

**THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PRINCETON PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD HELD
ON JANUARY 29, 2007, AT 7:00 P.M., AT THE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., by Ken Haskamp. Members present were Edward Juntilla, Lee Steinbrecher, Dave Thompson, and Jack Edmonds. Township members: Bryan Lawrence, Baldwin Township and Dan Minks, Princeton Township. Staff present were Jay Blake and Mary Lou DeWitt.

OATH OF OFFICE:

Lee Steinbrecher and Dave Thompson took the Oath of Office.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

JUNTILLA MOVED, SECOND BY HASKAMP TO NOMINATE DAVE THOMPSON AS CHAIRPERSON FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD. THERE BEING NO OBJECTIONS, THE NOMINATIONS WERE CLOSED. UPON THE CALL OF MOTION, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

STEINBRECHER MOVED, SECOND BY JUNTILLA TO NOMINATE KEN HASKAMP AS VICE CHAIRPERSON FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD. THERE BEING NO OBJECTIONS, THE NOMINATIONS WERE CLOSED. UPON THE CALL OF MOTION, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

STEINBRECHER MOVED, SECOND BY HASKAMP TO NOMINATE EDWARD JUNTILLA AS SECRETARY FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD. THERE BEING NO OBJECTIONS, THE NOMINATIONS WERE CLOSED. UPON THE CALL OF MOTION, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

Thompson took over as Chairperson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON DECEMBER 18, 2006

JUNTILLA MOVED, SECOND BY HASKAMP TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 18, 2006. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A. Amending Zoning Code to Update Parking Ordinance

Blake informed the Planning Commission Board that staff reviewed the City Parking requirements and they are significantly higher than other surrounding communities.

Recommendations that staff prepared an ordinance amendment are the following:

- A. For retail uses the parking requirements should be one space per 250 square feet of useable floor space.
- B. For office and banks parking requirements should be one space per 250 square feet of useable floor space and one for each anticipated employee.
- C. Parking stall size should be amended to nine (9) feet by twenty (20) feet or 180 square feet and parking lanes be adjusted to meet current International Traffic Engineers standards.
- D. A three foot setback for parking lots should be added.

Blake had the City Attorney and City Engineer review the suggested ordinance changes and they both approved of the changes.

Edmonds asked how this would affect the downtown business district.

Blake said this would not affect them at all. Gas stations are restriction for off street parking. This also does not affect the handicap parking spaces. Mixed uses as in a strip mall has to be reviewed by staff and determine what needs to be set for parking. Hotels are showing 1.5 for parking spaces because the view is that there would be one auto per room normally.

STEINBRECHER MOVED, SECOND BY JUNTILLA TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

STEINBRECHER MOVED, SECOND BY EDMONDS TO APPROVE THE CHANGES IN AMENDING THE ZONING CODE TO UPDATE THE PARKING ORDINANCE WITH OPTION ONE AND FORWARD THIS TO THE CITY COUNCIL. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

B. Amending Zoning Code to Allow Interim Use Permit

Blake informed the Planning Commission Board that it was noted that the State Statue has made changes on the Conditional Use Permit. The Interim Use Permit would be used instead to allow a time frame, may be terminated by violations of any of the conditions imposed, and automatically expires upon the termination date noted in the permit or upon change of ownership of the property, whichever comes first. The City Attorney recommended that the City adopt the Interim Use Permit. The Attorney also believes that Interim Use Permit be used more then a Conditional Use Permit. We would remove the Conditional Use Permit to an Interim Use Permit. The Conditional Use Permits that are already in effect will stay as they are. Those can not change. If a current Conditional Use Permit were to be amended then we can make it an Interim Use Permit.

STEINBRECHER MOVED, SECOND BY JUNTILLA TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

EDMONDS MOVED, SECOND BY JUNTILLA TO APPROVE THE AMENDING OF THE ZONING CODE TO ALLOW INTERIM USE PERMIT IN PLACE OF THE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND FORWARD THIS TO THE CITY COUNCIL. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

C. #07-01 Variance for Sign at Coborn's

Blake informed the Planning Commission Board that Coborn's would like an on site pylon sign that would be seen from Highway #169. The site is zoned B-2, General Business. The proposed

sign would be 70 feet in height with the square footage including all three signs is 691. The sign displays Open 24 Hours, Coborn's Logo Graphics, and changeable fuel prices.

In 1999, the City enacted a Sign Moratorium to allow the Planning Commission to study sign size and height requirements in areas adjacent to the interchange of Highway #169 and Rum River Drive. Several sign requests were being heard at that time for signage that would be visible from Highway #169, specifically Super America.

Blake said this is significantly larger than what we have agreed in the past. Staff recommends that this is tabled until we can review other cities regulations. Blake has reviewed other cities that look at the speed of passing by the signage as driving on the highway. Blake recommends tabling this until further investigation.

Juntilla would like more control of the signs. He does not want different size signs continuing to be placed.

Blake agrees that consistency is important. It is important that we review the signage and determine if we need to vary what is currently in the ordinance.

Steinbrecher commented that this is a topic that needs to be addressed for the west side of the City that is now building. The size of the sign needs to be controlled more than the height in most cases.

Mike Wahlin, Coborn's was present and addressed the Planning Commission Board. They did a visibility study that 70 feet was a good height from Hwy #169. The size needs to be considered for the grocery store and the convenience store. This does increase the number for the sizing. The proposed sign should be looked at as two different signs. He understands the sign has to be visible from the highway considering the speed and the area the sign is placed.

Blake said he understands what Coborn's is looking at. Staff is not comfortable with the size of the signage. Staff recommends tabling this.

Haskamp asked Wahlin what they are looking at if will bring traffic in and what they would lose in business if they did not have this amount of signage.

Wahlin did not know number wise what they would bring in or not bring in. This sign was approved in Glenco, MN.

Blake said staff could look at different communities that have a Coborn's store and see their signage.

Thompson said he would like to see this tabled. This should be addressed as overall with the west side of the City growing and having highway exposure.

Blake would like to control the numbers of what is in an area and also where one business sign is not trying to be higher than the next one.

Marc Ree, Scenic Sign Corp., spoke that the M in McDonalds is known. But with Coborn's that is not possible. He understands we have to decide what is right for the City. Ree said he has other City Ordinances regarding signage that he would be glad to share with Blake.

Thompson would like to know if there is any research that the size of the sign does bring in more traffic. That would be informative to bring in and check.

Blake told Ree that he would like to review the information he has regarding other cities signage. Ree said he would share that with Blake. Blake understands timing is a factor and Blake would like to have a report regarding signage for February's Planning Commission meeting. He does not want to drag this out.

Ree said there are two big needs for Coborn's, the grocery store and the gas station.

EDMONDS MOVED, SECOND BY STEINBRECHER TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

Blake told the Planning Commission Board that he will have a report on signage for February's meeting.

EDMONDS MOVED, SECOND BY JUNTILLA TO TABLE ITEM #07-01 VARIANCE FOR SIGN AT COBORN'S UNTIL FEBRUARY 26, 2007, MEETING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

D. #06-16 Variance at 907 First Street

Blake informed the Planning Commission Board that this is a continuation from last months January 29, 2007, meeting because two of the Planning Commission Board members is on Public Utilities Commission Board and can not vote, where there would not have been a quorum. Princeton Public Utilities needs to install a 12 foot soundwall to the existing power generation plant. The height of the sound wall is necessary to meet the new State sound levels for an Air Permit.

Mary Zilka, 107 9th Avenue South, lives by this site and was under the understanding that the wall would be behind her property.

Thompson said the placement of the fence was necessary to meet the MPCA's requirements where the sound is controlled.

Zilka said her house trembles. She was told by an employee of the Princeton Public Utilities there would be an eighteen foot sound wall behind her house.

Thompson said the vibration is from the generators and not from the noise. He was not aware that there was something said about an 18 foot fence. He is not sure the City would allow a variance for a 18 foot fence.

Blake asked if there are other tools to assist with the vibration. Can anything reduce this.

Thompson said no. It is inside the earth.

Blake asked that maybe Thompson could sit down with the neighbors and see if there is a way to contain the vibration.

Thompson said he would speak with the neighbors along with Blake and see if there is something that could be done.

STEINBRECHER MOVED, SECOND BY EDMONDS TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 3 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED. (Juntilla and Thompson abstained from the vote since they are on the Public Utilities Commission Board)

The Planning Commission Board reviewed the Findings of Fact:

1. Without the variance, is the owner deprived of a reasonable use of the property? Yes, use of generators.
2. Is the alleged hardship due to circumstances unique to this property? Yes, MPCA requirements.
3. Were the circumstances causing the hardship created by someone or something other than the landowner or previous landowners? Yes, MPCA requirements.
4. Will the issuance of the variance maintain the essential character of the locality? Yes, improve sound in neighborhood.
5. Does the alleged hardship involve more than economic considerations? Yes, MPCA requirements.

STEINBRECHER MOVED, SECOND BY EDMONDS TO APPROVE ITEM #06-16 VARIANCE AT 907 FIRST STREET WITH THE CONDITIONS THAT ALL PERMITS, BUILDING PERMIT AND MPCA PERMIT ARE ISSUED. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 3 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED. (Thompson and Juntilla abstained from the vote since they are on the Public Utilities Commission Board)

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Site Plan at 513 Rum River Drive North

Blake informed the Planning Commission Board the subject property is zoned B-2, General Commercial. A Conditional Use Permit was issued back on September 27, 1993, for automobile service and then amended on March 15, 2004, to add the sale of autos. The Planning Commission Board knows of this place as Isac's. On June 20, 2005, this Conditional Use Permit was reviewed by the Planning Commission Board after receiving a letter complaining about the number of vehicles parked on the subject property which had exceeded the granted number of 17 for sales and service in the Conditional Use Permit. This building has been vacant for over a year and a new tenant would like to place the same business use there. Amy Meyer, applicant

has reviewed the stipulations of the Conditional Use Permit and has no problem following the guidelines. Staff has spoken with the Dick Schieffer, City Attorney, concerning the Conditional Use Permit at this property. Schieffer suggested drafting a memo that Meyer would sign that she understands the terms of the Conditional Use Permit and will follow them. Meyer was given the memo prior to the Planning Commission meeting starting. Meyer is willing to abide by these guidelines, agreed to the terms, and signed the memo. She received a copy of the memo and the Conditional Use Permit.

Resolution #04-01 (March 15, 2004) Conditions of Conditional Use Permit:

1. The total number of vehicles outside the building on the lots is 17 for either sales or service.
2. The Conditional Use Permit will be reviewed in one year or if there are citizen complaints.
3. This Conditional Use Permit amends the existing Conditional Use Permit for automobile service repair.

Meyer informed the Planning Commission Board that she is renting the two garage sites on the north end of the building. Meyer plans to fix up the building with paint and cleaning the site area.

Thompson commented that the Conditional Use Permit states a total of 17 autos for this property and that also includes the other end of the building that had been leased out in the past.

Blake said the lot in the back is in a grey area with the Conditional Use Permit. That lot is not stipulated in the Conditional Use Permit.

Meyer said the back lot would only be to park her flat bed. No other storage. She will keep debris out of the area.

The Planning Commission Board is okay with Meyer using this site for auto service and sales.

B. Site Plan at 211 Rum River Drive North

Blake informed the Planning Commission Board that this was on the December 18, 2006, meeting for a Conditional Use Permit to reestablish auto service where mechanical work would be done along with selling of gasoline. The Conditional Use Permit was granted. Blake said the signage and parking meet the ordinance requirements. The trash storage does have to be enclosed and meet the Princeton Public Utilities requirements where they have accessibility to it.

Stephen Markoe, applicant informed the Planning Commission Board that he had been advised by the garbage hauler that if the trash area were fenced he would have a hard time accessing the trash container.

Thompson said that he will go look at the site and see what can be done.

Markoe asked about the handicap parking, there are two on the site plans and was wondering if one would be enough.

Blake said he will speak to Lynn Paulson, Building Official and see if one is okay. State statues will apply. Blake will call Marko with what Paulson advises.

STEINBRECHER MOVED, SECOND BY JUNTILLA TO APPROVE THE SITE PLAN AND SIGNAGE AT 211 RUM RIVER DRIVE NORTH. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

Markoe said the diesel pump works well where it is stationed. The pump site will be open 24 hours.

Thompson said that it might not be a bad idea to put a no parking sign in this area so no one blocks the pumps when they drop off their vehicles for service.

C. Concept Plan at 508 & 510 Fifth Avenue North

Blake informed the Planning Commission Board that the applicant was not present, but would still like to know what the Planning Commission Board thoughts are regarding the idea that was proposed to staff regarding this site. This property lies east of Northern Attitudes Bar & Grill, across the road, and south of the Northern Attitudes extra parking lot. There are two lots on the same PID number, Lots 8 & 9, Block 33, & N ½ of E-W alley adjoining. This is bare land where the back drops off to floodplain. The setback for bluff line is approximately 35 feet. The zoning for this site is B-2, General Business. The interested party is considering purchasing these lots and building a small retail shop. The idea is a couple shops on the mail floor, such as a coffee shop, salon, plumbing shop, or offices for rent. On the second floor would be two separate residential quarters for rent. The Comprehensive Plan shows this as residential.

The Planning Commission Board agreed they would like that this site stays residential to follow the Comprehensive Plan.

D. Business Licensing

Blake said that this suggestion was mentioned to the City Administrator at a past Planning Commission meeting. In the packet is a draft Karnowski has put together. Blake commented that he has found that people who are moving into the City with a business do contact the City on what needs to be done by bringing their business here. Blake does not supportive the idea of business licensing because a licensing ordinance tends to be negative. Blake would like to get the Chamber Board's view on this.

Steinbrecher said that licensing does give some control of where businesses are operating within the City and following the ordinances.

Lawrence agrees with Blake. The Zoning Ordinance covers the problems if they arrive.

Thompson wondered where do you draw the line. He does not agree with the licensing fee.

Blake looks at this as administration time that would be involved keeping up with this. Maybe this draft is beyond what we need. He will look in to it further and also speak to the Chamber Board.

E. Sign Ordinance Amendments for Highway Business Uses

Blake would like authorization to conduct a sign review and check with other communities and see what theirs are. Blake will look at other communities as a model. He will prepare a report for the Planning Commission concerning this. He is focusing on highway signage.

COMMUNICATION AND REPORTS:

A. City Council Minutes for January, 2007

The Planning Commission Board had no comments.

B. Staff Report

Blake gave a verbal report that talks continue with all three large stores for coming into the City. The City Council at the last Council meeting gave permission for Blake and the City Engineer to meet with two property owners concerning extending sewer and water. Blake will meet with Soule's. The City would like to know of Soule's plans, if they are planning on selling their land or going ahead with sewer and water extension, or tabling the plans right now. Blake concerns are the longer the wait the assessments go up and so does the cost.

STEINBRECHER MOVED, SECOND BY JUNTILLA TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED. THE
MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:25 P.M.

ATTEST:

Dave Thompson, Chairperson

Mary Lou DeWitt, Comm. Dev. Assist.