

Planning Commission Meeting

Minutes

June 14, 2021, 4:30 p.m.
Electronic Via Zoom
207 Lafayette Street
Winona, MN 55987



Members Present: Commissioner Brian Buelow, Commissioner Brad Ballard, Commissioner LaVerne Olson, Commissioner Ed Hahn, Commissioner Daniel Hall, Commissioner Dale Boettcher, Commissioner Todd Paddock, Commissioner Peter Shortridge

Members Absent: Commissioner Amy Jo Marks

Staff Present: City Planner Carlos Espinosa, Assistant City Planner Luke Sims

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Chairman Brian Buelow.

2. Approval of Minutes-May 24, 2021

The minutes from the Planning Commission meetings of May 24, 2021 were reviewed.

Moved by Commissioner Olson
Seconded by Commissioner Ballard

To Approve the minutes.

Motion Carried Unanimously

3. Public Hearing - 203 1/2 East Broadway Tourist Home IUP

Mr. Espinosa provided an overview of the proposed basement unit for a tourist home classification through the IUP process. He noted that the property is currently certified as a duplex which is allowed in the R-3 and this would change the basement unit from a long term unit to a short term rental. Mr. Espinosa mentioned that the requirements in city code would be met for the IUP.

Petitioner Adam Cloeter summed up the proposal and clarified that he runs a few other AirBnB units around the City and was available for questions.

Commissioner Hahn asked if there was an egress window. Mr. Cloeter responded that there was and the unit was up to code.

Commissioner Olson asked about the parking at that location and the neighboring property at 209 East 6th Street. Mr. Cloeter says he does own the property next door but the parking space for the unit proposed for short term rental is on the 203 East Broadway lot. Commissioner Olson mentioned it looked like there was plenty of room at 203 East Broadway. Commissioner Olson suggested making the house numbers more easily readable. Mr. Cloeter responded this was a good suggestion.

Commissioner Paddock asked to clarify that Mr. Cloeter lived on site. Mr. Cloeter responded in the affirmative.

Chairman Buelow opened the public hearing.

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

To approve the IUP.

Resolution # 21-3

Moved by Commissioner Shortridge

Seconded by Commissioner Boettcher

Motion Carried Unanimously

4. Other Business

Commissioner Paddock brought up the approval of the Fastenal building site plan on Second Street and the previous discussion of the building's height and impact on the view and river looking to Wisconsin. He mentioned that he has heard from several people that they regret how much of the view of the river and beyond is blocked and that hopefully future development will not be similar, even though it is only four stories. Commissioner Paddock asked the other Commissioners if they felt the same or had considered the impact on the view of the waterfront.

Commissioner Shortridge asked if there was a variance for height. Mr. Espinosa responded that there was no variance requested and it was built by-right. Chairman Buelow mentioned that some buildings in Lake City are built perpendicular to the river for more site lines rather than parallel to the river. Commissioner Paddock asked that if the Commission was concerned, what ideas do other have for the future, even for buildings that are meeting the current requirements for height.

Mr. Espinosa mentioned that the Comprehensive Plan update may affect this and that if there is a variance, the findings related to compliance with the Comprehensive Plan may be a fitting regulation to come into play. Commissioner Shortridge mentioned that the only way that would be used at all would be at the Board of Adjustment level. Mr. Espinosa responded that this was the case. Commissioner Olson expressed disagreement with the conversation and highlighted the other apartment buildings to the east and other buildings blocking the view to the river in other Second Street properties. He said that restricting the heights of building for those that need to build new buildings will impact the tax base of the City and that this was an inappropriate conversation and detrimental to the City to restrict the height of buildings in that location.

Commissioner Hahn mentioned that he appreciates that Commissioner Paddock has brought the issue up, especially as changes arise in downtown. He also expressed appreciation for Commissioner Olson's comments. Commissioner Hahn mentioned that he is not in favor of a wall of four or five story buildings but there weren't any sight lines at that location before and questioned where the sight lines were before and what the criteria for "seeing the river" were.

Commissioner Paddock said that the Mississippi River is not just a channel but a rated complex and stretches from the bluffs on the west side of the river over to the bluffs in Wisconsin and he considers that to be the view of the river, even if not being able to see the main channel. He noted the opinions raised to him were unsolicited from lifelong Winonans. He noted that it is huge in considering the future of Winona in an economic sense, including why Fastenal chose that location but all people need to be considered. Commissioner Boettcher mentioned that back in the 1940s, '50s, and '60s the river entrance for everything was much lower but floods came along which led the federal government, state, and city to make decisions to protect the City and its community and why things are different from 50 to 70 years ago. He noted that the City did not do anything obnoxious or rude but acted to protect the City for today and into the future.

5. Adjournment

The Commission voted in favor of adjournment at 5:00 pm.

Moved by Commissioner Shortridge

Seconded by Commissioner Olson

Motion Carried Unanimously

Handwritten signature of Luke Sims in cursive, including the initials "JEM" at the end.

Luke Sims, Assistant City Planner