

City of Excelsior
Hennepin County, Minnesota
Minutes
Planning Commission
Monday, April 26, 2021

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wallace called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Black, Craig, DiLorenzo, Harrison, Holste, Noll

Commissioners Absent: Wallace

Also Present: City Planner Becker, City Architect Larson and City Attorney
Staunton

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) Planning Commission Meeting of March 22, 2021

Motion by Noll, seconded by DiLorenzo to approve the March 22, 2021 Planning Commission meeting as amended. Motion carried 6-0.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

(a) 101 Center Street RRP for an Addition (PC No. 21-09)

Becker and Larson presented their reports. Larson added that the newly proposed edition had been improved from the previously submitted edition in that the front façade has not been altered. Noll asked if the gable on the side elevation would be amended, and it was explained that the existing gable would be staying, and they would just be adding on above the flat roof. Harrison opened the public hearing at 6:15p.m. Peter Hartwich, 186 George Street, asked how many square footage the addition would be; if any recycled goods would be used for the addition; and how the addition would approve the quality of life of the owner. The public hearing was closed at 6:20p.m. Beth

Stewart, owner, explained that the property only has two bedrooms, and the addition would add another bedroom to provide additional room. Harrison asked about the privacy concerns outlined in the findings of fact outlined in the resolution. Larson explained that there are some windows on the second floor that weren't there before, but that because it is within the existing footprint, it doesn't seem to have a major impact on the privacy of the neighbor. Noll asked about the front porch and why it wasn't pursued. Beth Stewart, owner, explained that their desire would be to have a front porch but that they didn't want to delay the process any longer. Noll would support a variance to allow for a front porch given the perceived cadence of the front yard setback. The Planning Commission concluded that they would proceed forth with the existing application, and if the applicant wanted to proceed forth with a variance, they could. Motion by Black, seconded by DiLorenzo, to approve the Residential Review Permit, and if the applicant would like to proceed forth with the front porch, they can apply for a variance for it at a later date. Motion carried 6-0.

(b)700 Third Avenue RRP for Expanded Deck (PC No. 21-07)

Becker and Larson presented their reports. The applicants spoke, addressing the City Architect's questions. Craig was happy to see the existing structure being improved upon. Harrison concurred. Motion by DiLorenzo, seconded by Craig, to approve the RRP. Motion carried 6-0.

(c) 450 West Lake Street Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Map Amendments to Annex a Portion of the Property from Shorewood to Excelsior (PC No. 21-10)

Becker presented the report. It was asked if property taxes could increase with the annexation, and this was uncertain, as staff wasn't sure what the property tax percentage of each city was. Also, a number of factors could affect the property taxes. Harrison brought up the four other properties that are located within the City of Shorewood on the peninsula and wondered if Excelsior should look into annexing those properties. DiLorenzo asked if there was any sort of agreement between the cities with this annexation, and it was explained that the City of Shorewood had initiated this request, and so no agreement was in place. Petra Cripe, 450 West Lake Street, stated

that she would prefer to be annexed into the City of Shorewood as opposed to the City of Excelsior. DiLorenzo empathizes with the property owner in that there is fear that an addition would not have been able to be re-built and that she wouldn't be able to have chickens if the property was annexed into Shorewood. Becker clarified that if the addition needed to be rebuilt that it could be if a permit was applied for within 180 days of the damage. Further, the Planning Director of Shorewood was uncertain if chickens would be allowed or not on the Shorewood portion with the required setbacks. Motion by Black to recommended approval to annex the property as well as a Comprehensive and Zoning Map Amendment to re-guide the property to Low Density Residential and rezone the property to R-2 Single and Two Family Residential.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a) Annual Meeting

(a) Elect Chair and Vice-Chair. The Commission elected Wallace as Chair. There was discussion regarding the Vice Chair, and the Commission elected Black as Vice Chair.

(b) Review By-Laws. Harrison suggested that an open forum be added to the agenda. Craig was concerned that this would add to meeting agendas and cause the Planning Commission to get off track. Noll felt that it was better that the Planning Commission focus on what is assigned to them. Ex parte communication was also discussed. In general, the Planning Commission felt that there should not be private communication regarding any projects set to go forth before the Planning Commission. Staunton to work with Becker regarding the "interest of properties." The submittal deadline was discussed, and it was decided that the deadline should remain the same as is explained in the ordinance. Harrison asked if the location of the meeting should be changed to accommodate remote meetings, and it was explained that it was likely fine to keep it as is.

c) 2021 Goals. DiLorenzo wanted to look at neglected and vacant properties, and it was pointed out that the Council is going to meet with the property owners to discuss these properties. It was discussed that this should be brought up during the joint session with the Council.

d) Code of Conduct. Nothing was discussed regarding the Code of Conduct and Decorum for Appointed Officials.

e) Communication Improvement Proposal. The Commission did not have any comments regarding this. It was suggested that perhaps the Planning Commission hold some kind of event that would solicit feedback, including some kind of social event, such as staffing a booth or tent at Apple Days and other events.

f) Excelsior Award. Craig felt that 720 Third Avenue deserved an award. Harrison felt that the homeowner should be contacted to see if they would like to order a sign. It was felt that they should, at the very least, receive a letter. The Planning Commission was looking to have a project list of completed projects to choose from. DiLorenzo suggested pushing the item to another meeting. Harrison suggested that a project list be sent out.

b) *Zoning Items Discussion*

This was moved to the May 24, 2021 Planning Commission meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Craig, seconded by Harrison, to adjourn at 9:00 pm. Motion carried 6-0.
Respectfully submitted,

Emily Becker
Planning Director