

**Meeting Minutes**  
**New Prague Planning Commission**  
**Wednesday, November 16, 2011**

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Planning Commission Chair Bob Gilman with the following members present: Bob Gilman, John Roos, Dan Meyer, Jay Nuhring and Council Representative David Bruzek. Absent: None.

City Staff Present: Ken Ondich – Planning Director

**2. Approval of October 26, 2011 Regular Meeting Minutes**

It was moved by Meyer seconded by Roos to approve the October 26, 2011 regular meeting minutes as submitted. Motion carried (5-0).

**3 Old Business**

None.

**4. New Business**

**A. Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Concept Review – Religious Institutions in B-1 District  
New Prague Planning Department, Applicant**

Planning Director Ondich presented the staff report. He stated that New Prague Lutheran Church is in the process of acquiring the former State Bank of New Prague building at 201 Central Ave. N and that they initially intend to use the building as offices and small meeting areas which are all permitted uses in the B-1 Central Business District. He stated that no corporate worship would be taking place in the building at this time as they are using the middle school for this purpose. He stated that the church is asking that the City consider adding “churches” to the “B-1 District” which would widen their future options for the building beyond the office use. He stated that City Staff and the City Attorney discussed the request and suggest adding the already defined “religious institutions” as a “permitted” or “conditional” use in the B-1 Central Business District as it is currently not listed in the district. He stated that said use is listed as a conditional use in all the other zoning districts except for I-1 Light Industrial. He stated that the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act states that cities cannot impose substantial burdens on religious uses and that the amendment would not impose a substantial burden. He stated that five other “religious” related uses are located in other zoning districts. He stated that the zoning ordinance currently defines religious institutions and that they are not listed as a permitted or conditional use in the B-1 District at this time. He stated that he recommends adding “religious institutions” to the list of conditional uses for the B-1 Central Business District as the only proposed amendment.

Commissioner Bruzek asked the representatives from New Prague Lutheran Church how many people would be attending any of the “team” meetings within the church.

Pete Sletten, New Prague Lutheran Church, stated that it would range from 5 to 10 people in a group up to maybe 40 per group for the team meetings. He stated that they would certainly try to stagger the groups.

Commissioner Bruzek stated that he was only asking to try to get a feel for the parking they should have.

Planning Director Ondich stated that the B-1 Central Business District does not have any off-street parking requirements and that the current use of the building by the church for offices and small group meetings was a permitted use and therefore was not subject to having a minimum parking requirement per the zoning ordinance.

Mr. Sletten stated that he couldn't elaborate too much more on the future use of the building at this time as they had not been in operation long enough to have a good feel for it. He stated that they were at the meeting tonight to discuss adding churches to the list of acceptable uses for the building into the future.

Brad Carlson, New Prague Lutheran Church, stated that they have had about 400 people at their first few worship services, but that they will know what their membership is as they move into 2012 and following the holidays. He stated that the current use of the building for offices will be very light during the day. He stated that they may continue to use the New Prague Middle School for their Sunday services as it has been working very well.

Commissioner Meyer stated that he liked seeing a building used rather than sitting vacant.

It was moved by Meyer, seconded by Roos to set a public hearing for the December Planning Commission meeting for the proposed ordinance amendment. Motion carried 5-0.

## **5. Miscellaneous**


The following miscellaneous items were reviewed as information only:

- A. Planning/Building Department Goals – 2012 – Planning Director Ondich stated included in the packet for review was a list of Planning/Building Department Goals for 2012 which includes some items particularly created from a recent City Council Retreat. Goals listed include updating the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, Coordinating Planning of an Athletic Complex with the School District, assisting with development plans for the former AMPI creamery site and then various zoning ordinance amendments as needed.
- B. Monthly Business Update – Planning Director Ondich presented the monthly business update that was presented to the EDA at their November meeting.

## 6. Adjournment

A motion was made by Nuhring, seconded by Roos to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 PM. Motion carried (5-0).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenneth D. Ondich". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "K" and "O".

Kenneth D. Ondich  
Planning Director