

**Planning Commission**  
**May 2, 2016**

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Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Planning Commission meeting was held on May 2, 2016, at 6:30 p.m. at Sartell City Hall.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Gary Orman, Ryan Fitzthum, Anna Gruber, Dawn Moen

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Nate Keller, Community Development Technician  
Mike Nielson, City Engineer  
Colby Warzecha, Student Liaison  
Anita Rasmussen, Community Development Director

Orman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**AGENDA REVIEW AND ADOPTION**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FITZTHUM TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED TO INCLUDE A REPORT OF THE JOINT PLANNING BOARD MEETING. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MOEN. UPON VOTE BEING TAKEN THE FOLLOWING VOTED:**

**AYE: ORMAN, FITZTHUM, GRUBER, MOEN**

**NAY: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FITZTHUM TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 4, 2016 MEETING PENDING CORRECTIONS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MOEN. UPON VOTE BEING TAKEN THE FOLLOWING VOTED:**

**AYE: ORMAN, FITZTHUM, GRUBER, MOEN**

**NAY: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Orman offered his congratulations to Mary Degiovanni and Anita Rasmussen for their appearance in the 2016 Women in Business publication.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**INTERIM USE PERMIT – WALMART/TNT**

Keller explained that TNT and Wal-Mart have applied for a renewal of their 2011 Interim Use Permit, which is set to expire on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016. An IUP is required for outdoor seasonal sales. TNT Fireworks will be selling fireworks in a 30'x40' tent within the Northwest portion of the parking lot. Sales will take place from June 23<sup>rd</sup> – July 5<sup>th</sup> from 8 am until 10 pm daily. It is staff opinion that the size of the tent will not impact parking, and sufficient parking will still be available to patrons. Staff recommends approving the Interim Use Permit application.

Fitzthum asked if we always allow five years or do we occasional require a shorter timeframe. Rasmussen confirmed that the timeframe was typically five years.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FITZTHUM TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FINDINGS OF FACT FOR THE INTERIM USE PERMIT. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MOEN. UPON VOTE BEING TAKEN THE FOLLOWING VOTED:**

**AYE: FITZTHUM, ORMAN, GRUBER, MOEN**

**NAY: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FITZTHUM TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE INTERIM USE PERMIT. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MOEN. UPON VOTE BEING TAKEN THE FOLLOWING VOTED:**

**AYE: FITZTHUM, ORMAN, GRUBER, MOEN**

**NAY: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**FINAL PLAT – PROVIDENCE OF SARTELL SECOND ADDITION**

Rasmussen provided information on the 15 lot final plat for Providence of Sartell Second Addition. Staff is recommending approval pending conditions including:

- Sidewalks are proposed on one side of all streets.
- The park dedication formula is unit based. (1150 sf or \$978 per single-family unit). Because of the proximity of an improved public park, a payment in lieu of park land dedication would be appropriate.
- All lots will have custom graded rear lots with the exception of lots 7,8 and 9, block 1.
- Based on the grading plan, the lots will be “built up” which results creates driveway slopes around 7.6% to 8.9%. Home types and grades MUST be constructed as depicted in the preliminary grading plan. A change in one housing type proposed during the building permit process will require a new grading plan for the entire development.
- Double frontage screening will be required on lot 1 and lot 15, block 1 along 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- Developer will be responsible for all trunk and park charges, security fees, along with all costs associated with the installation of utilities, street and wetland signs, roadways, paths, sidewalks, lights, mailboxes (per the new USPS standards).
- The properties with wetlands will need to erect signs at the edge of the wetland buffer area to ensure there will not be any encroachment.
- Prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, each lot will be required to plant one tree in the front yard based on the City Standards.
- This development is subject to trunk storm, water and sewer fees and park as dictated in the Development Agreement. The outlots will be subject to future trunk fees and dedication requirements.
- All staff comments be resolved (engineering, planning, fire, building, public works).

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MOEN TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE FINAL PLAT FOR PROVIDENCE OF SARTELL SECOND ADDITION. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY GRUBER. UPON VOTE BEING TAKEN THE FOLLOWING VOTED:**

**AYE: FITZTHUM, GRUBER, MOEN  
NAY: ORMAN  
MOTION CARRIED**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **ORDINANCE AMENDMENT CONSIDERATION**

Keller explained that last month the Commission discussed the possibilities of allowing honey bees within residential areas. The Commission wanted to bring the topic up for discussion again and directed staff to draft amendment options for honey bees. Keller reviewed options related to beekeeping ordinance amendments. Keller also explained the lack of personal needed to permit and enforce any new ordinance but offered a suggestion of working with the beekeeping groups in solving that issue.

Fitzthum asked if it were possible to have bee's on City property. Rasmussen suggested we obtain feedback from the League of Minnesota Cities and the City's insurance carrier. Gruber suggested that if they have some ordinance allowing beekeeping, it should have restrictions based on the size of the lot. She also wanted to ensure that the City would have a plan for inspections and enforcement in place prior to the enactment of the ordinance. Moen asked what the difference is between the types of bees. Orman felt there had been very little interest to have an ordinance despite an article in the paper and would prefer beekeeping be kept in the ag zones. Fitzthum offered that the City is allowing larger lots in the City, which could accommodate beekeeping.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FITZTHUM TO RECOMMEND TO THE COUNCIL TO CONSIDER THE APPROVAL OF BEEKEEPING ACCORDING TO ORDINANCE OPTION #2, STRIKING A4, REQUIRING THAT THE CITY HAVE ENFORCEMENT AND INSPECTION PROCEDURES IN PLACE AND REQUIRING APPROPRIATE SIGNAGE. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY GRUBER. UPON VOTE BEING TAKEN THE FOLLOWING VOTED:**

**AYE: FITZTHUM, GRUBER, MOEN  
NAY: ORMAN,  
MOTION CARRIED**

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE – INTERIM ORDINANCE**

Rasmussen provided staff recommended changes based on public input including:

#### **Introductions**

1. Add the Regional Active Living Advisory Group (RALAG) Regional Active Transportation Plan – November 2015
2. Adjust to reference that it is a 2016 plan (hopefully).
3. Add demographics (Appendix).

#### **Communications and Engagement**

1. Schedule a minimum of 2 joint meetings between the Commission and the Council per year to ensure the exchange of communication, priorities, goals and plans are discussed. (Text Change)
2. Create a specific branding strategy which capitalizes on the success of our students in our community. (Text Change)
3. Quarterly or semi-annual electronic newsletter to highlight what is going on in the City and Neighborhoods, could include decisions made by the Commission(s) and Council. (Text Change).
4. Create infographics and other communication pieces describing facts surrounding certain housing types, new developments, etc. (Text Change)
5. Goal 3 – Brand - active living, active transportation and recreation opportunities (bike trails, bike lanes, sidewalks), access to healthy food (farmer's market, community gardens, grocery stores) and healthcare facilities. (Text Change)

## **Economic Development**

1. Create a specific branding strategy which capitalizes on the success of our students in our community. (Text Change)
2. Include a chronological timeline of decisions and action items related to the downtown/town center concept (Appendix)
3. Review standards through a study and by a task force which reviews current standards and uses for vacant or underutilized heavy industrial areas (I-2) and require master plans for the development of any I-2 properties. The study could exclude existing operational businesses. (Interim Ordinance)
4. Ensure city policies promote a healthy quality of life. (Text Change)
5. Goal 1. Further describe “quality of life” to include health and wellness aspects of quality of life in that description. (Text Change)

## **Public Safety**

No Changes Proposed

## **Planning**

1. Monitor secondary and primary growth areas based on new community facility (school or otherwise) placement and propose adjustments as necessary. (Text Change)
2. Review the former paper mill property for a potential public use (some or all). (Interim Ordinance)
3. Unused land could be allowed to be used for agriculture/gardens. (Text Change)

## **Community Culture**

1. Rephrasing Goal 5 to, “Become a healthy living community.” Add continue to enhance Sartell as an active living community. (Text Change)
2. Adding Stearns and Benton County Public Health to the list of partners in Strategy 5.1. (Text Change)
3. Add “Ensure residents have access to healthy, locally-grown food” as a strategy. (Text Change)
4. Add “Ensure residents have access to health care facilities” as a strategy. (Text Change)
5. Add “Ensure residents have *access* clean air and tobacco-free common spaces” as a strategy (Text Change)

## **Transportation**

No Changes Proposed

## **Parks and Open Space**

1. Include findings created by the school district and the city relating to space and amenity needs (Appendix)
2. Include a chronological timeline of park plan adoption/amendments (Appendix)
3. Include the former paper mill property in a study for a review of uses, including any potential public use (Interim Ordinance)
4. Goal 4: The Regional Active Living Advisory Group (RALAG) we recommend adding as a partner for connections and trails. (Text Change)

## **Community Facilities**

No Changes Proposed

Rasmussen further explained the Interim Ordinance on I2 properties. The ordinance starts the process to put a moratorium on all I-2 properties, including a portion of the former paper mill (it will not include any portions currently zoned I-1 or commercial). The purpose of the moratorium is to essentially prohibit any additional zoning, subdivision, building, land use, etc. approvals on all of our I-2 properties until after there's a study of our heavy industrial properties. That study may include the approval of the formation of a task force consisting of residents, commission members, property owners, citizens, development interests and a member of the Mississippi River Regional Planning Group (in addition to governmental types). The task force would review the three properties, review the appropriateness of the current land use and zoning designations and standards/ordinances, review the appropriateness of the current site conditions, and the appropriateness to conduct a master planning process on one or all of the properties. If something does arise during the length of the moratorium, we can explore providing exceptions to the ordinance.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY GRUBER TO RECOMMEND APPROVING THE INTERIM ORDINANCE ON I2 PROPERTIES. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY FITZTHUM. UPON VOTE BEING TAKEN THE FOLLOWING VOTED:**

**AYE: FITZTHUM, ORMAN, GRUBER, MOEN**

**NAY: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Televising Meetings**

The consensus of the commissions was to not televise the meetings unless it was at the direction of the Council. While the commission desired transparency and providing the public with an additional means of learning about what is happening in the community, they felt that because they are an advisory body to the Council, they did not want to misconstrue their role to the public and create confusion over their actions versus actions taken by the Council. Orman asked about having a picture taken of the Commission and made available on the website.

### **Accessory Structure Ordinance**

Keller reviewed amendments pertaining to accessory structures. The purpose of the amendments are:

- Add exemptions for small accessory buildings
- Allow detached garages in side yard
- Add limits on the size of accessory structures
- Allow flexibility in type of materials

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FITZTHUM TO RECOMMEND APPROVING THE ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS RELATING TO ACCESSORY STRUCTURES. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY GRUBER. UPON VOTE BEING TAKEN THE FOLLOWING VOTED:**

**AYE: FITZTHUM, ORMAN, GRUBER, MOEN**

**NAY: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Neighborhood Program**

Keller explained that staff has been working on drafts for the new potential Neighborhood Matching Fund (NMF) Program. The NMF is designed to build and strengthen neighborhoods through Community Events, economic development initiatives, park improvements, safety upgrades, and other funding priorities. Currently, the city has approximately \$4,500 in available grant money for this program. Applicants will be asked to fill out an application and present their request to the NMF Committee. Funds

will be awarded at the end of each grant cycle. It may be possible to have multiple grant awards per grant cycle as long as the total dollar amount does not exceed \$2,000 (including city match). Applicants can apply for up to \$2,000 in total grant money. The city will match the winning grant request(s) dollar for dollar (1 to 1 ratio) up to \$2,000 total. Staff is requesting that the Commission nominate a member to serve on the NMF Committee. Keller explained the Committee will have four other members consisting of a representative from each of the following: Park Commission, Economic Development Commission, Planning Commission, and two staff member's one from the Police and one from the Planning Department. Once the Committee is established further details of the program and criteria will be decided by the Committee.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FITZTHUM APPOINTING ORMAN TO THE MATCHING FUND COMMITTEE. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY GRUBER. UPON VOTE BEING TAKEN THE FOLLOWING VOTED:**

**AYE: FITZTHUM, ORMAN, GRUBER, MOEN**

**NAY: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Joint Planning Board Update**

Gruber updated the Planning Commission on the recent Joint Planning Board meeting relative to a request for a variance and conditional use permit.

### **Commission Roles and Responsibilities/Special Training Meeting**

Rasmussen provided some background on Commission roles and responsibilities (packet information), and would like to hold a special meeting for training which could help answer questions that the Commission may have about their advisory role. She suggested that the training would also have scenario discussions to create conversations. She further suggested that the meeting could be in June or July, separate from a regular meeting. Fitzthum suggested that the session is held after a new commission member is appointed by the Council. He further suggested that it might be helpful for the Council to have some briefing on the roles of the Planning Commission (and others) as well. Orman stated that he feels that they are often reactionary versus being proactive on issues, and we should identify concerns which will make our community better. Previous actions by the Commission were discussed. Orman reiterated to the group that he feels it is sometimes necessary to offer his opinion on land use requests, even if it is contrary to the rules and ordinances. Fitzthum reminded the group that their decisions have to be objective and according to the codes they recommended for adoption and added that the Commission cannot be subjective in their decisions and recommendations. He further stated that he had concern over the recent Community Center plat/land use action that the planning commission took. His concerns were with the reasoning that other Commissioners offered when asked why they dissented over the land use issues. In his opinion, their responses were centered around the amenities which were to be offered in the future Community Center rather than based on whether or not the purchase of and sale of property aligned with our comprehensive plan. Gruber stated that she is concerned that the group had perhaps lost sight on what their roles are as commission members are. She further explained that their role was to assist the Council to enforce the ordinances and comprehensive plan which they helped develop. She found it very unfortunate that the media and others drew unnecessary attention to previous actions by the Commission as adversarial to the Council, and that was not at all the intent.

### **Project Updates**

Rasmussen provided updates on the following issues:

- Avalon Village, Providence and Arbor Trails development
- Heritage Drive/County Road 1 Improvements
- Community Center

**ADJOURN**

**FITZTHUM MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:55 PM. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MOEN. UPON VOTE BEING TAKEN THE FOLLOWING VOTED:**

**AYE: FITZTHUM, MOEN, ORMAN, GRUBER**

**NAY: NONE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Minutes by:

Anita Rasmussen, Community Development Director

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