

**WILLMAR PLANNING COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12th, 2023
333 6TH STREET SW, CONFERENCE ROOM 1
MINUTES**

1. The Willmar Planning Commission met on Wednesday, April 12th, 2023 at 6:30pm at the City Hall

Member Present: Vice-chair Kelsey Vosika, Yvon Fils-Aime, Stacy Holwerda, Christopher Buzzeo and John Christianson.

Members Absent: Jonathan Marchand, Stephanie Carlson, Jasmine Miller and Steve Dresler.

Others Present: Director Justice Walker, Dan Jacobs and Doug Fenstra.

2. Vice-Chair Vosika called for order at 6:33pm. She started with the review of minutes from March 15th. Commissioner Buzzeo motioned to approve, and Commissioner Fils-Aime seconded. All members present voted aye to approve. The motion was approved.

3. Farm-Rite:

Director Walker overviewed the project according to the agenda and read the Staff comments. Director Walker opened for questions or any comments. Commissioner asked who is the owner of the pond land. Walker responded it is owned by Farm-rite and the pond will help drain water from the region. Staff recommend approving the plan review considering the zoning, the correct setbacks, open space, building coverage and the parking spaces was explained that staff intends to change the parking minimum. If the change is not approved, Farm-rite will need a variance to under build parking.

Commissioner Buzzeo motioned to approve, and Commissioner Christianson seconded. All members present voted aye to approve. The motion was approved.

4. City initiated Zoning Map and Text Amendments:

Director Walker explained that this is a preliminary discussion. Walker explained the location of the area and indicated that the GB district permits multi-family housing. It means that changing the zoning from R4 to GB will not change anything substantially. The apartment complex that already exists will still conform with the zoning. Director Walker explained that the owners on 1st street were buying lots on the rear for expanding parking lots and it doesn't make sense to retain this island of R4, considering the multi-family use will still be permitted. Director Walker informed the Commissioner the next Planning Commission meeting we will have the public hearing about this rezoning.

In the second part Director Walker explained the proposed changes on in GB for south of Willmar Ave from General Business (GB) to General Business 2. The change will permit a more intense commercial area designated for big box stores, different than observed north Willmar Avenue. A map and a text amendment proposal was introduced.

Director Walker explained the proposal for text amendment on eliminating park minimums from the ordinance. The number of parking lots could be analyzed case by case, depending on the number of customers, workers or any other issue. Walker explained the case of Farm-rite, that the ordinance requires 40 spots, but it is not necessary for them. If the ordinance doesn't change they would request for a variance. Director Walker opened for comments but nobody commented.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Fenstra introduced their proposal for a Night Club that only will be open on Friday and Saturday nights from 8pm to 1am. The building is already built and has some entrances and parking. Walker explained this is preliminary and discussed about some issues from the past, like residents' noise complaints. Walker comments about the utilities that already exist. Commissioners Fils-Aime and Holwerda confirmed with Director Walker the location of the proposed night club.

Director Walker introduces new commissioner John Christianson. Director Walker explained the change of the meeting from April 5th to April 12th and confirmed next week meeting on a regular date. The agenda will be sent Thursday or Friday and we will have a public hearing for the zoning amendment next week. Mr. Fenstra continued the Night Club discussion and said they will buy the property.

Walker commented about the bee and chicken ordinance proposal. It is currently stalled.

5. ADJOURN

Commissioner Buzzeo motioned to adjourn at 7:20. Seconded by Commissioner Holwerda. The motion carried. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes presented by City Planner Guilherme Motta