

On Thursday, May 15, 2014, at 7:05 p.m., a regular meeting of the Plan Commission was called to order. Roll Call. Present: Eric Larson, Rick Andersen, Karen Chevalier, Bob Conklin, Rene Morris and Steve Munson. Absent: Mike Mellott.

Also present were: Planner Dustin Wolff, Building and Zoning Superintendent Amanda Schmidt, City Manager Scott Shumard and Assistant City Clerk Monique Castillo.

Karen Chevalier made a motion to approve the April 17, 2014 minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Rene Morris. Voting: Ayes – Larson, Andersen, Chevalier, Conklin, Morris and Munson. Nays – None. Motion carried.

Chair Larson opened a Public Hearing at 7:16 p.m. to hear from petitioners Shannon and Heidi Scalise of 705 West Third Street, Sterling. The Scalise's currently operate a tattoo and body piercing shop at this location. They would like to expand business to a bait shop and offer live bait. The property is currently zoned as B-2-1 which specifically states a live bait shops is not permitted. The Scalice's are requesting the property be rezoned as B-3.

Discussion regarding the obvious flaws with the zoning, amending the wording of section B-2 or allowing a special use.

Planner Wolff explained a special use cannot be allowed. Also, being this is such a transitional area, business could grow. Wolff asked commissioners to keep this mind when making the decision to avoid intensive use in the future, which could be unlikely.

Schmidt added publications were made, fees were paid, notification requirements were met, signage notifying the public of the hearing was placed at the site for at least two weeks and although there were no written comments received, several phone calls were received in support of the amendment for the business.

Laurina Law, 1111 West Third Street, Sterling, is concerned about the hours of operation and noise constraints as the residents already have to deal with the mill behind them. Schmidt noted there are no restrictions on hours of operation.

Chevalier made a motion to table the petition from Richard Ng/Shannon Scalise of 705 West Third Street, Sterling to ask the Sterling City Council to amend the wording of Section B-1-1 of the Zoning Code. The motion was seconded by Rene Morris. Voting: Ayes – Andersen, Chevalier, Conklin, Morris, Munson and Larson. Nays – None. Motion carried.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:45 p.m.

Planner Wolff gave a brief report on the overview of Article 3 and noted this section will be kept on the Agenda for June meeting.

Wolff distributed Article 4 and an updated schedule and asked that commissioners review for discussion at the June 19, 2014 meeting.

Schmidt informed the commissioners of a seminar on "Zoning 101" and "How to Conduct Public Zoning Hearings". The seminar will be held in Rock Falls on June 12, 2014. Schmidt added this is a free event but registration is encouraged.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Monique Castillo
Assistant City Clerk

Plan Commission – Public Discussion
City Council Chambers

May 15, 2014

Planner Wolff noticed a Public Discussion at 6:00 p.m. prior to the regular Plan Commission. Wolff welcomed guests and explained the goal of the public discussions are to get input from the local businesses regarding the Proposed Zoning Ordinance.

Wolff gave a quick overview, explaining the proposal is a draft from City staff and what the different colors of the code represented. He also suggested the audience review the comprehensive strategic plan to get a better understanding of the proposal.

Wolff opened the floor for discussion, reminding guests of the schedule being followed and asked that discussions relate to Articles 2 and 3 only.

Jana Groharing, Sterling Main Street, spoke on behalf of Sterling Today regarding Sec. 102-227(B)(2)(m): Off Street Parking – Parking Space Design/Shared parking. Wolff explained there is no minimum requirement, joint parking is as it relates to condo development in downtown setting.

Tim McNinch, Airplay Sports, had several sections he wanted to discuss:

Sec 102-310(3)(a)(i): Purpose Statements – Nonresidential Districts/Business Districts/Neighborhood Business District (NB). Discussion to decipher the statement “care must be taken.” Wolff explained this section is intended for small scale businesses, “the corner stores,” the places you can walk to, etc. The purpose of this statement is to keep that in mind when determining the intended use of a business.

Sec 102-310(3)(a)(iv): Purpose Statements – Nonresidential Districts/Business Districts/Regional Business District (RB). Discussion to determine if “buffer zones” would be in place to avoid cases like the Sriracha case in Southern California. Wolff explained there should not be a need since this section is not intended for manufacturing, as in the Sriracha case, only large scale business.

Sec 102-310(3)(a)(v): Purpose Statements – Nonresidential Districts/Business Districts/Business Park District (BP). Discussion regarding the wording.

Sec 102-310(3)(c)(ii): Purpose Statements – Special Purpose Districts/Planned Development District (PDD). Discussion in general. Wolff explained this section gives businesses the latitude to get more incentives provided they are willing to prepare the extra paperwork.

Sec 102-310(3)(c)(iii): Purpose Statement – Special Purpose Districts/Sterling Redevelopment Form District (SRFD). Discussion regarding the old Lawrence property and its exclusion from this section. Wolff agreed the property appears to be excluded but that is only because it appears in Section 9, which has yet to be reviewed.

Sec 102-333(3): Special Purpose Zoning Districts/Approval and Sec 102-333(B)(2): Planned Development Districts/Permitted Location. Discussion on whether or not “care should be taken” will apply to this section as it does in Sec 102-310 (3)(a)(i).

Jana Gorharing, Sterling Main Street, wanted more information on Historic Preservation.

Sec 102-334(c): Discussion on how to get the status of a Historic Preservation without reinventing the wheel. Wolff explained it was a matter of getting the Commission to adopt an ordinance and getting the support of the community.

Wolff thanked guests for coming out and reminded them of future meetings. Wolff also emphasized the importance of the business owners to express their thoughts and give support of code updates.