

CITY OF CHARLEVOIX
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Monday, June 9, 2014 - 7:00 p.m.
210 State Street, City Hall, Council Chambers, Charlevoix, MI

A. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chair Sherm Chamberlain.

B. Roll Call

Vice Chair: Sherm Chamberlain

Members Present: RJ Waddell, Toni Felter, Keith Sherwood, Dave Novotny, Judy Clock, John Elzinga

Members Absent: John Hess

Planning Director: Michael Spencer

C. Inquiry Into Potential Conflicts of Interest

None.

D. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Member Novotny, second by Member Clock, to approve the June 9, 2014 agenda as prepared.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

E. Approval of May 12, 2014 Minutes

Motion by Member Felter, second by Member Waddell, to approve the May 12, 2014 minutes as presented.

Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

F. Call for Public Comment not Related to Agenda Item

No public comment.

G. New Business

1. Discussion on Upcoming Zoning Amendments and Public Hearing Dates.

Planner Spencer stated that the new Zoning Ordinance had been in place for almost a year and there are some additional refinements needed to the Ordinance. He suggested the following items be considered:

a. Outdoor Displays

Last summer, City Council added a provision to the Zoning Ordinance that prevents outdoor merchandise on the sidewalks, on the entryways into buildings, and on the outside of buildings themselves. The City had received a number of complaints about business owners hanging t-shirts on the outside of their buildings downtown. Some business owners wanted to restrict outdoor merchandise while others wanted to keep the displays. Businesses have been told that there would be a public process this summer to see if a compromise could be reached. Planner Spencer stated that Harbor Springs and Mackinac Island do not allow outdoor displays; Petoskey does allow it and Boyne City allows it with some limitations.

Discussion followed regarding any potential liability from allowing the merchandise on City property. Planner Spencer suggested that the Commission could set the public hearing for July and he could come up with options such as: 1) leave the regulations as is; 2) not regulate the displays; or 3) allow each business one rack or a certain number of feet of building façade for a merchandise display.

Vice Chair Chamberlain questioned if September would be a better time for a public hearing, as the busy summer season will be done before any of the regulations get changed. Planner Spencer offered to draft some regulations for discussion at the next meeting, and then hold a public hearing in August.

Member Sherwood stated the City should distinguish between store fronts that actually own space in front of their store versus a business that puts a rack on a public sidewalk. He believes it is important to have a balance between public safety and what is good for the business. Member Sherwood then questioned the advantage of having the Planning Commission go through a public hearing and then having Council go through the same process. Planner Spencer responded that this process is required by law.

Member Felter said if the businesses were making complaints then the Commission should look at the issue. Member Clock stated that she was more inclined to go into a building if a garment was hanging outside on the

building vs. a clothing rack and displaying no merchandise outdoors creates a less cluttered look. Member Elzinga would like to see a little leeway.

Motion by Member Novotny, second by Member Felter to set a public hearing for Monday, July 14th at 7:00 p.m. regarding potential amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

b. Small Portable Storage Bins, Closets or Sheds

Planner Spencer stated that there had been some question as to whether or not portable storage bins, closets and sheds were considered permanent; some look like an upright closet and some look like plastic storage sheds. Most cities do not regulate these types of structures and Planner Spencer would like to draft language to clarify what is allowed by ordinance and what is not.

c. Granny Flats

Granny flats and second dwelling units are prohibited in R1 districts in Charlevoix. Boyne City and Petoskey allow them as a special use by permit and are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Planner Spencer reported that some people feel they should be allowed and that there is currently a big demand for rental properties. Other people feel that the single-family neighborhood should remain the same. Presently this is allowed in R2-A zoning. Member Novotny thought special use permits were the appropriate method to use.

d. Modification of Setback Requirements in the R-4 Zone

Planner Spencer reported that the City would like to require green space in front and the hard space and cars in the rear of the Pine River Lane Development. If the setback was reduced to allow the building closer to the street, then the City could require rear parking. Planner Spencer asked the Planning Commission to consider this revision.

e. Sandwich Boards

Planner Spencer stated that five to six years ago, sandwich boards were not allowed; however, business owners had requested the ability to use them, so they have been allowed with certain restrictions. Now plastic boards with removable letters are showing up throughout the City, and his department is getting complaints. Discussion followed regarding allowing different size signs in certain parts of the City. Planner Spencer will draft some suggested language for the Commission to consider.

f. Architectural Standards

Planner Spencer asked if the City should consider architectural standards for private developments. He stated that if the City wanted to consider such standards, the process would involve working with an architect, having more public involvement, and that the adoption of such standards would take time.

H. Old Business

None.

I. Staff Updates

1. Update on Marina Expansion

Planner Spencer stated that Council has decided to form a steering committee to develop other options for the marina expansion, putting the Marina project on hold. The City will be hiring a marina engineer to review the options for the proposed expansion project.

2. Update on Bridge Street Blooms

Planner Spencer reported that Bridge Street Blooms will be pursuing a site plan review in either July or August.

J. Request for Next Month's Agenda or Research Items

None.

K. Adjournment

Motion by Member Waddell, second by Member Clock to adjourn the meeting.
Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Joyce Golding/fgm

City Clerk

Sherm Chamberlain

Vice Chair