

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

DATE: February 8, 2021

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Buelow, Commissioners Ballard, Hahn, Hall, Olson, Marks, Shortridge, Boettcher, and Paddock

ABSENT: Commissioners Marks, Boettcher

STAFF PRESENT: City Planner Carlos Espinosa, Assistant City Planner Luke Sims, Natural Resources Sustainability Coordinator John Howard

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chairman Buelow.

Approval of Minutes – January 25, 2021

The minutes from the January 25, 2021 Planning Commission meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Olson moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Hahn seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously via roll call vote (Appendix A).

Public Hearing –2255 Garvin Heights Road Tourist Home IUP

Carlos Espinosa, City Planner, provided an overview of the location for the Interim Use Permit and the associated use of an airstream RV Trailer as a short term rental on the property for visitors to the vineyard at that property. Mr. Espinosa noted that staying in an RV longer than 72 hours is prohibited by City Code, housing units must be connected to city sewer and water, and all tourist homes must be within a building. However, the proposal is unique given the location in an agricultural/natural resources zoning district and the large, 20-acre lot size along with the vineyard setting that has attractive characteristics for visitors to the area. Staff recommended the approval of the request with eight conditions: 1) a variance shall be obtained to City Code 43.03.79L1)b) to locate the RV on the property and utilize it as a Tourist Home/Short Term rental; 2) a variance shall be obtained to City Code 43.03.79L1)c) to connect the RV to sewer and water systems; 3) a variance shall be obtained to the definition of a Tourist Home in City Code Section 43.07.12 to allow the use of an RV versus a building; 4) the Tourist Home unit shall be located within an Airstream trailer model number 25FB Twin; 5) the Tourist Home unit shall be located in the rear of the primary structure at 2255 Garvin Heights Road; 6) the Tourist Home unit shall be certified for a maximum of 4 people; 7) the Tourist Home unit shall be equipped with a 2A10BC fire extinguisher; 8) the water source for the tourist home unit shall be connected through the existing on-site winery building or otherwise metered so that the water usage for the unit can be tracked.

Applicant Marv Seppanen spoke to the proposal. He mentioned that the RV is currently being manufactured and it will be a temporary location for much of the year but will primarily be used in the summer. Linda Seppanen mentioned that it is a unique location and will be remote from the road and within the fencing of the vineyard. She also mentioned there would not be loud parties and that renters would be screened.

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Commissioner Hall asked about the 72 hour limit for occupancy of an RV but sought clarification that the proposal is for seven days and that a variance was not noted in the required conditions. Mr. Espinosa said that a variance for that would be required and the first condition from City staff would address the 72 hour limit as well.

Chairman Buelow opened the public hearing.

Michael Onstad, 707 W. 6th Street, is in the middle of developing AirBnB units in the former Video Vision building and fully supports the proposal.

No further members of the public coming forward to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Hall asked if the petitioners had reached out to the neighbors and any opinions they may have had. Mr. Seppanen responded that there have been no comments but were informed through the public hearing process. Ms. Seppanen mentioned that the neighbors can't see the site.

Commissioner Shortridge moved to approve the proposal. Commissioner Hahn seconded the motion.

Commissioner Paddock asked if the City Code's parking requirements should be two spaces rather than one for this instance. Mr. Espinosa noted that there is parking in the northerly portion of the site as well and additional room for parking closer to where the Airstream is to be located. Mr. Seppanen mentioned that this was correct and there are 22 paved spaces available. Ms. Seppanen added that there was additional crushed rock parking.

Chairman Buelow asked why the Commission wouldn't approve this and noted there wasn't much to prevent this.

Commissioner Hall noted that sometimes Commissioners can be a little reluctant to rely on variances for code. In this case, he noted that the code is written to anticipate cases but this proposal is fairly unique and there is an opportunity for tourism in a unique, beautiful setting. He mentioned that he has no issue with it and that the restrictions seem to prevent a slippery slope.

Commissioner Hahn expressed appreciation for proceeding with caution and that tourist homes before the Commission the last couple years were originally treated with caution but this proposal is quite unique and restricted. He mentioned that if new applications do come in, the Commission is in a position to pump the brakes on a case by case basis.

Commissioner Shortridge mentioned that the applicant also lives right next door and right above where this will occur and they have a high motivation to take care of the property.

No further comments forthcoming, the Commission voted on the motion at hand. All Commissioners present voted aye.

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Public Hearing – Unified Development Code Text Amendment: Storage Facility as a Permitted with Standards Use in Mixed Use-Downtown Fringe Zoning District

Chair Buelow asked staff to present the item. Luke Sims, Assistant City Planner went through the agenda item as written in the Commission agenda.

Commissioner Shortridge asked if these proposed amendments would apply to multi-story buildings. Mr. Sims clarified that staff is recommending the 50% front non-storage requirement only apply to the first story of a multi-story building. As a result, floors above the first floor could be all storage.

Mr. Sims also noted that staff had received a letter from Dan Admundson, a business owner renting space for 20 years in the downtown zone, in support of proposed storage use at 330 West Second Street.

Next, Chair Buelow asked the applicant, Michael Onstad to describe his petition. Mr. Onstad described his application and the information provided with it which detailed a number of other uses he's explored for the property. In short, those uses would not be profitable given buildout expenses and market conditions. A storage use however does pencil out. Mr. Onstad also noted that the proposed storage use would be easily added to the existing building and easily removed – so that if the property is redeveloped in the future, it would be relatively simple to do so.

Andrew Puetz, 77 Wildridge Drive and owner of the adjacent Chrysler Winona dealership voiced his support for the proposed change and noted that storage is a service he would use at 330 West Second Street.

Jose Pelaez, 853 E. 3rd Street Winona, downtown business owner, stated his support for the storage use given the vacant state of the building. Mr. Pelaez stated he believes the storage use to be appropriate in the fringe areas of downtown.

Kurt Glenna, 373 W. Broadway, noted he has a downtown office space and supports Mr. Onstad's petition.

Gabriel Longhini, 1377 Skyline Drive, stated that he is in support of the storage use. Mr. Longhini stated that he rented a living space in downtown for a number of years and one of the hardest things to find was storage space.

Mitch Walch, 20687 Co Rd. 33 Altura, MN, who owns the property adjacent to 330 W. Second and he supported the use in the fringe area of downtown.

There being no others who wished to speak, Chair Buelow closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Hahn stated he commended Mr. Onstad for pursuing this amendment through a text amendment which he believes is a much more palatable proposal than a zone change.

Commissioner Paddock echoed Mr. Hahn's statement.

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Commissioner Shortridge concurred with other Mr. Hahn and Mr. Paddock but noted that in reviewing the proposed amendment, the Commission must look at the broader effects of the change.

Chair Buelow asked if Commissioners would be interested in extending the 50% non-storage requirement to upper floors of buildings. The consensus of the Commission was not to pursue this.

Commissioner Olson asked if the amendments could apply just to the singular lot at 330 W. Second. Mr. Sims responded that this would not be permitted.

Commissioner Hall and Olson noted the potential positive impacts on other properties from the proposed amendments. Perhaps this would open up a new potential use for currently unused or un-utilized spaces.


Following further discussion about potential positives and negatives of the proposed amendments to other downtown fringe properties, Commission Olson made a motion to approve the amendments as recommended by staff and incorporated into the draft ordinance attached to the Commission packets. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ballard. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

Mr. Sims mentioned that Natural Resources Sustainability Coordinator John Howard may attend the next meeting to discuss community garden opportunities. Commissioner Hall added that the Citizens Environmental Quality Control Committee has received significant interest in community gardens recently.

Adjournment

On a motion from Commissioner Shortridge and second by Commissioner Olson, the Commission unanimously voted in favor of adjournment at 5:52 pm.



Luke Sims
Assistant City Planner

APPENDIX A
Roll Call Vote Sheet

| NAME | Approval of Minutes from January 25, 2021 | 2255 Garvin Heights Road IUP | UDC Text Amendment |
|------------------|---|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Brad Ballard | Aye | Aye | Aye |
| Dale Boettcher | Not Present | Not Present | Not Present |
| Brian Buelow | Aye | Aye | Aye |
| Ed Hahn | Aye | Aye | Aye |
| Dan Hall | Aye | Aye | Aye |
| Amy Jo Marks | Not Present | Not Present | Not Present |
| Lavern Olson | Aye | Aye | Aye |
| Todd Paddock | Aye | Aye | Aye |
| Peter Shortridge | Aye | Aye | Aye |