

**WILLMAR PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF WILLMAR, MN
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2014**

MINUTES

1. The Willmar Planning Commission met on Wednesday, January 8, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. at the Willmar City Offices Conference Room #2.

**** Members Present:** Mark Klema, Gary Geiger, Andrew Engan, Bob Poe, Scott Thaden, Nick Davis, and Sandy Bebler.

**** Members Absent:** Margaret Fleck, and Randy Czarnetzki.

**** Others Present:** Steve Salzer, Wes Hompe, Bruce D. Peterson- Director of Planning and Development Services, Megan DeSchepper- Planner.

2. REORGANIZATION: Mr. Geiger made a motion, seconded by Mr. Engan, to nominate Mr. Klema for Chair.

Mr. Klema made a motion, seconded by Mr. Poe, to nominate Mr. Engan for Vice Chair.

Mr. Engan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thaden, to nominate Mr. Geiger for Secretary.

The motions carried.

3. WELCOME NEW COMMISSION MEMBER: Sandy Bebler was welcomed by the Planning Commission as a new member and thanked for volunteering her time to the community.

4. MINUTES: The minutes of the December 11, 2013 meeting were approved as submitted.

5. BREWER TAPROOMS TEXT AMENDMENT- FILE NO. 14-01: The public hearing opened at 7:07 p.m. Staff presented the proposed text amendment to Zoning Ordinance 1060 to include brewer tap rooms as permitted uses in the Central Business District and General Business District with a conditional use permit. Staff explained that the City Council amended the liquor license requirements to permit brewer taprooms a few months back.

No one appeared to speak for or against the request and the public hearing closed at 7:08 p.m.

The Commission talked about the history of brewer taprooms in State Statute and keeping the City up to the new regulations. And that once the City Council had amended

the liquor license the Planning Commission recommended starting the text amendment process to regulate where brewer taprooms would be permissible uses.

Mr. Thaden made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to approve the text amendment ordinance and forward it onto the City Council for public hearing and adoption.

The motion carried.

6. WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY: Wes Hompe, General Manager of Willmar Municipal Utilities, presented a proposal for Willmar Municipal Utilities to acquire property at 810 Litchfield Ave. SW (Gerry's Liquor). Mr. Hompe explained that in 2010 a long range study was performed that laid out a plan for operation and energy efficiency solutions that included facility improvements and development. It has been the Utilities plan to acquire the identified properties in the expansion area as they become available. The goal is to ultimately own all the parcels for their staged growth plan.

Staff reminded the Planning Commission that as per the City Charter the Planning Commission reviews and approves all land acquisitions.

The Commission inquired about the use of the property for the time being. Mr. Hompe explained that the rental apartments in the upper level will continue to be rented out and that the main level will be used for some commercial space but not a liquor store. The Commission supported the Utilities efforts for a long range plan and vision.

Mr. Geiger made a motion, seconded by Mr. Engan, to approve the acquisition of land by Willmar Municipal Utilities as requested.

The motion carried.

7. MINNWEST TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS PARKING EXPANSION PLAN REVIEW- FILE NO. 13-10: Steve Salzer, of MinnWest Technology Campus, explained that he had submitted the parking lot layout for Planning Commission review as a conceptual plan; the design has to go to Historical Preservation for review and approval. Once they approve the concept, then MinnWest will design the stormwater plan, and other construction requirements. Mr. Salzer also brought a parking layout with diagonal stalls as another possible alternative. It was the consensus of the Commission was that the conceptual layout was acceptable and Mr. Salzer can bring the plan back for formal review after Historic has approved the concept. The Planning Commission chose to leave the matter on the table and take no action.
8. GESCH ACRES SECOND ADDITION FINAL PLAT- FILE NO. 13-02: Staff presented the final plat of a two lot subdivision on behalf of Gesch Properties, LLC of property legally described as follows: part of the south half of the northwest quarter of Section 23, Township 119, Range 35 (19th Ave. SE). The conditions of preliminary plat

approval such as utility and drainage easements and the plat name change had all been added to the plat.

The Planning Commission reviewed and discussed staff comments (see Attachment A).

Staff added that the other conditions for the preliminary plat were development related, and when a developer comes forward with plans those conditions shall be met.

Mr. Thaden made a motion, seconded by Mr. Geiger, to approve the final plat and forward it onto the City Council for approval.

The motion carried.

9. HIGHWAY 40 VACATION: Staff presented a proposal for the vacation of Highway 40 SW from Willmar Ave. SW to County Road 5 to allow for the expansion of Jennie-O Turkey Store to the north. This has the potential to create more jobs in the community and possible sale of industrial park land for the expansion as well. TIF monies may also be available for the project. The City Charter requires Planning Commission approval prior to City Council holding a public hearing on the vacation.

Mr. Poe made a motion, seconded by Mr. Engan, to approve the Highway 40 vacation as proposed and forward it onto the Council for a public hearing.

The motion carried.

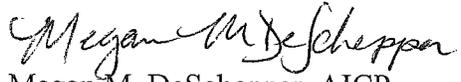
10. MISCELLANY: The Commission discussed storage containers or PODS that may be an issue in the future in residential areas. Some parcel delivery companies use them as holding sortation centers and drop them in residential areas during high volume times like the Holidays. The containers are often used as temporary storage during a house move etc. The Commission talked about people turning these storage containers into storage sheds that may turn into eyesores. Staff was of the opinion that they would have to be of similar materials and colors as the home on the property, but someone could put residential siding on them etc.

The Commission asked staff to bring draft language to the next meeting that would prohibit shipping containers/PODS as permanent storage units in residential areas.

The Commission also further discussed off-premise advertising and what constitutes advertising.

11. There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission the meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Megan M. DeSchepper, AICP
Planner/Airport Manager

PLANNING COMMISSION- JANUARY 8, 2014

STAFF COMMENTS

1. GESCH ACRES SECOND ADDITION FINAL PLAT- FILE NO. 13-02:

- The applicant is Gesch Properties, LLC, Willmar, MN.
- The applicant is requesting to subdivide a parcel into two parcels on property legally described as follows: part of the south half of the northwest quarter of Section 23, Township 119, Range 35 (19th Ave. SE).
- The parcels front 19th Ave. SE and 5th St. SE respectively.
- The parcels are zoned SCD (Shopping Center District).
- Minimum sq. ft. and lot width are well exceeded.
- The plat name was changed as per the City Assessor's recommendation.
- Willmar Municipal Utilities easements were added as requested.
- The drainage and utility easements were added as per the Interim City Engineer's request.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the final plat with the following conditions:

- A. Stormwater adjacent to both lots. Ponding will likely be required. Grading, erosion control, and drainage plans will be required during the site plan review.
- B. A site plan illustrating proposed access locations for Lot 1, Block 1 and Lot 1, Block 2 shall be submitted for review prior to a building permit being issued for either of the sites.

