

Meeting Minutes
New Prague Planning Commission
Wednesday, December 21, 2022

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Chair Dan Meyer with the following members present Brandon Pike, Ann Gengel, and Jason Bentson. Absent was Shawn Ryan.

City Staff Present: Ken Ondich – Planning / Community Development Director
Joined via GoTo Meeting Kyra Chapman – Planner

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A. November 16th, 2022 Regular Meeting

It was motioned by Pike, seconded by Bentson, to skip the November 16th regular meeting minutes and review them at the next meeting because they were not included in the packet. Motion carried (4-0)

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. None.

4. NEW BUSINESS

**A. Concept Review of Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Fuel Station Definition to include EV Charging Stations
City of New Prague – applicant**

Planner Chapman presented the staff report and introduced the proposed zoning ordinance amendment. She explained that the city received an inquiry from a business that would like to purchase a lot in the I-1 Light Industrial District north of the New Prague fire station and convert the land into an Electric Vehicle (EV) charging station.

Planning Director Ondich explained that there is a 60' easement along the southern half of the property because 6th St NW originally went through the property. There is a limited permissible buildable area of the lot because of this easement but parking lots are a permitted encroachment.

Planner Chapman continued that under the current zoning ordinance, EV chargers are not allowed in the I-1 Light Industrial District, let alone anywhere else in the city. Planning staff suggest replacing the existing definition for Convenience Store to Fuel Station, because the term Convenience Store is too broad and includes the use for retail business and fuel station. The new

definition would also include electric energy for electric vehicles. Furthermore, the amendment would allow fuel stations as a conditional use in the I-1 Light Industrial Zoning District only if it is adjacent to a state highway.

Planning Director Ondich mentioned that through a conversation with Utilities General Manager Reimers, the city can handle the power needed for EV charging station in the I-1 Light Industrial District, thus, influencing staff's suggestion to allow EV charging station in this district. However, there is a limited amount of information or ordinances on EV charging stations.

Pike liked the idea of having EV charging stations as a conditional use because it would be brought to the Planning Commission for further suggestions and guidance.

Planning Director Ondich clarified that the current definition of Convenience Store is confusing because some businesses in the past wanted to do retail but not sell fuel. Replacing the definition of Convenience Store to Fuel Station would prevent future confusion.

Gengel asked how many stations are intended to be installed at the site.

Planning Director Ondich explained that it would be a Tesla charging station and it's expected to have 3 stations. New Prague currently has charging stations at City Hall and Coborn's.

Gengel inquired if there will be a place for people to sit.

Planning Director Ondich explained that there's not much information out there on the topic of charging stations or their regulations since the topic is fairly new. Planning Commission could discuss performance standards or require amenities such as trash cans.

Planner Chapman added that there's not much value of having a parking lot at the site. If the business owner added a canopy or other developments, it would increase the property value. Planning Commission could add performance standards.

Planning Director Ondich mentioned that EV charging stations don't add any value to the property. There is also no tax value from the site and there won't be any employees.

Gengel inquired if there will be attendants.

Planning Director Ondich explained that there will be no attendants.

A motion was made by Pike seconded by Gengel for the approval of holding a public hearing for the next Planning Commission meeting on January 25th pertaining to the definition of fuel stations.

Motion carried (4-0).

5. Miscellaneous

The following miscellaneous items were reviewed as information only:

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New Prague Planning Commission Minutes

A. Update on Comprehensive Plan Process

Planning Director Ondich updated the Planning Commission that city staff had their first kick off meeting with MSA on December 20th. In the meeting, goals and background information of New Prague were discussed. Planning staff also gave MSA a tour of the city and indicated areas of interest or significance.

Planning Director Ondich further explained that the steering committee that will work with MSA, will consist of 2 council members, 1 planning commissioner, 1 park board member, 1 EDA member, 1 school district/school board member, and 1 chamber of commerce member. One planning commissioner and one alternative commissioner is needed for the steering committee. The six meetings would occur throughout the year between 5pm and 8pm and probably won't last more than an hour except the last meeting.

Pike and Gengel recommended themselves for the position. Pike will be the main planning commissioner for the steering committee and Gengel will be the alternative.

Pike inquired how to bring vibrancy to downtown Main Street especially in the afternoon and evenings.

Planning Director Ondich explained 1319 Woodfire Tavern and Local 105 have brought vibrancy to the area after 6pm. The Mill could further bring vibrancy to Main Street and the city. Building Official Sasse met with the building owners last week to discuss their sprinkler system. The owner's originally bought the property for \$200,000, believing the price was a bargain but after discovering the high cost of demolition, they have decided against such actions. Planning staff have been considering preserving the original part of the Mill by looking through old fire insurance maps. The Mill could be rezoned to B-1 or a new zoning district could be made for the property.

B. Monthly Business Updates

Planning Director Ondich presented the Monthly Business Updates. In 2022, 14 new homes permits were processed, which is much lower than the 25 new home permits processed last year. Next month, the vacant lot inventory will be presented. Purchase agreements are being made for all the seven shovel-ready site lots in the industrial park district. There will be three businesses in the industrial park: Scott Equipment Co, CVF Racing, and Brick's Boatworks. Scott Equipment will use the new property as an office space and CVF Racing is expanding the property into CVF Off-roading. Brick's Boatworks outgrew their home business and is expanding their business in New Prague. In February or March, Brick's Boatworks will come to a Planning Commission meeting, requesting a conditional use permit for storage. Eventually the property won't have outdoor storage.

Pike inquired if the Brick's Boatworks was the reason for changing the zoning ordinance amendment to allow retail-use in the I-1 Light Industrial District.

Planning Director Ondich said that Brick's Boatworks was one of the company's that influenced the zoning ordinance amendment.

C. Annual Meeting Calendar

The annual meeting calendar was reviewed.

6. Adjournment

A motion was made by Pike, seconded by Bentson, to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 pm. Motion carried (4-0).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kyra J. Chapman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K".

Kyra J. Chapman
Planner