



CITY OF LA CRESCENT

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TO: Planning Commission Members
Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
FROM: Shawn Wetterlin, Building/ Zoning Official
DATE: December 14th, 2017
RE: Meeting Minutes, *Shawn*
Tuesday, December 12th, 2017

The Planning Commission met at 5:30 p.m., on Tuesday, December 12th, 2017 in the City Council Chambers at City Hall. The Following members were present: Donald Smith, Patti Dockendorff, Jerry Steffes, Dave Hanifl, Jason Ludwigson and Richard Wieser. City Council member Brian Krenz and Building/ Zoning Official, Shawn Wetterlin were also in attendance. Planning Commission members Linda Larson was not in attendance.

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Smith. The meeting minutes of November 20th, 2017 were approved as distributed by a consensus of the Planning Commission Members.
2. The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing at City Hall to consider adopting the required updates to the Shoreland and Floodplain ordinances.

The Public Hearing opened with Planning Commission Chairman Smith giving an overview of the Shoreland and Flood plain Ordinances. The amendments that are required to the remainder of the Zoning Ordinance were reviewed. These edits are mostly deletions and are primarily as a result of consolidating all regulation relating to shoreland zoning to the two rewritten chapters.

Public Hearing was then closed as no member of the public wished to be heard.

3. The Planning commission continued the consideration of an Administrative Subdivision request for 1108 Spruce Drive, which was tabled from the November 20th Planning Commission meeting.

Chairman Smith gave an overview of the Subdivision process and the Administrative Subdivision process. The Administrative Subdivision rules are for a single property boundary change and not sequential administration subdivisions. There is only one principal structure permitted on a lot

with the exception of a PUD. A PUD is generally multiple acres. Thus a second subdivision would be required. There has been neighborhood concern expressed for what they believe might be constructed on the site being 2 2-story 8 plexes. The concerns expressed at the last meeting were inconsistency with the essential character of the neighborhood. The contemplated development likely would require variances. It was explained that if a project does not require variances and is consistent with the zoning it does not come before the Planning Commission and is approved by the Building Official. It was agreed that the proper review for this project would be as a subdivision review. Then, if variances are required, they could be part of the subdivision review, also protecting the potential developer from purchasing land without clear understanding of what could be built on the site.

Motion by Steffes, Seconded by Dockendorff to recommend to the City Council the rejection of the administrative subdivision without prejudice, and to allow the applicant to apply for a Subdivision without an additional fee

Upon a roll call vote, all members present voted in favor of the motion as proposed.

4. The Planning Commission reviewed the Bluffland and Bike Pedestrian Plan letter dated February 15, 2017.

It was the consensus to have hard copies made of the final Bike Pedestrian Plan, Bluffland Plan and Downtown Plan and distribute them to the City Council, Planning Commission and Economic Development Commission. As laudable as it is to go paperless it is felt if these are to be working documents they are more serviceable as hard copies on which to make notes and reference.

5. Chairman Smith gave an overview of the attached annual report.

Motion by Ludwigson, Seconded by Dockendorff to approve the report with agreed upon edits and additions and sent it to the Council as required in the bylaws. Copy attached to these minutes.

6. Motion by Steffes, Seconded by Wieser to recommend to the Council to amend the Downtown Plan calling page 2 of the Downtown Plan a summary and eliminating the elements of concern to the city attorney and city council.

Upon a roll call vote, all members present voted in favor of the motion as proposed.

The next Planning Commission meeting date will be February 13th unless other requests come in.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Planning Commission Annual Report 2017

The 2017 Annual Report was adopted by motion and forwarded to the City Council as provided in the Planning Commission by-laws. The Draft Work Plan for 2018 will be reviewed at the first meeting in 2018 and be based, in part, on a review of the action steps of the: Comprehensive Plan; Downtown Plan; Comprehensive Plan; Bicycle Pedestrian Plan and unfinished work from 2017. The review may also highlight activities of others based on timelines and actions steps.

1. 7 Conditional Use Permits and Administrative Subdivisions were recommended and 6 subsequently approved
 - a. 4 Alternate means of Flood Proofing
 - b. 1 Child Care in Residential District.
 - c. 2 Administrative Subdivision

2. 12 Variances were reviewed and granted, some with modifications and conditions.
 - a. 1 Flat Roof
 - b. 4 Setback from the water on Shoreland.
 - c. 4 Garage forward of principal structure.
 - d. 1 Ratio of garage to total home frontage.
 - e. 1 Setback from Road.
 - f. 1 Fence Height

It is interesting that all but one variance was on Shore Acres Road in Shoreland District.

3. Bicycle Pedestrian Sub Committee was formed and began functioning.

4. Authorized submission of grant request to LAPC for Bicycle Pedestrian Planning. The grant was awarded and the Planning Commission recommended the City approve a contract with Alta Planning. Two public workshops were held; a bike ride; 2 rounds of meetings with Houston County and MNDOT were held; 2 public hearings were called. Drafts were reviewed and revised by the Bike Ped Subcommittee and the Planning Commission. The work resulted in an updated plan that greatly impacts road and capital planning for the City and the County was recommended by the Planning Commission and adopted by the City Council. The plan has action steps the City can implement but importantly calls for meetings with the County and MNDOT that actions can be incorporated into next years, and subsequent years, operating and capital plans. The recommendations include from "paint" to "substantial capital investment".

5. Authorized submission of a grant request to LAPC for Bluffland Planning. The grant was awarded and the Planning Commission recommended that the City approve a contract with MSA Consultants who had developed the Regional Bluffland Plan with the substantial input of stakeholder groups and the public. Using this work as a starting place several rounds of meetings which included Minnesota Land Trust and representatives of area municipalities and counties. Concepts were created and properties were identified that land owners could be contacted. The Plan is more refined for City owned property and less defined for private property in an effort not

to be presumptuous of property owners. The next steps would include property owners and the identification of citizen champions as trail work will require volunteer help.

6. Working with MSA Consultants the Planning Commission led a process to develop a vision for a downtown of the future for La Crescent. There were 2 joint public hearings and 2 public meeting with the Chamber and Economic Development Commission as well as working/listening sessions. 4 additional public meetings and workshops were conducted. The Downtown Plan was supported overwhelmingly as an important element of attracting and retaining young families to our communities. The goal of having more local retail and commercial opportunities is dependent on drawing from the broader region. The possibility of a catalytic project must remain foremost in our minds and our actions each year.
7. Held Public Meetings, working sessions, met with agency staff and attended seminars, to prepare the rewritten sections on Floodplain and Shoreland zoning and associated text amendments. Current status draft versions prepared and we will be working out differences with the MNDNR. Some differences remain but the commission is optimistic that the rules can be agreed to that accommodate our local reality of plats of insufficient width and depth, created over 100 year ago, with modern environmental ethic. If we cannot we will suggest followup with area legislators and the Secretary of the DNR.
8. Proposed a market study for the 'racetrack property' to answer key questions and allow the City to solicit developers to an important project. Without land for new homes La Crescent cannot be competitive in attracting young families. The Planning Commission studied the impact of new homes on school enrollment and other economic factors as fees collected for building permits and connections. Continuing conversations with 2 groups of potential developers were conducted with City Staff.
9. Reviewed Comprehensive Plan for action steps for 2017. Ensured they were incorporated into 2018 capital and operating plans.
10. Was active in getting the peculiarly placed rumple strips on 14/61 removed and replaced.
11. Completed an application for Bicycle Friendly Designation and received honorable mention and a suggestions for improvement as the City seeks 'bronze' designation.
12. Other work for the good of the Community. Please refer to minutes.

12/11/2017 (2) prepared DBS

Planning for the La Crescent Downtown of the Future

Planning Summary

The plan is recommend by the La Crescent Planning Commission with the active participation of the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Commission.

The Commission and Council recognizes the importance of a general plan to guide development. The concepts of density, downtown housing, street profiles, traffic patterns, concentration of commercial development in a single Central Business District, parking policy and parking locations, replacement of the city hall and its potential location, bike trail "take-off" over the highway, gathering places and commercial uses are directions guiding policy and action.

The success of local businesses and their support for the plan are essential to the success of the downtown. The City will actively support their growth and success. Specific city actions outlined in the plan include property acquisition, design of street reconstruction and actively working with developers on specific parcels and projects. Land and development projects consistent with the plan will be favored while also acknowledging that this plan is dynamic and can be modified to reflect new realities and opportunities.

This plan is adopted "as an adjunct to the comprehensive Plan" providing additional detail and specific actions consistent with that plan.