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PLAN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

October 17th, 2023 at 6:30PM at the City Hall Council Chamber and via Go To Meetings

The meeting can be joined in person or by using a computer, smartphone or tablet at <https://meet.goto.com/286373013>. The meeting can also be joined by phone at 1 866 899 4679 using Access Code: 286-373-013

Present: John Beirl, Ana Tochtermann, Jeff Beirl, Laurie Gregor, JoAnn Erickson, Steven Wiley (Planning and Development Director), Mike Hebert, Tom Stankard (*Ashland Daily Press*)

Absent: Mayor Matt Mackenzie (Excused), David Eades (Excused)

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Acting Chair John Beirl called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm and Wiley called the roll. A quorum was declared present.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Acting Chair Beirl asked for approval of the agenda. Erickson moved to approve the agenda as proposed and Gregor seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Consent Agenda

Jeff Beirl arrived at 6:32 pm.

- a. Approval of minutes from the October 17th, 2023 Plan Commission meeting
Acting Chair Beirl asked for approval of the minutes from the previous Plan Commission meeting. No Commissioners had any revisions to the minutes. Tochtermann moved to approve the minutes as written and Jeff Beirl seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

4. Identify potential conflicts of interest

No one identified any conflicts of interest.

5. Public Comment (non-agenda items)

Acting Chair Beirl asked if anyone had any public comments. No one had any comments.

6. Action Items:

There were no action items on the agenda for consideration.

7. Discussion Items:

- a. Potential Development on Parcel 201-04943-0000, zoned Planned Residential/Institutional (PRI) Applicant: Mike Hebert

Acting Chair Beirl introduced the item. Wiley presented the item and provided site information, background, an overview of the proposal, and explained that the potential applicant had concerns with the requirement to pave the access and drive areas within the site. Acting Chair Beirl asked Mike Hebert to join the Commission to participate in discussion. Mr. Hebert explained that his current site was located along Highway 13 and included four buildings of 40' x 150' in size. He stated that he was out of room with wetlands on his current site. He had no issue with paving the driveway but that paving the other drive areas in the site would be cost prohibitive. There would not be any parking on-site. He had 124 units at his current site and traffic was low there. He explained that there was a demand for units. He filled up 2 40' x 150' buildings in 9 months. Acting Chair Beirl asked if there were any questions from the Commission. Erickson asked if the access to the site would run from Highway 13 or Farm Road. Hebert answered that he would look at access running into the site from Binsfield. He showed the driveway off Binsfield with wetlands nearby. He was not sure if all buildings would be 40' x 150' or not. He explained that the life expectancy of the other units in town will expire eventually. Jeff Beirl asked what surfacing material Hebert had at his other sites and if it was gravel. Hebert answered that he had gravel at his other sites. He stated that the costs were too much for blacktop and that he would do the driveway.

Acting Chair Beirl asked Wiley how much wiggle room there was on paving. Wiley explained that current ordinance required paving of most access, drive, and parking areas. Beirl mentioned the storage units to the east and asked if those were grandfathered in. Wiley explained that they likely were if they predated the current ordinance. Tochtermann asked about the parcels surrounding the subject site. Beirl and Wiley what was on the surrounding properties. Commissioners asked Hebert what the life expectancy was of the units. Hebert answered 30-40 years. Tochtermann asked Hebert if he looked at other parcels. Hebert replied that he had looked for 15 years prior and that it was difficult to find a site. Erickson asked if gravel would help with drainage onsite. Wiley explained that in many cases gravel was considered impervious. Jeff Beirl asked if the storage units would be located on slabs. Hebert replied that the buildings would be on slabs. Beirl asked if it was possible for Hebert to extend the slabs out. Hebert answered that typically the buildings were designed in such a way that the designers did not want the slabs extended out. Tochtermann asked if with the existing storage units aging was there a possibility to purchase some of the existing ones. Hebert answered that the existing units were full and making money. He explained the design of his proposed units with flat roofs.

Acting Chair Beirl thanked Hebert for considering investing in the community. He then asked the Commission if this was what we wanted in the area. He acknowledged that some folks liked residential for outlying areas of the City such as this. He stated that he was supportive of the land use for this location and that he would rather have them out there than in other locations where existing units are such as by the Central Railyard Park, etc. Erickson stated that the use was appropriate and was not sure how many residential units would go in there. Jeff Beirl stated that the subject site was in the right area and asked Wiley about what has to be paved. Wiley explained that ordinance required all access and drive areas to be paved. Beirl stated that the Planning Department was putting the Plan Commission in a tough position. The Plan Commission did not have the final say and so if the Commission encouraged the potential applicant to move forward and the Council voted this proposal down the Commission looks like the bad guys. Gregor asked

about options for the applicant moving forward. Wiley explained potential options including applying for an ordinance amendment or a Planned Development. Tochterman stated she was supportive of the potential project. Erickson asked about next steps. Wiley explained that staff would work with the potential applicant on options moving forward. Hebert explained that he wanted to get to a yes or no from the Commission. He is aware that it is not a sprint to the end result but probably a year process. Acting Chair Beirl stated that the general consensus was positive but that he was aware of the challenges. He recommended that the applicant work with staff and hopefully the Commission would see the applicant back for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) review. Jeff Beirl asked Hebert if he was amenable to paving at a later date. Hebert replied that the sooner he paved the better due to rising costs. Paving in the future would cost more and likely be even more prohibitive.

8. Announcement/Reports/Comments/Questions

Wiley explained that he would be coming back with a potential land sale and right-of-way vacation along with ordinance amendments at future meetings. Acting Chair Beirl asked for an update on the El Tarasco site over by Kwik Trip. Wiley explained that the developer was turning this site back over to the City.

9. Adjournment

Acting Chair Beirl asked for a motion to adjourn. Erickson moved to adjourn and Jeff Beirl seconded. Motion carried 5-0. Meeting adjourn at 7:25 pm.