

**WILLMAR PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF WILLMAR, MN
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2013**

MINUTES

1. The Willmar Planning Commission met on Wednesday, October 23, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. at the Willmar City Offices Conference Room #2.

**** Members Present:** Charles Oakes, Gary Geiger, Bob Poe, Andrew Engan, and Margaret Fleck.

**** Members Absent:** Nick Davis, Scott Thaden, Mark Klema, and Randy Cazarnetzki.

**** Others Present:** Steven Salzer, Joan Arbisi Little, Tammie Knick, Jim Sieben, Bruce D. Peterson-Director Planning and Development Services, and Megan DeSchepper-Planner.

2. MINUTES: The minutes of the September 25, 2013 meeting were approved as submitted.

3. TECHNICAL ACADEMIES OF MN-CHARTER SCHOOL MINNWEST TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS PLAN REVIEW- FILE NO. 13-10: Steve Salzer of MinnWest Technology Campus presented a request for plan review for a Charter School Technical Academies of Minnesota on property legally described as Unit 8 of the MinnWest Technology Campus, CIC #40 First Supplemental (1705 16th St. NE).

Joan Arbisi Little an educator from St. Paul explained that the Charter School is a Minnesota Department of Education and DEED project where they do project based learning, skills, and mentorship programs. The school will be a 7th through 12th grade charter school with 150 children max, and 10 to 15 teachers.

The Planning Commission reviewed the Technology Zoning Districts which permits education uses. The Commission talked about parking for the use. Staff added that with the MinnWest Technology Campus they do not usually get a site plan as the campus is already built. However with the type of the use the Commission can certainly request to see the parking plan.

Mr. Salzer added that they are submitting a 100 car parking lot to the Historical Society for review and approval.

Jim Sieben of the MinnWest Technology Campus said this is a good fit for the campus as a way to connect with future work forces to get the skills they need for their workers. Not to mention that their employees children could attend the school.

The Commission also discussed that the school districts that lose children to this new school will lose funding. Ms. Arbisi Little explained that the Charter School is a separate school district and does not require the Willmar School Districts approval. They will get funding from the state per child, but often times do work with the area school district to share resources etc.

Mr. Geiger made a motion, seconded by Ms. Fleck, to approve the plan review for the Technical Academies of MN Charter School at the MinnWest Technology Campus with the following conditions:

- A. The parking lot plan shall be submitted for review and approval by the Planning Commission at an upcoming meeting.
- B. The use shall meet all applicable local, state, and federal rules and regulations at all times.

The Planning Commission made the following affirmative findings of fact as per Section 9.E.3.a.1-7:

1. That the plan review, with such conditions as the Commission shall determine and attach, conforms to the purpose and intent of this Ordinance, and is in conformity with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan of the City as education uses are listed in the Technology District.
2. That there was no factual demonstration of a substantial/appreciable negative impact on values to properties in the neighborhood from the proposed conditional use as no appraisals were submitted to prove so.
3. The plan review will not result in the destruction, loss, or damage of a natural, scenic, or historic feature of major importance to the community as they will maintain the historic designation and meet all historical society regulations for the campus.
4. That the plan review will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district as zoned as the campus is fully developed.
5. That adequate utilities, access roads, stormwater management, and other necessary facilities have been, or are being, provided as a parking plan has been drafted and will be reviewed by the Planning Commission at an upcoming meeting.
6. That adequate measures have been, or will be, taken to provide ingress and egress in such a manner as to minimize traffic congestion and maximize public safety in the public streets as the street infrastructure is already existing.
7. The conditional use will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained in a manner that is compatible in appearance with the existing or intended character of the surrounding area/neighborhood as it's a vacant building that will be functional again.

The motion carried.

4. MISCELLANY- RULE TIRE BUILDING: Staff explained that the Rule Family has offered to gift their property/building to the City or a nonprofit at 620 Pacific Ave. SW for tax purposes. The Family has stated that if a deal cannot be struck within 30 days they will walk away from the property. A not for profit is interested in the property and hopes to demo the building and use the lot for parking. This is a preferred

solution as it will keep the property as a taxable lot and as the City had no definite plans for the property. However if this proposal falls through the City could step in to keep it from going tax forfeiture and then the whole condemnation and demolition will be more costly.

Mr. Engan made a motion, seconded by Ms. Fleck, to approve the City to accept the gift of property/building if the other not for profit entity doesn't accept it.

The motion carried.

5. FIVE YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT REVIEW: Staff presented a summary of the 2014 Capital Improvement Plans for the City of Willmar. The Commission reviewed the summary report and kept their review focused on land use items. There was a discussion about the need to do more for stormwater planning and improvements as it's an ongoing issue that never seems to be resolved.

Mr. Geiger made a motion, seconded by Mr. Poe to forward the Capital Improvements priority list to the city council to include the recommendations into their budgeting process with focus on more and continued funding for stormwater projects.

The motion carried.

6. STINGERS OFFICE AGREEMENT: Staff updated the Commission that the Stingers temporary office trailer was approved by the Commission two years ago with the stipulation that it would be reviewed again prior to January 2014. The goal is to ultimately build a permanent office facility at Taunton Field, but the Stingers/City of Willmar does not have the necessary funds yet.

The Commission talked about the Stingers trailer not being an eyesore or issue as they keep it up and it functions for their needs.

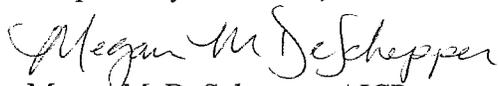
Mr. Czarnetzki made a motion, seconded by Mr. Poe, to continue to allow the Stingers to operate out of the office trailer until January 2016.

The motion carried.

7. ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE CONTINUED: Staff distributed a draft of Section 2. Definitions. The Commission will review the packet of other communities zoning ordinance definitions sections to further review and discuss at the next meeting. Staff will supply a list to the Planning Commission of specific definitions in the current ordinance that need reviewing/updating.

8. There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Megan M. DeSchepper, AICP
Planner/Airport Manager