

**WILLMAR PLANNING COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023  
333 6<sup>TH</sup> STREET SW, CONFERENCE ROOM 1  
MINUTES**

1. The Willmar Planning Commission met on Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023, at 6:30pm at the City Hall

**Members Present:** Yvon Fils-Aime, Christopher Buzzeo. John Christianson and Steve Dresler.

**Members Absent:.** Chair Jonathan Marchand, Stacy Holwerda and Vice Chair Kelsey Vosika.

**Others Present:** Director Justice Walker, City Planner Guilherme Motta, Aaron Backman, Mike Bowman, Hojn Hafner, Jennifer Kotila, Matt Runke, Troy Lederson.

2. Commissioner Dresler called for order at 6:33pm. Commissioners reviewed minutes from June 7<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Buzzeo asked for changes in the last line of item 4. Commissioner Buzzeo motioned to approve with the correction, and Commissioner Fils-Aime seconded. All members present voted aye to approve. The motion was approved.

**3. BETHESDA MAP AMENDMENT AG TO LB – PUBLIC HEARING (FILE 23-06).**

Director Walker gave an overview of the project and read the staff recommendation according to the agenda.

The public hearing was opened at 6:36pm.

Commissioner Dresler asked if anyone would comment on the map amendment, and nobody commented.

Public Hearing closed at 6:36pm.

Commissioner Dresler asked for commissioner comments. Director Walker explained the location, that it is contiguous to north Limited Business zoning district and justified why this is the best zoning to be amended considering that in R1, R2 and R3 there are limited density limits, and it would be necessary a PUD prior to final approval. He also explained that the PUD would give flexibility on the project. Mr. Lederson explained this is a similar development to other Bethesda projects. Commissioner Buzzeo confirmed it would be 210 units. Commissioner Dresler asked for more questions.

**Staff recommended in favor of the approval for the Map Amendment.**

**Commissioner Christianson motioned to approve the Map Amendment, and Commissioner Fils-Aime seconded. Commissioner Fils-Aime voted aye, Commissioner Buzzeo voted aye, Commissioner Dresler voted aye and Commissioner Christianson voted aye. The motion was approved.**

#### 4. RAIL PARK, MAJOR SUBDIVISION – FINAL (FILE 23-03)

Director Walker gave an overview of the project according to the agenda and comments provided. He showed data necessary for preliminary and final plat approval and checked with commissioners if it was provided.

The public hearing was opened at 6:47pm.

Commissioner Dresler asked if anyone would comment on the project.

Mr. Backman introduced the final plat showing the utilities and easements available.

The public was closed at 6:49pm.

Commissioner Buzzeo read the overview project to clarify why it would be necessary to approve the plat now when new subdivisions were imminent in the future. Director Walker explained that the current subdivision is conceptual and to unify the several lots into only one lot. This would give prospective tenants a blank slate for development. Other subdivisions would be necessary according to the new developments interested in locating in the Rail Park. At that point utilities would be necessary and required. Commissioner Buzzeo asked why the cost to extend utilities were not on the developer for this subdivision. Mr. Backman said that water service is part of the agreement made by the city and the developer and it would be consolidated. Commissioner Buzzeo asked about the signatures on the final plat, that would be provided after council approval and final mylar signature would be requested. Commissioner Dresler asked for more questions. With no further questions, Commissioner Dresler asked for a motion.

**Commissioner Fils-Aime motioned to approve Rail Park Major Subdivision; Commissioner Buzzeo seconded. Commissioner Christianson voted aye, Commissioner Fils-Aime voted aye, Commissioner Buzzeo voted aye, and Commissioner Dresler voted aye. The motion was approved.**

#### 5. PEP'S BAR AND RESTAURANT, PLAN REVIEW – PRELIMINARY (FILE 23-06)

Director Walker gave an overview of the project according to the agenda. He explained that there is no alteration in the exteriors and only interior remodeling. Mr. Hafner said they agree with staff comments. Mr Bowman explained it is a social dining club and cocktail establishment for members only, for 62 people inside and the goal is to continue with construction of the kitchen and bathrooms and installing a sprinkler system. Commissioner Buzzeo asked for location and confirmed if it is only interior remodeling and Mr. Walker showed location on GIS. Commissioner Dresler asked about the current use, it is a studio and garage. Director Walker explained why it is a Plan Review process and shall be approved for the Planning Commission. Commissioner Dresler asked about parking issues and the architect Mr. Hafner responded they have at least 30 stalls already paved and that the occupancy is based on square footage. Commissioner Dresler asked for more questions and finished the discussion.

## 6. MISCELLANNEY

1. Director Walker explained this is a city-initiated Map and Text Zoning Amendment that changes uses for the General Business District. This change is part of the split of the General Business District in 3 different zonings. The General Business District would keep in general retails, neighborhood businesses in a more walkable and neighbor environment, according to uses specified on the new uses table and new lot size and setbacks. GB-2 (General Business District 2) was already approved by this Planning Commission on 05-17 meeting. The changes have occurred in the General Business (GB) zoning located throughout the 1st Street S, south Willmar Ave. The third zoning district created from the GB split is the GB-3 (General Business District 3). This zoning is a more industrial related business, located on areas that already have the tendency for industrial uses, but not as heavy as the one located in I-1 and I-3. This zoning is located on certain portions of Hwy 12, close to industrial area and on north, throughout the Hwy 71.

2. Director Walker broached the topic of short-term rentals. He stated that he has seen an uptick in inquiries over the last few months. He said they discussed this at the council meeting and it was decided to work on an ordinance that would be discussed and later brought to the Planning Commission.

## 7. ADJOURN

Commissioner Buzzeo motioned to adjourn at 7:21pm. Seconded by Commissioner Fils-Aime. All members present aye. The motion carried. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes presented by City Planner Guilherme Motta