

October 1, 2019

The Scandia Planning Commission held their regular monthly meeting on the above date. The following were in attendance: Commissioners Greg Amundson, Travis Loeffler, Perry Rynders and Acting Chair Jan Hogle. Absent: Commissioner Dan Squyres. Staff present: City Administrator Ken Cammilleri, City Planner Merritt Clapp-Smith and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund. City Council liaison Jerry Cusick and Mayor Christine Maefsky were also present.

Acting Chair Hogle called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA, MINUTES

Loeffler, seconded by Rynders, moved to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Loeffler, seconded by Rynders, moved to approve the August 6, 2019 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

AMENDMENTS TO THE DEVELOPMENT CODE REGARDING ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

At their August meeting, the Planning Commissioners held a public hearing on amendments to Section 3.2 of the Development Code pertaining to Accessory Structures. The amendments provided for increases in the allowed number and total square footage of residential accessory structures, increased the permitted number of sheds 120 square feet and smaller, removed the minimum lot size requirement for exceptions for historic accessory buildings, and provided similar provisions for location of structures in shoreland and river districts. The Planning Commission recommended the City Council approve the amendments, but at their August 20th meeting the Council directed the Commissioners to continue to refine the ordinance based on concerns over the increased number and size of permitted accessory structures and sheds.

Maefsky noted her concern that a 1-1/2 acre property could have up to 12 small sheds as permitted by the proposed ordinance. Maefsky recommended the definition of accessory structure be redefined to exclude dog houses, playhouses, chicken coops and storage units under 20 square feet and remove the chart (3)(C) entirely. Another point of concern was the increase to allow 12,000-16,000 square foot residential (non-agricultural) accessory structures on properties 40 acres and greater.

Hannah Weber and Tom Tazell, 21087 Olinda Trail, commented on the amendments. Six sheds on small lots under an acre would be objectional, and an unlimited number on properties over 5 acres seems foolish.

Staff clarified that the intent to regulate the number of structures is to manage visual impacts due to cluttered properties. A nuisance ordinance can more effectively address clutter issues than zoning ordinances, but a clear definition of a structure would help on the enforcement side.

Staff was directed to prepare adjustments to the proposed ordinance amendments for further discussion at the next meeting.

AMENDMENTS TO THE DEVELOPMENT CODE REGARDING SIGNS

At their August Work Session, the Council directed the Planning Commission to review the sign ordinance for potential amendments to address problematic issues such as interior lit signs visible in windows and doors being exempt from current regulations.

Planner Clapp-Smith provided potential amendments and reference updates to the sign ordinance to address the visual impacts, including stronger language for lighting directed at business signs.

Acting Chair Hogle noted that the allowed 10 square feet size for advertising signs is too small to allow for readability to travelers along roadways, and recommended a more reasonable size. Clapp-Smith will research MnDOT guidance on size/speed factors to address a maximum size for advertising signage.

Hannah Weber, 21087 Olinda Trail, asked what measures can be taken to deal with the lit, interior signs on the businesses across the street from her residence which remain on 24 hours a day. Weber said the signs are obnoxious, obtrusive and unbecoming of the city as a whole. She asked that the businesses be notified to turn off the lights one hour after closing.

Staff will prepare draft amendments related to signs for further discussion at the next meeting.

DISCUSSION ON SCANDIA'S 2020-2024 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Commissioners began a discussion on the recommended Capital Improvement Plan for compatibility with the goals of the current 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Four CIP projects were identified:

- Bliss Addition Stormwater Project – found to be consistent with water resource goals and policies to protect surface and groundwater quality and improve stormwater management.
- Bliss Addition Community Septic System Nitrate Abatement – nature of the project found to be consistent with water resources goals and policies
- Community Center Improvement Project – found to be consistent with goals as a community focus for cultural and civic activities in the Village Center and to encourage investment in community-oriented institutions.
- Second Auxiliary Fire Station (proposed at the Big Lake School Area at the intersection of Manning and Mayberry Trails) – Discussed the current land designation as a park, but a second fire station is desirable and needed to benefit the west side of the city and is consistent with the Comp Plan goals related to public safety. They recommended adding this project to the Comp Plan update proposed for adoption at the end of this year. Planner Clapp-Smith will consult with Bolton-Menk on when comp plan amendments can be made.

FUTURE AGENDAS

Accessory structure and sign amendments, along with a final resolution on the CIP will be discussed at the November 5th meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Loeffler, seconded by Amundson, moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund
Deputy Clerk