. He has never seen a golfcart going over the speed limit. He said to try this and have them respect the laws.

There was a discussion of:

- State law.
 - Puts our police in a challenging situation.
 - Right now illegal.
- Possible ordinance and registration process.
- Putting it on a city commission agenda.
- A possible PILOT program to see how it goes.

Mr. Khorey said he can do an RCA for the city commission.

C. RV Parking Amendment – Continued Discussion

Chris Khorey, McKenna, discussed the updated version of the RV amendment. He discussed a key facet of the new version: recreational vehicle equivalent; dates, and pavement and permit requirements are based on their last discussion.

There was a discussion of:

- Probably not many properties that are 20,000 s.f.
- Gives residents a bit more flexibility.
- Defining by length is helpful.
- Surfaces, concerned about approach being pavers.
- Mr. Khorey will put together a summary for the website before the public hearing; also graphics.
- Permeable pavement.
- Approaches not allowing gravel.
- Parking pad cannot be between the right of way?
 - Need to be clear about that.

There was a discussion to move forward with a public hearing next month.

D. Rental Inspection/Code Enforcement Annual Report – Receive and File

There was a discussion of:

- Keeping an eye on the budget associated with rental inspections.
 - 76% were fully compliant.
 - An incentive program.
- The public act on rental inspections.
 - Having a copy of the agreement between the landlord and tenant.
- Volume of enforcement has increased.

Motion by Commissioner `Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Eshelman that the planning commission receive both reports.

YEA: Holden, Harger, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Renfrow

NAY: None

Motion carried.

7. COMMITTEE SITE PLAN APPROVALS: JANUARY 12 MEETING – BOTTLE AND CORK

Mr. Khorey said the committee will be meeting on January 12th to review an expansion of the Cork and Bottle Party Store. He said this is an opportunity to bring the site closer to the landscaping code.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Thornton thanked them for serving the community and taking time on this.

9. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Mayor Dzurka asked where we are on chicken coop allowable materials.

Mr. Khorey said he would bring this to you for review at our February meeting.

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

YEA: Holden, Harger, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills, Renfrow

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.