

**THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD HELD ON MARCH 17, 2014,
AT 7:00 P.M., AT THE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., by Jack Edmonds. Members present were Jeff Reynolds, Eldon Johnson, Mitzi Mellott, and Chad Heitschmidt. Staff present were Carie Fuhrman (Comm. Dev. Director) and Mary Lou DeWitt (Comm. Dev. Assistant).

Absent was Chad Heitschmidt. (Heitschmidt arrived at 7:02 P.M.)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING ON FEBRUARY 18, 2014

JOHNSON MOVED, SECOND BY REYNOLDS, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 18, 2014. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 4 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS:

EDMONDS MOVED, SECOND BY JOHNSON, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS WRITTEN. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 4 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

Heitschmidt arrived at 7:02 P.M.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A. Amendment to Chapter IV – Administration and Enforcement

The City Attorney is recommending some housekeeping changes to the Appeal Process as outlined in the Zoning Ordinance. The appeal process is in place for any situations when it is alleged that there is an error in any order, requirement, decision, or determination made by the Planning Commission, Zoning Administrator, Building Inspector, or any other City Staff in regards to the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. The recommended changes are in a draft Ordinance for the Planning Commission's review.

After the public hearing is held, staff would recommend the Planning Commission recommend approval to the City Council of Ordinance #704. Fuhrman would then bring the Ordinance to the next City Council meeting for its first reading.

Fuhrman said Item 4 on the Ordinance is a completely new section that has been added. It reads as follows:

4. Further Appeal from The Board's decision shall be filed in the appropriate Court and served on the City Clerk within 33 days of the Clerk's mailing of the Board's final order to the Appellant. In the event of Further Appeal, Appellant shall provide to the Court and the Board, a copy of the transcript of the Board's Appeal proceeding taken from the Board's tape recording by a certified Minnesota Court Reporter. Appellant shall pay the transcription costs of the Court Reporter and reimburse the City for the costs it incurs for consultants, including the City Attorney, reasonably necessary to conduct the Appeal. The Board's final order remains in effect unless stayed by the Court.

Edmonds opened the public hearing.

Charles Nagle, resident of Baldwin Twsp. was present and said the Ordinance should specify the name of the Court instead of the appropriate Court. There are different Courts, such as; Court of Appeals, District Court, and so on.

Mellott said they would have to bring it to the appropriate Court where you file the case.

Edmonds said the City Attorney wrote this so he should know what to write.

Fuhrman will ask the City Attorney and see if the wording should be changed. If there is a change in the language, she would make the change if the Planning Commission is okay with that.

Edmonds asked if there were anymore comments from the public and there were not.

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

EDMONDS MOVED, SECOND BY JOHNSON, TO FORWARD ORDINANCE #704, AS WRITTEN FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER IV (ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT) OF TITLE 11 (ZONING) OF THE CITY OF PRINCETON CODE OF ORDINANCES, AMENDING THE APPEAL PROCESS WHEN IT IS ALLEGED THAT THERE IS AN ERROR IN ANY ORDER, REQUIREMENT, DECISION, OR DETERMINATION MADE BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION, ZONING ADMINISTRATOR, BUILDING INSPECTOR, OR OTHER CITY STAFF MEMBER IN THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE OR SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. General Sign Ordinance Amendment (Continued)

The Planning Commission has discussed wall mounted business signs, projecting signs, under-canopy signs, and temporary signs during this overhaul of the Sign Ordinance. At the February 18, 2014 meeting, staff verified that current Sign Ordinance defines a wall sign as including "signs on a mansard", and the definition of "façade" is "the entire building front including the parapet".

At the February meeting, the Planning Commission discussed further details of the general changes to the Sign Ordinance, including:

- Consensus was that wall signs are allowed on parapets. Therefore,
 - Wall sign definition should include reference to signs on parapets (Ch. VII.2).
 - A definition for parapet should be added to the Definition Section (Ch. VII.2).
- Consensus was to allow a maximum of 10% of a sign to extend above the roof line of a flat roof, mansard roof, or parapet (whether or not it is a wall or parapet sign) (Ch. VII.4B).
 - Currently, the wall sign regulations state that "signs shall not extend beyond the side edge of the building."
- Consensus was to add a new category called "Fascia/Soffit" signs.
 - A definition should be added (Ch. VII.2).

- ° Regulations (Ch. VII.4 – Signs Permitted with a Building Permit, not Planning Commission review).
 - Sign must be securely fastened to the fascia or soffit.
 - Sign should allow for snow and water to run off between the roof and sign.
 - The number of signs and area shall meet the wall sign regulations. (The proposed changes would allow for any combination of wall and/or soffit/fascia signs to not exceed 3 and ten (10) percent of the area of the building wall, or 200 square feet, whichever is smaller).
 - The bottom of the sign shall provide at least eight (8) feet clearance.

The Planning Commission requested staff bring the changes in draft form for the Planning Commission to review at the March meeting. Fuhrman provided a document that includes all of the changes that have been discussed in outline format. She also sent the potential changes to the Chamber Board for their comments and has included those for the Planning Commission to review.

Wall Sign Ordinance

Fuhrman went through the proposed Wall Sign Ordinance:

- Allow up to three wall signs for each building wall abutting a street.
- Gross surface area of all three signs cannot exceed the 10% requirement or 200 square feet, whichever is smaller.
- Add definition for parapet and include reference to parapet signs.
- Allow maximum of 10% of a sign to extend above roof line of a flat or mansard roof or parapet.

Edmonds asked the Planning Commission Board if there are any changes they would like to make or are they okay with the proposed Wall Sign Ordinance. The Planning Commission agreed that they are okay with the proposed Wall Sign Ordinance.

Projecting Signs (aka Flag Mounted Signs)

Fuhrman went through the proposed Projecting Signs (aka Flag Mounted Signs):

- One allowed for each building wall abutting a street.
- Each sign cannot exceed a total of four square feet.
- Clearance of eight (8) feet required from the bottom of the sign to the ground.
- Each sign cannot project more than four feet out from the building wall.
- Sign must be thoroughly secured and anchored.
- No illumination allowed.

*Chamber Member Survey Question: Are you in favor of allowing these types of signs?
17 out of 17 respondents said yes.*

There were two comments:

- 1) *Provided they flow with the aesthetics.*
- 2) *Depends on the building.*

Fuhrman said by the Chamber survey they are in favor of them.

Edmonds asked the Planning Commission Board if they are okay with the language for Projecting Signs.

Heitschmidt said sidewalks are usually four feet wide and he pictures a sign extending beyond the sidewalk area.

Johnson believes a sidewalk is not less than eight feet wide. These signs should be fine over a sidewalk area.

Heitschmidt was fine with the wording being left as is. The Planning Commission Board agreed.

Mellott said if this allows Flag Mounted Signs does that mean banners and flags.

Fuhrman said it is the signage, not flags. Does the Planning Commission want to allow banner type signs. The Ordinance addresses banners for an event or promotion with a certain amount of time they can be up.

Heitschmidt wonders if just Projecting Signs should be addressed in the Ordinance instead of adding Flag Mounted Signs. In the Sign Definitions section of the Ordinance, Flag Mounted Signs could be recognized, but the Projecting Signs should not be referred to as Flag Mounted Signs.

The Planning Commission Board agreed and Fuhrman will change the Ordinance to read Projecting Signs and have Flag Mounted Signs under Sign Definitions. Fuhrman asked the Planning Commission if Projecting Signs in combination with Wall Signs should read, "They cannot exceed the 10% requirements or 200 square feet of the gross surface area of the building wall, whichever is smaller".

Johnson and Heitschmidt agree all signs are within the 200 square feet or 10% of the building wall area.

Under-Canopy Signs (aka Suspended Signs)

Fuhrman went through the proposed Under-Canopy Signs:

- Cannot extend beyond the canopy.
- Each sign cannot exceed a total of four square feet.
- Clearance of eight (8) feet required from the bottom of the sign to the ground.
- Sign must be thoroughly secured and anchored.
- Sign can be either parallel or perpendicular to the building wall.
- No illumination allowed.

*Chamber Member Survey Question: Are you in favor of allowing these types of signs?
17 out of 17 respondents said yes.*

There were two comments:

- 1) Provided they are congruent with the aesthetics.*
- 2) Not much exposure and not everyone has a canopy.*

Fuhrman said she did add to the language the signs can be either parallel or perpendicular to the building wall.

Proposed for Projecting Signs, Under-Canopy Signs, and Wall Signs:

- A business is allowed projecting or under-canopy sign and/or wall signs.
 - Total sign square footage shall meet the wall sign square footage requirement.
 - No more than three signs in total combination (of under-canopy, projecting, and/or wall signs).

Temporary Signs:

Fuhrman said this does not pertain to sandwich board signs. The current Ordinance provisions have no changes and read as follows:

- Temporary sign permit required.
- Allowed for 14 days; 2 permit allowed at any time.
- Maximum size: 48 Square Feet.
- Not allowed in Residential Districts.

There are proposed additions to the Temporary Sign Ordinance as follows:

- No more than 8 permits per calendar year shall be issued to any one property for for-profit advertising. (Non-profit organizations or charitable event signs do not count towards the 8 per property).
- No more than 4 permits per calendar year shall be issued to any one business.
- Businesses can use temporary signs to advertise on other property. (The current Ordinance allows businesses to advertise only on the property of their business).

The Chamber Member Survey Questions: Should businesses be allowed to advertise on these types of signs off-site (not directly at their business location)?

- *13 out of 18 respondents said yes.*
- *2 out of 18 respondents said no.*
- *3 out of 18 respondents said maybe*

There were two comments:

- 1) Helps promote a business or event for a short period.*
- 2) Some businesses in the Princeton Mall cannot be seen easily from Rum River Drive. A sign by the road would do a lot to improve awareness.*

Should a limit be placed on the number of temporary ground signs allowed on one property at a time?

- *10 out of 18 respondents said yes.*
- *8 out of 18 respondents said no.*

There were two comments:

- 1) Limit only 2 per property.*
- 2) One per property.*

Mellott asked when the Planning Commission discussed the temporary signs.

Fuhrman said it was at the December 16, 2013 meeting.

Edmonds commented that we want to give businesses every opportunity to promote their site.

Fuhrman said commemorating a special event, business anniversary, grand opening, and other promotions are currently permitted with a temporary sign permit. It was in 2011 when it was adopted that a charitable event or non-profit could have a temporary sign off-premise.

Mellott thought when the business was having a special event, not promotional, they could have an off-premise temporary sign. She believes that is what was discussed.

Heitschmidt said that wording could stay in the language for a special event and such.

Johnson said the Chamber members who responded to the questioner, 13 out of 18 supported the proposed Temporary Sign Ordinance.

Fuhrman said Elk River does not allow these off-site signs unless for charitable organizations or non-profit. Depends on the aesthetics of the sign and safety is what the community is looking for.

Mellott said if you are using a temporary sign on your site and then having one off-site that is two different issues to her.

Fuhrman said the wording can change for off-site where the language is stricter on temporary off-site signage.

Mellott commented that advertising off-site is a little different. She wants to limit the type of advertising off-site.

Heitschmidt thought the consensus was for collectively off-site business advertising on other properties. If we want to regulate it more, maybe changing eight permits to six per calendar year.

Mellott does not believe the issue was to have the signs constantly up on main street. If doing off-site, it is part of that four that are allowed per calendar year to any one business. These off-site signs allowed down main street would be advertising all summer long. You can advertise off-site she is okay with, but not to have them up constantly.

Heitschmidt suggested for off premise signage to allow four signs per year, per business.

Mellott said a property would have four sign permits available per calendar year that they could allow others to use if they do not need to advertise. Non-profit stays as is. She would like for a business advertising off-site should be allowed four permits for the property only. Then they can advertise up to four on a property.

Fuhrman said she could draft this up for April 21, 2014 Planning Commission public hearing. Does the Planning Commission want to allow eight permits for a calendar year on a property where four permits allowed for-profit and four permits allowed for non-profits as well.

Reynolds said just change the eight permits to four permits.

Heitschmidt said in the current Temporary Sign Ordinance allows six off premise signs per year for non-profit, but does not say per property.

Fuhrman said Subsection Five, Item D4 in the Sign Ordinance where it states "Signs under subsection 5.D. shall be limited to no more than six (6) in a year" could be taken out. The proposed Ordinance change could say, no more than four permits for-profit per calendar year for off-site businesses. No more than four permits for-profit business off-site per calendar year. Multi-tenant buildings could be addressed that eight permits are allowed per calendar year.

Reynolds suggested six permits allowed on multi-tenant property per calendar year.

Heitschmidt said shopping centers or multi-tenant businesses could be counted as one property.

Fuhrman agrees to allow more for multi-tenant buildings.

Mellott said how much more. Limit the number to a business.

Fuhrman said allow per tenant spaces, if there were four spaces there could be two per business.

Mellott likes that idea.

Heitschmidt said four per business per calendar year and multi-tenant can have six per year.

Reynolds said six per multi-tenant property should be sufficient.

Johnson would like to give the businesses more opportunity to have more than two months out of the year for temporary signage. Just because a sign is out there does not mean the sign is junk.

Heitschmidt said we do not want a temporary sign in a yard all the time.

Fuhrman will put together a draft Ordinance for a public hearing for the April 21st Planning Commission meeting.

Fascia/Soffit Signs:

The current Ordinance does not address fascia/soffit signs.

The proposed wordage for the Fascial/Soffit Signs reads as follows:

- Add a definition
- Sign must be securely fastened to the fascia or soffit.
- Sign should allow for snow and water to run off between the roof and sign.
- The number of signs and total area shall meet the wall sign regulations. (The proposed changes would allow for any combination of wall and/or soffit/fascia signs to not exceed three (3) total signs and ten (10) percent of the area of the building wall, or 200 square feet, whichever is smaller).
- The bottom of the sign shall provide at least eight (8) feet clearance.

Fuhrman will add that the sign cannot be more than two feet of total height and the bottom of the sign cannot be above the fascia.

B. Dynamic Sign Ordinance (Continued)

Fuhrman updated the Planning Commission in her memo that reads as follows:

The Planning Commission reviewed staff's draft language at their February meeting and made suggestions, which are being presented in the attached draft language.

Specific issues that staff would like to address including the following:

1. The Planning Commission had a question for the City Attorney in regards to enforcing regulations on existing signs.
 - Mr. Schieffer responded that if new regulations have a strong impact on health and safety, you may be successful in enforcement, but the sign ordinance is part of the Zoning Ordinance, and the Statue is very strong for the property owner on non-conforming uses. He would not count on retroactive enforcement.
2. The Planning Commission requested clarification if only freestanding dynamic signs could be allowed in the B-1 District (and not wall signs)? The Planning Commission was also discussing potentially only allowing dynamic signage on two blocks (the two "malls") in the B-1, Central Business District.
 - Mr. Schieffer responded that allowing a certain type of signage in only specific areas of a Zoning District, and not others in the same zoning district, is potentially not prohibited, but he would not recommend it as it could be challenged by someone that is not allowed a dynamic sign in the same district (it could be perceived as spot zoning).
 - In addition, the question of allowing only freestanding dynamic signs versus wall signs could potentially be defended if challenged. However, the Planning Commission would have to make strong findings for why only freestanding dynamic signs were allowed and not wall signs.

- Base on Mr. Schieffer’s recommendation, and the feedback from the Downtown Committee, staff would recommend not allowing dynamic signs in the B-1 District.
 - This raises another issue: The Planning Commission was discussing the potential for the two “malls” placing a pylon sign closer to the street advertising all of the various tenants in their buildings (known as a Multi-Tenant Business (MTB) sign). As was discussed, some changes would need to be made in order to allow these types of signs (they would technically be located on city property, which is considered an off-site sign). Changes would also be needed to the MTB sign language, which we currently have in the Code and are only allowed in B-2, B-3, and MN-1. Please review that language in Chapter VII.7.D.) This may be something the Planning Commission wants to look into further.
3. Does the Planning Commission want to allow dynamic signs on billboards? Please review the billboard language in Chapter VII.7.B.
- Fuhrman has asked the Planning Commission to review the draft language that was included in their packets and bring their comments to the meeting.

The current Ordinance states signs are required to meet “regular” sign regulations, such as square footage, location, number, etc.

The potential changes being discussed:

- Add definitions.
- Allow in all Non-Residential Zoning Districts.
 - Discussion still on-going about Downtown.
- Not allow within 125 feet of an existing residence (single family home, apartment, etc.)
- Sign face shall not be oriented towards an existing residence.
- Regulate brightness standards.
- Regulate duration and transition times.
- No flashing signs allowed.

Chamber Member Survey Question: Should there be a limit on where digital signs are allowed to be located?

- 8 out of 18 respondents said yes
 - 5 out of 18 respondents said no
 - 5 out of 18 respondents said maybe
- No comments received.*

Chamber Downtown Committee Poll: Should the City limit where these signs are allowed? Should the City limit any other features of these signs?

- 4 out of 7 respondents said these signs should be not allowed in downtown
- 2 out of 7 respondents wanted further discussion
- 1 out of 7 respondents said these signs should be allowed in downtown

There were five comments:

- 1) *Downtown signage should reflect a historic look*

- 2) *I am okay with only allowing them in the commercial and industrial areas of the city (not downtown and not along Rum River Drive)*
- 3) *Grandfather in the signage that is present and outside of downtown proper. I would like the city to be more stringent in the look of the signage that is in disrepair.*
- 4) *There needs to be a discussion of these types of sign in regards to brightness and location. We should discuss how we feel about them downtown. I have seen some towns that would allow Holiday's sign, but it would need to be on the ground and aesthetically designed to match the buildings and downtown architecture.*
- 5) *Kind of hate to hurt the ability to advertise competitively, but at the same time hate to get to where we have a mini Las Vegas on as these signs get cheaper and cheaper to add and operate. They can be distracting to drivers, but they're also informative. I need to hear more discussion/ideas from others.*

Edmonds said in regards to dynamic signs on billboards he wondered if MnDOT would have a rule on them changing to a new picture or wording.

Reynolds asked if we need to address this in the Ordinance now.

Fuhrman said she could keep dynamic signs out of the public hearing for the April meeting.

Johnson wants to look at the dynamic signs now and see if we are okay with it. He talked to Scenic Signs about these and was told that there are controls in the computers that adjust to the nits. If we get into the roll time and flashing we would basically be shutting the signs down. Brightness is the biggest issue with the signs. Scenic Signs said the clarity is most important and not to change the sign so fast so people can read it. The sign does not need to be rolling fast. We should try to get the intensity of the light controlled and let the rest of it float where we do not need to control them.

Edmonds said you cannot regulate the signage so much where it causes more problems than helps.

Heitschmidt said if we do not regulate the digital signage in the beginning then there are problems down the road.

Fuhrman said we can justify not allowing them in certain districts. If we have a strong finding of why we do not allow them in a district that is a defensible finding.

Reynolds would prefer not having the digital signs downtown. They would not fit in with the historical buildings there. There could be a restrictive size requirement in B-1 Downtown Business or not allowing them at all.

Heitschmidt does not want them in the B-1 District. There are a lot of residential properties in that district.

Edmonds said there was the discussion of not allowing the dynamic signs 125 feet from residential properties.

Mellott commented that there are apartments above all the businesses downtown.

Heitschmidt said that it would be easier to say they are not allowed in B-1 District than looking to see if they are located 125 feet from a residential property.

Johnson said what about requiring a Conditional Use Permit for dynamic signs.

Fuhrman said yes, that would be good, but if the conditions are met than they have to get the sign. A Conditional Use Permit for dynamic signs would be good to have in place. If the Planning Commission does not want to have the dynamic signs on the public hearing for the April 21st meeting, that is fine.

Johnson is okay with not allowing dynamic signs in the B-1 District and not in residential areas, and it must be 125 feet from a residential property. Johnson said to remove on the draft Ordinance language under Specific Regulations, Tab B "Orientation", Item 1. "No portion of a sign face shall be oriented towards an existing residence". The nits do make a difference if by a street light. He is okay with the rest of what Fuhrman drafted.

Fuhrman said on the draft Ordinance language under Specific Regulations, Tab E "Duration/Transition", does the Planning Commission want this language she highlighted in the Ordinance.

The Planning Commission agreed that she should remove that language.

Fuhrman said she does have in the language if there are concerns about the sign brightness, it is up to the sign owner to have the tool to show the nits. In the malfunction area of the draft language is wordage if the sign malfunctions, the sign shall be designed to freeze the display, and the owner shall discontinue the display immediately upon malfunction.

Edmonds asked the Planning Commission Board if the dynamic sign language should be in the public hearing for the April 21st meeting and the Planning Commission agreed it should be.

Fuhrman said she will ask the City Attorney on the moratorium if we have to remove it or can we go ahead and put dynamic sign language in the public hearing.

HEITSCHMIDT MOVED, SECOND BY JOHNSON, TO HAVE THE SIGN ORDINANCE AND DYNAMIC SIGN ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS ON THE PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA FOR APRIL 21, 2014 FOR A PUBLIC HEARING. STAFF WILL CHECK WITH THE CITY ATTORNEY ON IF THE DYNAMIC SIGN MORATORIUM HAS TO BE REMOVED PRIOR TO THE PUBLIC HEARING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT OR IF IT CAN BE DONE ON THE SAME PUBLIC HEARING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. MN Design Team Potential Visit

The Downtown Committee is comprised of downtown business owners, residents, and city staff. One of their goals is to enhance the atmosphere of downtown in making it safe for pedestrians and more welcoming to visitors, as well as new potential business owners. The Downtown Committee is very interested in pursuing a potential MN Design Team (MDT) Visit. The MDT is comprised of several design professionals (Landscape Architects, Architects, Planners, Engineers, and so on). They will come into a community for a long weekend and work with the community on whatever needs or issues the community might be facing. A MDT visit concentrates on gathering input from the entire community, not just a core committee. It provides the expertise of several professionals at a fraction of the cost (\$5,000). The MDT will provide visual design concepts; they potential funding mechanisms; and a potential implementation timeline for the recommended changes/updates.

Fuhrman has been involved in the work of the Downtown Committee and sees a MDT visit as an asset to the Princeton community and has provided comments from the Pine City Community Development Director. Pine City has PRO-Minnesota Design Team in 1988 and again in 2009 and are very supportive of the visits. A grant is being pursued to pay for the visit. As part of the application, letters of support are highly encouraged; therefore, staff is requesting that the Planning Commission approve the Chair's signature on a letter of support on behalf of the Princeton Planning Commission. If the application is approved, the Planning Commission will be invited to participate in the visit.

Fuhrman said they are thinking around September for the visit. It takes six months to get ready for it.

Edmonds asked if the money is not raised than what.

Fuhrman said she is waiting to hear from the Initiative Foundation if they would reimburse the City if the Council approved to put down \$2,500. She is going to Appleton, MN in April for their visit to see how it works. She would like the Planning Commission to be involved when the time comes. She also need a letter of support from the Planning Commission that she is willing to write if Edmonds signed it.

Reynolds thought it was a great idea and Heitschmidt did too.

Edmonds is fine with signing the letter.

Fuhrman will invite the EDA Board, Rotary, Lions Organization, Planning Commission Board and City Council to attend the Chamber's luncheon to brainstorm.

JOHNSON MOVED, SECOND BY HEITSCHMIDT, APPROVE THE CHAIR'S SIGNATURE ON A LETTER OF SUPPORT ON BEHALF OF THE PRINCETON PLANNING COMMISSION FOR THE MN DESIGN TEAM APPLICATION. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

COMMUNICATION AND REPORTS:

A. Verbal Report

1) February Building Report

The Planning Commission Board had no comments.

2) Planning 101 (Free course with WSB)

WSB & Associates is hosting Planning Commissioner and City Council member training sessions on the basics of the planning process: Planning 101. These sessions will cover why planning is beneficial for communities, the history of planning, the legal basics of the planning process, land use and zoning tools, and trending topics in the planning field. This is a great opportunity to engage with area Planning Commissioners and City Council members and learn what you need to know in your role as a policymaker.

This year, WSB is offering three sessions across the state to provide an opportunity for more communities to participate. All Planning Commissioners, City Council members, and staff are welcome to attend any session that works for you! There is no cost to attend and meals will be provided at each of the sessions.

There is a meeting that will be held in St. Cloud on April 5th, from 11:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M. If any of the Planning Commission members would like to attend, please let Mary Lou know by March 28th and she will RSVP to WSB & Associates. The City would reimburse gas mileage and Fuhrman encourages ride sharing if possible.

3) Rental Rehab Deferred Loan Program

Central Minnesota Housing Partnership, Inc. is requesting applications for Rental Rehabilitation Deferred Loan Program. Application packets are now available for the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency Rental Rehabilitation Deferred Loan Program (RRDL). The Central Minnesota Housing Partnership, Inc. (CMHP) is the program administrator in Central Minnesota, and will be accepting and ranking funding applications. The deadline for application submission is Thursday, April 10th, 2014 at 4 P.M.

CMHP has requested a \$2.5 million funding allocation to be used to address the rehabilitation needs of eligible rental properties in the following counties: Aitkin, Benton, Carlton, Cass, Chisago, Crow Wing, Isanti, Kanabec, Morrison, Mille Lacs, Pine, Sherburne, Stearns, Todd, Wadena, and Wright (excluding the City of St. Cloud). Owners of rental properties containing 6 or more units may be eligible for a 0% interest deferred loan in the amount of \$25,000 per unit, with a total maximum loan of \$300,000. Owners who complete designated rent and tenant income compliance requirements may have up to 25% of the loan balance forgiven.

Central MN Housing Partnership Requesting Application – 2

RRDL loan funds can be used to cover the costs of permanent general improvements that have not been started prior to the RRDL loan closing, and which materially preserve or improve the basic livability, safety, or utility of the property. A typical rehabilitation project may include, but

not be limited to: new roofing, siding, windows, doors, floor coverings, boilers and mechanical systems and energy & water saving improvements.

Information collected in the RRDL application will be reviewed and ranked according to a set selection criteria. Owners will be notified of their application status once all received and complete applications are ranked. Application packets may be requested by contacting Jason Krebsbach, Community Development Director, at (320) 258-0672 or Jason@cmhp.net

Fuhrman told the Planning Commission Board that if they know of anyone who owns rental property in town, let them know of this loan program. Staff has mailed the information to owners of rental properties containing six or more units.

4) SRTS Sidewalk Project Open House: March 27th from 5:30 – 6:30 P.M. at City Hall

There will be an open house for “Safe Routes To School” on March 27, 2014 from 5:30 P.M. – 6:30 P.M. at City Hall before the City Council meeting. An open house letter was sent to the property owners along the route to invite them to the informative meeting.

B. City Council Minutes for February, 2014

The Planning Commission Board had no comments.

Fuhrman said the Planning Commission Board was given clean copies of the Planning Commission Bylaws that were approved by the City Council.

JOHNSON MOVED, SECOND BY REYNOLDS, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:01 P.M.

ATTEST:

Jack Edmonds, Chairperson

Mary Lou DeWitt, Comm. Dev. Assistant