

Meeting Minutes
New Prague Planning Commission
Wednesday, April 22, 2009

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Planning Commission Vice Chair Pat Remfert with the following members present: Kay Wilcox and Bob Gilman. Absent were Tony DeLuca and Grant Gengel.

City Staff Present: Ken Ondich – Planning Director and Renee Christianson – City Planner.

2. Approval of March 25, 2009 Regular Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Wilcox, seconded by Gilman to approve the March 25, 2009 regular meeting minutes as submitted. Motion carried (3-0, DeLuca and Gengel absent).

3. Old Business - None

4. New Business

1. Re-Use of 400 W. Main Street – Greg Aase, Applicant

Planner Christianson presented the staff report. She stated that 410 W. Main Street is a former motel property currently owned by Reliance Bank of Faribault. She stated that the former owner recently deeded the property to the lender. She stated the former owners were granted a conditional use permit to allow retail, service establishments and office space and all permitted uses listed for the B-1 District on the main floor and three apartments on the second floor. She stated that since the building was renovated in 2004 there has been difficulty in renting the main floor of the building. She stated that the applicant has indicated interest is using the main floor of the building for apartments which were not approved as part of the conditional use permit. She stated that staff supports keeping the main floor of the building for some type of commercial use. She stated that the agenda item is for discussion purposes only at this point.

Greg Aase, CFO of Reliance Bank of Faribault, stated that their bank took over the building on December 31, 2008. He stated that the building is not economically viable because of the main floor business use but that the three apartment units upstairs have had no problem staying occupied. He stated that they are putting on a new roof and that the basement recently flooded. He stated that their bank does not intend on keeping the property long term. He stated that they also own the coffee shop at 408 W. Main Street. He reiterated that units two and three on the main floor are a difficult prospect for retail use.

Commissioner Wilcox stated that she has concerns about residential items being stored outside of main floor units and that she does not support apartments on the main floor.

Commissioner Gilman stated that he would support apartments on the first floor as long as the first unit abutting Main Street was commercially used.

Commissioner Remfert stated that he felt the first floor should be kept commercial and that he remembers having the same discussion when the original conditional use permit was approved.

There was a majority consensus of the Planning Commission that apartments not be allowed on the main floor of the building.

2. MnDOT Presentation / Discussion – TH 19 / CR 89/CR164 Intersection

Mark Scheidel, MnDOT Transportation Planner, introduced the background and study that was conducted for the TH19/CR89/CR164 intersection to determine if an elongated or combined roundabout is viable for the offset intersection.

Jeff Rhoda, SEH, stated that the charge from MnDOT was to conduct a quick analysis to review the concept for the combined roundabout. He stated that the concept uses less right of way, less construction and keeps the construction more localized. HE stated that it would provide an acceptable level of service at the year 2028. He stated that the cost estimate at this time would be just over 1 million dollars.

Commissioner Remfert asked is there are other roundabouts in Minnesota like the one reviewed for the study.

Mark Scheidel stated that at this time there is no commitment from MnDOT to do a project at this intersection, the concept is not necessarily the preferred option and there is no funding currently available to complete it. He stated that further study would be needed to determine a preferred option for the intersection.

3. Rezoning Update – Creamery and Surrounding Area

Planner Ondich presented the staff report. He stated that staff was directed to initiate the rezoning at the February 25, 2009 Planning Commission meeting and that a concept review was held at the March 25, 2009 Planning Commission meeting. He stated that at the March 25 meeting staff was directed to review the buildable area on the lots west of 3rd Ave. NW with respect to current and proposed zoning. He stated that the land is currently zoned I-1 Light Industrial and that the proposed zoning in the Comprehensive Plan is B-1 Central Business on the south half and RM Medium Density Residential on the north half. He stated that within the current I-1 Zoning there is very little buildable area on any of the three lots. He stated that the RM zoning on the north half provides a small buildable area on the northern most lot and even less on the lot to the south. He stated that the B-1 Zoning would provide buildable area on the southern most lot everywhere on the lot except for within 10' of the property line along the railroad right of way. He stated that staff did not believe that the setbacks are negatively affected with the rezoning request. He stated that staff recommends moving forward with the rezoning by holding a public hearing at the May 27, 2009 Planning Commission meeting.

Willis Coonan, owner of 206 3rd Ave. NW, stated that as far as the current use of his property, it doesn't matter what it's zoned because he would be grandfathered in.

A motion was made by Wilcox, seconded by Gilman to move forward with a public hearing for the rezoning at the May 27, 2009 Planning Commission Meeting, which passed unanimously (3-0).

4. TH 19 / 11th Avenue Roundabout Update

Planner Christianson presented information regarding the possible roundabout project for the intersection of TH 19 and 11th Avenue. She stated that at this time MnDOT has offered to fund 75% of the project cost with state and federal funds and that the project must be started this summer. She stated that despite no pending development in the area there are various benefits to moving the project forward. She stated that the City Council made a motion to move forward with the project at their April 6th, 2009 meeting.

5. Miscellaneous

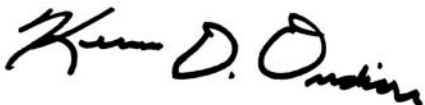
The following miscellaneous items were reviewed:

- A. Inventory of Planning Activities: 2001 to Present – Planner Christianson noted that staff had completed an inventory of Planning activities from 2001 to the present date and included the listing in the packet.
- B. Maxfield Research: Senior Housing Update Report – Planner Ondich noted that a report from Maxfield Research was included in the packets as information regarding metro area senior housing.
- C. Praha Haus Restaurant – Planning staff noted that the Praha Haus restaurant closed on Tuesday April 21, 2009 but that they plan to reopen for a short time in the near future to honor gift certificates that people may have.
- D. Walgreens – Planner Ondich stated that Walgreens intends to start construction on Friday May 1st.
- E. El Tequila Restaurant – Planner Ondich stated that El Tequila Restaurant is not finished and staff has not heard a definitive opening date.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 PM by order of Vice Chair Remfert.

Respectfully submitted,



Kenneth D. Ondich
Planning Director