

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

The Community Development Committee of the Willmar City Council met on Thursday, January 30, 2014, in Conference Room No. 1 at the City Office Building.

Present: Rick Fagerlie ..... Chair  
Bruce DeBlieck ..... Vice Chair  
Jim Dokken ..... Member  
Tim Johnson ..... Member

Others present: Denis Anderson, Council Member; Andrey Nelsen, Council Member; Bruce Peterson, Director of Planning and Development Services; Paula and Brett Peterson; and David Little "West Central Tribune"

Item No. 1      Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Fagerlie at 4:45 p.m.

Item No. 2      Public Comments (Information)

Paula and Brett Peterson, who farm south of Murdock on Highway 40, were present to ask that consideration be given to the installation of traffic signals at the Highway 40/County Road 5 intersection; also, to the future intersection of County Road 5 and Willmar Avenue. They indicated that it is difficult to make left turning movements from Highway 40 onto County Road 5 and they anticipate the same problems at the future Willmar Avenue intersection. The Committee received their comments for information. Staff will follow up with MnDOT to see if warrants exist for signals at either of those locations and to discuss a possible traffic study.

Item No. 3      UMEC Building Declaration as "Unsafe" (Motion)

Staff presented information regarding the condition of the UMEC building in downtown Willmar. This building is the former Erickson Furniture building on Litchfield Avenue. The building has deteriorated over the years to a point where there are a number of conditions that warrant an unsafe building declaration. Photographs of problem areas were viewed by the Committee. The photos were exterior photos only, as access into the building was not possible due to the relocation of the business. Various remedies to the problem were discussed. The biggest question was if the City demolishes the structure, how the City would be reimbursed? The available options at this time are to file a lien or to place it on the real estate taxes as a special assessment. The situation may be somewhat different if there is a mortgage on the property. Staff will try to determine if there is a mortgage on the property and contact the mortgage holder. The Committee did not want to delay action due to the unsafe conditions at the rear of the building.

A motion was made by Council member Johnson, seconded by Council member DeBlieck and passed for the following, that the Council issue an unsafe building declaration and take the necessary steps to have the conditions corrected or the building demolished.

Item No. 4      Consideration of Fee Adjustments (Motion)

Staff presented proposals to increase fees for planning and zoning activities, as well as for the rental housing program. Planning and zoning fees have not been increased in five years, and the rental housing program fees have not been adjusted since the inception of the program. The primary adjustments proposed to the planning and zoning fees were a \$50 across the board increase in application fees for matters that go

before the Planning Commission. These would include conditional use permits, plats, rezoning, and variances that go before the Board of Zoning Appeals. Also proposed were a \$50 charge to write a zoning letter for mortgage companies/appraisers and a \$100 charge for formal plan review before the Planning Commission as well as small changes to sign permit fees. Staff proposed that applicants for action by the Commission also provide \$700 in escrow to be used for special studies or review in the course of consideration of land-use matters. The Committee did not support this idea.

In the rental program, the primary change being recommended by staff was to increase the registration fee. It is currently \$25.00 per building and \$5.00 per unit. Staff was recommending an increase to \$50 per building and \$10.00 per unit. This would result in a \$25.00 increase in registration fees for a single-family home, which would cover a two-year period. The registration period for other types of structures ranges from two-four years, so the increased fees would be able to be spread over a number of years and across a number of units. The Committee recognized that a fee structure that would support 100% of the cost of the rental inspection program was not feasible, but did believe there were some increases warranted. Other changes proposed for the program were slight increases in fines and penalties.

A motion was made by Council member DeBlieck, seconded by Council member Johnson and passed to adjust the planning and zoning fees as proposed, without the escrow fee requirement, and that an ordinance be introduced for a hearing on March 3, 2014.

A motion was made by Council member Johnson, seconded by Council member DeBlieck and passed that the rental housing program fees be adjusted as proposed, with an ordinance introduced for a hearing on March 3, 2014.

Item No. 5      JOTS Project Anticipated Timeline (Information)

Staff presented a proposed timeline for the Jennie-O Turkey Store project. The timeline shows approximately six months to get through the procedures necessary to vacate the right of way, convey property, structure any public financing package, review plans, and issue permits for construction. The Committee briefly discussed how the process might be kept more open and with information available to the public. Staff informed the Committee that every step of the process that required City action would be conducted either at the Committee level or at the full Council, and would include public hearings for the street vacation, any conveyance of real estate, and for any public financing or incentives provided in the course of the project.

Item No. 6      Old Business

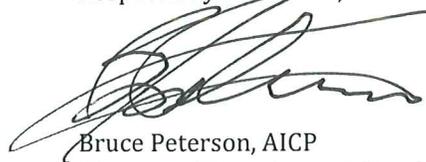
There was no old business.

Item No. 7      New Business

There was no new business.

There being no further business to come before the Committee the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m. by Chair Fagerlie.

Respectfully submitted,



Bruce Peterson, AICP  
Director of Planning and Development Services