

**WILLMAR PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF WILLMAR, MN
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2018**

MINUTES

1. The Willmar Planning Commission met on Wednesday, September 19, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. at the Willmar City Offices Conference Room #1.

** Members Present: Steve Gardner, Rolf Standfuss, Jeff Kimpling, Terry VanVeldhuizen, Jonathan Marchand, Margaret Fleck, Cletus Frank, and Terry Sieck.

** Members Absent: Dr. Jerry Kjergaard.

** Others Present: Sarah Swedburg – Planner, Bruce Peterson – Director of Planning & Development Services, Marv Calvin – City of Willmar Mayor.

2. MINUTES: Minutes of the August 15th, 2018 meeting were approved as presented.

3. INDUSTRIAL PARK COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR REZONE DISCUSSION: Staff presented a potential rezone affecting several lots along Industrial Drive from Hwy 12 to Trott Ave SW, leading into the Industrial Park. Staff explained that this is a likely solution to the request for a day care center use in the Industrial Park earlier this year. Staff reminded the Commission that the prior request as a single parcel rezone or a text amendment was not possible because it would be a stretch to rezone the parcel as it was mostly surrounded by industrial properties and the use simply is not compatible with the industrial zone. Looking at a larger scale rezone, creating a commercial corridor, would be most feasible.

The Commission discussed surrounding uses of the parcels and the nature of the parcels included in the rezone. Because of the lot sizes and Hwy 12 visibility, the parcels included in the corridor lend themselves more towards commercial uses than industrial uses.

Terry VanVeldhuizen spoke highly of having child care services on the MinnWest campus and the convenience of such an amenity near key places of work.

The Commission recognizes the great need for child care in the City, and directed Staff to move forward with this rezoning, including 4 additional parcels to create a cohesive commercial zone on the east side of Industrial Drive.

4. USED AUTO PARTS SALES DISCUSSION: Staff presented the previously discussed request to allow used auto parts disassembly and sales in the General Business zone. When first asked to consider the use, the Commission requested a more detailed site plan before any decisions were made. After seeing the site plan and a potential text amendment, the Commission felt they could not make the findings of fact to allow such a use, particularly because of the proximity to residential properties. Currently, impound lots, auto parts, automobile, and truck sales are all allowed in the GB zone.

The large difference between this request and the prior agenda item is the previous item would create a transition of zones and decreases intensity of allowable uses, whereas the property in question currently is in a transitional zone and the use would be an increase in intensity.

The Commission again expressed concern about the proximity to a residential zone and being close to a major entrance into the City. The future intention of this area is fluid, and Staff does not foresee redevelopment occurring in this area for some time yet.

After discussion, the Commission unanimously chose to keep their previous decision that the use is most compatible in an industrial zone as currently allowed.

5. MISCELLANY – RESIDENTIAL LOT LAND SALE: The Planning Commission reviewed the Land Sale for a residential lot described as follows: Lot 12, Block 5, Pleasant View Third Addition. The City owns several lots in this area, and two parcels south of this area were gifted to Habitat for Humanity for single family homes. The lot is zoned R-2, and the buyer would like to build a single family home on the property, which adequately fits the neighborhood.

Mr. VanVeldhuizen made a motion, seconded by Ms. Fleck to recommend the residential Land Sale to City Council.

6. REVIEW OF DOWNTOWN ACCESSORY BUILDING PERMIT: Staff presented a Building Permit Application recently submitted by Juan Mejia of La Michoacana. He is requesting to build a small shed on property behind the grocery store for storage of shelving and other staging materials. The use is allowed, because it is an accessory to their business. A pre-fabricated building from Eagle Creek Buildings of Browerville is being proposed for the structure, and would be sided with horizontal beige vinyl.

The Commission reviewed the downtown design standards. Staff presented 3 examples of similar siding in this area. They also discussed desire for the placement to be altered from the proposed middle of the lot to along the eastern edge. This would allow the shed to serve as screening between Highway 12 and onsite dumpsters.

The consensus of the Commission was that this was an allowable building within the Central Business District, and staff could move forward with processing the permit.

7. There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah J. Swedburg
Planner