

**WILLMAR PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF WILLMAR, MN
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7, 2018**

MINUTES

1. The Willmar Planning Commission met on Wednesday, March 7, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. at the Willmar City Offices Conference Room #1.

**** Members Present:** Steve Gardner, Rolf Standfuss, Terry Sieck, Cletus Frank, Dr. Jerry Kjergaard, and Jonathan Marchand.

**** Members Absent:** Jeff Kimpling, Margaret Fleck, and Terry VanVeldhuizen.

**** Others Present:** Bruce Peterson - Director of Planning and Development Services, Sarah Anderson - Planner.

2. MINUTES: Minutes of the February 21, 2017 meeting were approved as amended. Item 4 now reads "... Mr. Marchand made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sieck..."

3. SIGN PERMIT REQUIREMENTS DISCUSSION: Staff recently received an inquiry about requiring a sign permit for the changing of graphics on an existing sign.

A letter from Gary Laughlin (Quick Signs of Willmar) was presented, as he was unable to attend the meeting. He expressed that changing graphics should not require permits, as surrounding cities and counties do not have this requirement. It would also add unnecessary time and cost requirements, Mr. Laughlin stated.

Staff presented several examples of other Zoning Ordinances, the majority of which specifically exempt the changing of graphics from the permitting process.

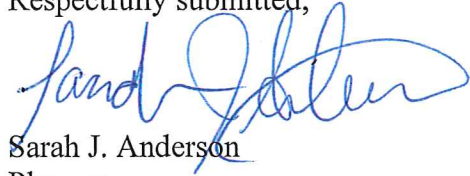
The Planning Commission discussed that the content of signs is not regulated. It was agreed that regulating signs is a public good, but requiring permits for all graphics changes would be an unnecessary burden for both staff and the public. A sign is currently defined in the Ordinance as "Any device, structure, fixture, or placard using graphics...", therefore, no text amendment is needed at this time, but clarification shall be added in future revisions of the Ordinance. The City will not require any permits for a change in graphics on a sign when a sign structure is unaltered.

4. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PRESENTATION: Staff presented an overview of the Comprehensive Plan. The current Planning Commission members were not a part of the drafting process in 2006-2009 and wanted to better understand the content. The Plan is one of three major documents that determines land use in the City, and greatly pertains to and drives the Commission's land use decisions.

5. SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE DISCUSSION: As per Implementation Project A in the Comprehensive Plan, staff is continuing work to rewrite the Subdivision Ordinance. Minor subdivisions were discussed; at minimum, approval will be needed by the Planning Commission, and the Mayor and City Clerk's signatures will still be needed on the final plat. The Commission expressed interest in holding their own public hearing once the final draft is complete, and in an ideal timeline, the Ordinance will be brought to Council at the end of May. Discussion will continue at a later meeting when more staff comments and reviews have been received.

7. There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sarah J. Anderson
Planner