

Planning Commission Meeting
February 12, 2018
7:00 PM

Call to Order:

Chair Ross called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call:

Present: Councilmember Katy Ross. Commissioners Paul Lesieur, David Pfuhl, Bob Turkington, Nancy Reid, Joyce Yoshimura-Rank and Kara Ries.

Staff: Recording Secretary Gretchen Needham and City Administrator Mike Robertson

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Yoshimura-Rank moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Reid seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Reid moved to approve the January 10, 2018 meeting minutes. Commissioner Yoshimura-Rank seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Public Hearing Continuation—Proposed Zoning Ordinance Changes

Bruce Carlson of 33 Hill Farm Circle asked whether there was enough time to notify the public of the change of the Planning Commission meeting date. Administrator Robertson said that notice of the change of date was published in the City's official newspaper the Shoreview Press. With no further comments the public hearing was closed at 7:05 p.m.

Administrator Robertson said that the changes were as follows;

- 1) A change in the definition of building height which will be measured from the top ridge instead of the average height of the roof.
- 2) Construction hours, which are from 7am to 7pm Monday through Friday, 9am to 5pm Saturday, no work on Sunday, will be listed as an ordinance which means they can now be enforced by the Sheriff's Department.
- 3) New driveways need to be hard surfaced. Existing gravel driveways would be grandfathered in.
- 4) Variance language of "undue hardship" would be changed to "practical difficulties" in conformance with State law.

Commissioner Ries suggested the phrase "practical difficulties" be defined in the definition section.

Commissioner Reid moved to recommend approval of the proposed Zoning Ordinance Changes. Commissioner Pfuhl seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Public Hearing—Proposed Detached Accessory Building Ordinance Changes

Chair Ross opened the Public Hearing at 7:14 p.m. and listed the following options for consideration. Option 1 would allow a detached accessory structure to be considered part of the home if it was connected by a breezeway. Option 2 would increase the current maximum allowed size of 50% of the building footprint to somewhere between 75%-100%. Option 3 would allow the size of a detached garage to be a percentage of the total square footage of the home such as 75-80%. Option 4 would treat detached garages the same as attached garages. All options would be subject to the current 1,500 square foot cap on garages.

Andy Michels of 3 Thompson Lane spoke generally in favor of the suggested changes to the Accessory Building Ordinance. He said he preferred Option 4 of treating detached garages the same as attached garages.

Bruce Carlson of 33 Hill Farm Circle asked if the FAR (Floor Area Ratio) Ordinance was set in stone. He said he thinks the FAR ordinance impacts corner lots like his excessively. He'd like to build a 1,527 square foot detached garage and he is only allowed a 1,300 square foot detached garage. He noted that he had owned another home in North Oaks on a corner lot and that he had run into the same issue with the FAR. He would like the Planning Commission to look at this.

Administrator Robertson said that he was not aware of any variances to the FAR recently in North Oaks. Chair Ross said she had heard of one variance to the FAR which was granted over 20 years ago. With no further comments the public hearing was closed at 7:23 p.m.

Commissioner Reid said she wasn't ready to make a decision and asked for photos to show how the options would look. She said she would not like to see detached accessory buildings that looked larger than the principal residence. Administrator Robertson said he would get some addresses of homes in nearby communities which would illustrate the proposed changes.

Commissioner Lesieur said while he was not a fan of huge garages he thought people did need a place to store equipment and toys so that they were not in their yard. He did not favor options 1 or 4 and thought there should be a distinction between attached and detached garages.

Commissioner Ries asked for additional data to support a change to the ordinance. She wondered how many similar requests for variances for detached accessory structures or from the FAR ordinance had come before the City in the past and asked Robertson to research this. Robertson said that the City's electronic records went back to the late 90's and that he would examine them. The Planning Commission was in consensus that this was a good idea.

Commissioner Ries moved to table the discussion of the proposed Accessory Building Ordinance Changes until the next meeting. Commissioner Pfuhl seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

City Update:

1. Administrator Robertson noted the League of Minnesota Cities Memo on Variances was provided at the request of Councilmember Nelson and it is useful for explaining variances and the language used to define them.
2. Administrator Robertson discussed Deputy Burrell's report on 2017 crime statistics and their decrease from 2016 which was given at the February 8 City Council meeting.
3. Council Member Ross talked about Planning Commission and City Council members taking classes for online training in areas that commissioners and council members may find helpful.
4. Council Member Ross remarked that there was a 351% increase in recycling from 2016 to 2017.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Reid made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Yoshimura-Rank seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:05 pm.

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 29, 2018