



**PLANNING COMMISSION
WORK SESSION
ANOKA CITY HALL COMMITTEE ROOM
Tuesday, September 20, 2016
6:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the Anoka Planning Commission was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners present:

Chair Don Kjonaas, Borgie Bonthuis, Manley Brahs, Karna Brewer, James Cook, Peter Rech

Commissioners absent: Sandy Herrala

Staff present:

Doug Borglund, Deputy Community Development Director; Clark Palmer, Associate Planner

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Discussion – Fence Materials Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

Deputy Community Development Director Borglund introduced the topic. Mr. Borglund began by saying fence permits are required for residents who wish to erect a fence on their property. He said most applicants propose constructing fences made out of wood or chain linked. He explained that sometimes the City receives applications for fences constructed from unique materials. He said staff decided to bring to the Planning Commission the issue of looking at standards that would regulate fence type and materials. Mr. Borglund pointed out photos in the packet that illustrated someone using interesting fence materials.

Commissioner Brewer asked what the materials seen in the photos are. Mr. Borglund responded by saying there is a mix of a wire mesh fence with plywood that has been painted and that are supported by green metal stakes.

Commissioner Brahs asked if they got a permit. Mr. Borglund said they did but there were concerns in the neighborhood about how the fence looked.

Mr. Borglund next discussed what types of materials are currently prohibited by ordinance including cloth or canvas like fence materials, and barb wire.

Commissioner Brewer noted that the prohibited materials currently included in the ordinance were crossed out in the packet. She asked if the intent was to remove the list of prohibited materials and amend the ordinance to only include a list of allowed materials. Mr. Borglund said yes, that was the intent.

Commissioner Brahs asked why they got a permit. Associate Planner Palmer advised that the fence was constructed without a permit and through enforcement action the property owner was ordered to apply for a permit. Mr. Palmer said the fence permit has not received its final inspection and that staff has some concerns on the workmanship of the fence.

Commissioner Brewer asked if plastic fences would be allowed. Mr. Borglund said that composite materials are similar to plastic.

The Commission briefly discussed construction materials intended for fences and those ordinarily not used.

Chair Kjonaas said materials used for fences should be identified as fencing material.

Commissioner Cook expressed concerns about fences that are solid that may act as a wing in strong winds. He suggested having spacing requirements for the fence materials so that wind could pass through

Chair Kjonaas said fence panels purchased at home improvement stores often are solid with no spacing. Mr. Borglund said composite materials are often solid, say in a 4 ft by 6 ft section.

Chair Kjonaas asked if a panel for screening a patio, for example, would be considered a fence. Staff and the Commission reviewed the definition of a fence.

Commissioner Bonthuis asked, when looking at the fence photos included in the packet, why the subject would have constructed two fences. Mr. Palmer said that the chicken wire fence was constructed first, and the second wooden fence was constructed later to provide screening for the yard.

Commissioner Brahs asked if fences were required to be painted or coated. Mr. Palmer responded that this was not a requirement.

The Commission discussed how the State Building Code relates to fences. Mr. Palmer advised that fences fewer than 7 ft are exempt by the State from needing a building permit, and that the City's fence permit is more of a zoning permit.

The Commission discussed setbacks for fences and what is required. Advantages and disadvantages to fence placement were discussed.

Fences and footings were discussed. Mr. Palmer advised that, per the Building Official, footings are not required but that posts must adequately support the weight of the fence.

2. Discussion – MS Main Street Mixed Use District Sub District EM-1 Historic Downtown Core Permitted and Prohibited Uses Zoning Text Amendment

Deputy Community Development Director Borglund introduced the topic. He summarized a draft ordinance amendment that would prohibit tobacco shops, liquor stores, stores that sell drug paraphernalia and marijuana dispensaries from locating in downtown Anoka.

Commissioner Brewer expressed dissatisfaction with the proposed text amendment. She said she would not want to see nice/high-end tobacco and liquor stores prohibited. She said the nice shops are not a detriment. She said when you paint with a broad bush you may eliminate things you don't want but also hurt some things that you do want. She said she would not like to see these uses prohibited because there are good shops.

The Commission discussed what would happen if the City wanted to move one of its liquor stores to within downtown.

Commissioner Brahs asked how downtown Anoka was defined for purposed of the ordinance. Mr. Borglund advised that the boundaries are from the river (Rum River) to 5th Ave. and Van Buren St. to Monroe St.

The Commission discussed the current list of permitted and prohibited uses within downtown Anoka.

Mr. Borglund asked if there were other uses the Commission would like to see added to the list of prohibited uses.

Commissioner Cook asked that “dry-cleaning pick-up” be moved and combined with “retail services” and that “photo pick-up stations” be removed.

Other potential changes to particular uses were considered.

Commissioner Rech said because the City has municipal liquors stores and that a private store could not locate in the City, adding it as prohibited use did not seem to make sense.

After further discussion, Mr. Borglund said liquors stores can be kept as a permitted use.

3. Other staff updates

Planning Commission Work Session
Sept 20, 2016
Page 4 of 4

Mr. Borglund talked briefly about the new Associate Planner, Stephanie Rouse, recently hired by the City. He said she would attend the next meeting to introduce herself.

Time of adjournment 7:09 p.m.
Submitted by: Clark Palmer, Associate Planner