

**Meeting Minutes**  
**New Prague Planning Commission**  
**Wednesday, August 24, 2016**

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Nuhring with the following members present: Dan Meyer, Bob Gilman and Matthew Goldade. Absent was Jenna Tuma (arrived at 6:33 p.m.).

City Staff Present: Ken Ondich – Planning / Community Development Director

**2. Approval of July 27, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes**

It was moved by Meyer, seconded by Gilman, to approve the July 27, 2016 regular meeting minutes as submitted. Motion carried (4-0, Tuma had not yet arrived).

**3. Old Business**

None.

**4. New Business**

**A. Request for Variance #V2-2016 – Reduce Setback to Rear Lot Line for Industrial Building Addition at 503 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW  
Mike Picha, applicant**

Planning Director Ondich presented the staff report. He stated that the subject property is located at 503 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW and that the lot was platted in 2001 as part of a one lot plat known as New Prague Business Park 6<sup>th</sup> Addition. He stated that the applicant, Mike Picha, who is also owner of Picha Electric, constructed the building in 2001 at a size of 40' by 60' in size. He stated that they are proposing a 20' addition onto the rear of the building so that they can store all their equipment and materials inside their building. He stated that the I-1 Light Industrial Zoning District requires a 40' rear property line setback and that the proposed addition would encroach 5' into the required rear setback. He stated that the property to the north and east is zoned I-1 Light Industrial and that Foundry Hill Park is located to the southwest. He also stated that located directly south of the subject site is a single family home in the RM Medium Density Residential Zoning District and that a 6' tall screening fence exists along the property line. He stated that the subject lot has an unusual jog on the rear which further restricts construction on the rear portion of the lot which would push an addition on the north side of the site further into existing required off-street parking. He also noted that the lot is deeper than originally platted due to a vacated alley which had existed adjacent to the site but added 6' to the lot once vacated. He stated that the applicant notes that he is currently renting storage

space at another building in the industrial park and that this addition would allow him to store all his equipment and materials in his own building. He stated that the applicant did explore an addition on the north side of the site, but that it would disrupt the existing parking lot and would generally not be in a good location on the site. He stated that the applicant noted that it makes the most sense to simply add onto the east end of the building which follows the existing design of the building and that Chad Lunder, Building Official, stated that an addition to the north side of the building may not be possible and that even if it was possible that it would require significant changes to the roof and extensive construction costs. He stated that staff recommends approval of Variance #V2-2016 from the required 40' rear setback to 35' to allow for the construction of an industrial building addition located at 503 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW with the findings listed in the staff report.

Chair Nuhring asked how other industrial buildings in the area were closer than 40' to the rear lot line.

Planning Director Ondich stated that the building to the north was constructed before the subject building and he was unsure if a variance was approved or if the setback for that building was only 30' at the time of construction. He added that the buildings to the northeast were much older and that the rear setback was not originally along the dividing line between the area buildings as 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW didn't previously extend through the area.

Mike Picha, applicant, stated that the shed shown on the rear side of the property in the pictures was already removed this past Saturday to another location on the site. He stated that he has seven employees that work out of the building and that he can't fit all his equipment in the building right now. He stated that the 20' building addition gives them room. He stated that he has been in business for 25 years. He stated that the building addition would be the same height and color of the existing building.

A motion was made by Gilman, seconded by Goldade to recommend approval of Variance #V2-2016 from the required 40' rear setback to 35' to allow for the construction of an industrial building addition located at 503 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW with the following findings:

- A. The requested variance to allow for the addition onto an existing industrial building which is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of this ordinance because industrial buildings are a permitted use in the I-1 Light Industrial Zoning District.
- B. The requested variance to allow for the construction of an industrial building addition at up to 35' from the rear property line is consistent with the comprehensive plan because the subject property can have an industrial building as a permitted use in the I-1 Light Industrial Zoning District and the variance would provide for a buildable area to construct the addition that does not exist with the full rear setback in place.

- C. The applicant proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner with the modest addition to the existing industrial building which is a reasonable request and would fit in well with the existing industrial area, in particular the industrial building at 505 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW directly to the north which is setback approximately only 30' from the rear property line.
- D. Unique circumstances apply to this property over which the property owners had no control and which do not generally apply to other properties in the vicinity because the lot was platted with an unusual jog along the rear lot line which precludes placement of the addition on the lot in compliance with the setbacks without being financially impractical as well as impractical in terms of construction methods.
- E. The variance does not alter the essential character of the neighborhood because the property and proposed addition fit in with the industrial uses in the area and noting that the industrial building located directly to the north is located closer to the rear property line than the proposed variance would allow.
- F. The variance requested is the minimum variance which would alleviate the practical difficulty because it would allow for the construction of an industrial building addition that would allow for the applicant to store equipment and materials inside of the building and would not be as close to the rear property line as other industrial buildings in the same area.

Motion carried (5-0).

## **5. Miscellaneous**

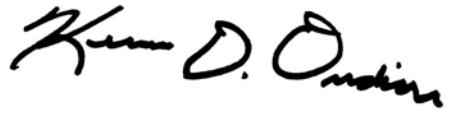
The following miscellaneous items were reviewed as information only:

- A. Monthly Business Update – Planning Director Ondich provided the Monthly Business update to the Planning Commission that had been provided to the EDA earlier in the month. Commissioner Tuma asked if the City had received any feedback about the Autowash Systems Inc. project which had an adjacent property owner concerned about a retaining wall and drainage. Planning Director Ondich stated that he had informed the adjacent property owner when the construction permit was issued and that he believed they also had the property surveyed but that he had not heard any further concerns since construction started.
- B. Industrial Rear Yard Setback – Commissioner Gilman asked why the industrial district had a 40' rear yard setback as it make it difficult to efficiently use the land on the smaller industrial lots. Planning Director Ondich stated that he would research the rear setback and report back to the Planning Commission at a future meeting.

## **6. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Goldade, seconded by Gilman, to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 p.m. 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