

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WEST BRANCH PLANNING COMMISSION HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL, 121 N. 4TH ST ON TUESDAY NOVEMBER 14, 2017

Chairman Mike Jackson called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Present: Bob David, Kara Fachting, Mike Jackson, Lisa Saurer, Dan Weiler.

Absent: Heather Grace, Jayson Stroebel, June Longstreet.

Other Officers in attendance: Mayor Denise Lawrence, Kelli Collins

Guests: Jan Hasty, Troy Brown, David Evergreen, Michelle Koin

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

David Evergreen spoke on the addition of a pole barn At West Branch Greenhouse to be used for storage. Member Jackson asked if there were any utilities in that vicinity. Member David expressed concern for water lines. Kelli Collins added that Miss Dig had already approved.

MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY FACHTING TO ALLOW EVERGREEN TO BUILD POLE BARN FOR USE AS STORAGE.

Yes – David, Fachting, Jackson, Saurer, Weiler. No _ none

Absent – Grace, Longstreet, Stroebel Motion Carried

Sign Permits

Troy Brown spoke on behalf of Dean Brown in regards to the proposed banner to be placed at the Ritter’s Pizza location, now Deano's Pizza. The banner will stay until spring, at the Grand Opening.

MOTION BY FACHTING, SECOND BY WEILER, TO APPROVE THE 3X12 TEMPORARY BANNER FOR 180 DAYS.

Yes - David, Fachting, Jackson, Saurer, Weiler. No - None

Absent – Grace, Longstreet, Stroebel Motion Carried

Michelle Koin spoke on behalf of Early Head Start, to attach their sign to a pre-existing Health Department sign. Kelli Collins noted that the proposed sign exceeds the square footage allowed. Member Jackson noted that the rules will change in early spring at which time the sign will be in compliance.

MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY FACHTING, TO APPROVE SIGN WITH DIMENSIONS INDICATED, WITH THE ADDED NOTE NOT TO EXCEED DIMENSIONS INDICATED.

Yes - David, Fachting, Jackson, Saurer, Weiler. No - None

Absent – Grace, Longstreet, Stroebel Motion Carried

MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY DAVID, TO EXCUSE LISA SAURER FROM VOTING ON THE FOLLOWING

ISSUE.

Yes - David, Fachting, Jackson, Saurer, Weiler. No - None

Absent – Grace, Longstreet, Stroebel Motion Carried

Kelli Collins spoke in regards to a proposed business to be opened by Lisa Saurer in a residential area. Collins noted there were no objections from the surrounding residents/businesses. A Special Use Permit was previously obtained by Saurer.

MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY FACHTING TO APPROVE THE OPERATION OF THE BUSINESS IN A RESIDENTIAL AREA.

Yes - David, Fachting, Jackson, Weiler. No - None

Absent – Grace, Longstreet, Stroebel Motion Carried

MOTION BY DAVID, SECOND BY JACKSON TO EXCUSE JAYSON STROEBEL ABSENCE DUE TO A FUNERAL.

Yes - David, Fachting, Jackson, Saurer, Weiler. No - None

Absent – Grace, Longstreet, Stroebel Motion Carried

MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY FACHTING TO EXCUSE HEATHER GRACE UNTIL AFTER THE REWRITE APPROVAL OF THE PLANNING ORDINANCE.

Yes - David, Fachting, Jackson, Saurer, Weiler. No - None

Absent – Grace, Longstreet, Stroebel Motion Carried

MOTION BY FACHTING, SECOND BY JACKSON TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 10, 2017.

Yes - David, Fachting, Jackson, Saurer, Weiler. No - None

Absent – Grace, Longstreet, Stroebel Motion Carried

Member Jackson noted that he had reviewed the new planning ordinance, and recommended that the city Council approve it as soon as possible, to be in compliance. Jackson also noted that several grants have been affected or unobtainable due to the current ordinance being out of date.

Member David noted it would be a nice gesture to send a Thank You letter to John Dantzer for his service in taking minutes for the Planning Commission meetings, as well as preparing the packets. Lisa Saurer will compose a letter to Mr. Dantzer.

Discussion regarding the changes for Planning Commission per the approval of the new Planning ordinance if approved by Council.

Discussion regarding the necessity of adding a Planning Director to Planning Commission. Kelli Collins and Michelle Frechette have both expressed interest in the position. Member David noted he would like to see formal letters from both. Kelli Collins agreed to accept the position.

MOTION BY FACHTING, SECOND BY WEILER TO APPROVE THE ELECTION OF A PLANNING COMMISSION

DIRECTOR, AND RECOMMENDS ELECTING KELLI COLLINS.

Yes - David, Fachting, Jackson, Saurer, Weiler.

No - None

Absent – Grace, Longstreet, Stroebel

Motion Carried

Member reports:

Member David would like to look into adding another date for leaf pickup, noting his concern with drains being stopped by accumulating leaves.

Member Saurer would like to look into additional monitoring of sidewalks being kept clear, as many homes have foliage overhanging sidewalks making sidewalk use impossible. Jackson recommended a letter / notice to residents be posted on Facebook.

Jackson thanked everyone in advance of the work in the coming year regarding the Master Plan, and noted that Denise from NEMCOG and Kelli Collins will be very instrumental in moving forward with the many changes ahead of us. He also recommended that the Planning Commission utilize the 2 meetings per month, the first meeting being used to conduct regular business, the second meeting to be dedicated to work on the Master Plan. He also noted that the DPW is doing an excellent job. All agreed.

Mayor Denise Lawrence addressed the Members regarding the combining of the Planning Commission and the DDA.

Member David said much of the reason that Planning members have not attended DDA meetings is directly due to the times of the DDA meetings. Most Planning members work and are not able to attend meetings at 12:00 on weekdays.

Mayor Lawrence noted that the vote by City Council to not remove any members of Planning or DDA due to unexcused absences was in violation of the current ordinance.

Member David and Member Fachting noted that their terms are up on Dec 31, 2017, and asked Mayor Lawrence if they were to stay on after that or be reappointed or apply to be reappointed. Lawrence reiterated the vote by Council.

Jackson noted that it would be in the best interest of the City for City Council to approve the new ordinance and move forward with the applications for Planning Commission to avoid the lack of a quorum.

MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY DAVID TO RECOMMEND TO CITY COUNCIL TO PASS THE NEW PLANNING ORDINANCE ASAP.

Yes - David, Fachting, Jackson, Saurer, Weiler.

No - None

Absent – Grace, Longstreet, Stroebel

Motion Carried

MOTION BY DAVID, SECOND BY FACHTING TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:49 P.M.

Yes - David, Fachting, Jackson, Saurer, Weiler.

No - None

Absent – Grace, Longstreet, Stroebel

Motion Carried