

Meeting Announcement and Agenda of the Cambridge Planning Commission
City Hall Council Chambers

Regular Meeting, Tuesday, May 3, 2016, **7:30 pm**

Members of the audience are encouraged to follow the agenda. When addressing the Commission, please state your name and address for the official record.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approval of Agenda (p. 1)
3. Approval of Minutes
 - A. April 5, 2016 Regular Meeting (p. 3)
4. Public Comment: For items not on the agenda; speakers may not exceed 5 minutes each.
5. New Business
 - A. Discuss potential future business restrictions (used auto dealers, thrift stores/second hand stores) (p. 6)
6. Other Business/Miscellaneous
 - A. City Council Update
 - B. Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission (PTRC) Update
7. Adjourn

Notice to the hearing impaired: Upon request to City staff, assisted hearing devices are available for public use.

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PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 5, 2016

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Cambridge Planning Commission was held at Cambridge City Hall, 300 – 3rd Avenue NE, Cambridge, Minnesota.

Members Present: Jim Godfrey, John Klossner, Joe Morin, Shirley Basta, Chad Struss, Bob Erickson, and Robert Nelson. All present, no absences.

Staff Present: Marcia Westover, City Planner

CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Godfrey called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Morin moved, seconded by Basta to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 7/0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 2, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes

Erickson requested the minutes be changed to reflect an excused absence for him for the March 2, 2016 Planning Commission meeting. Erickson moved, seconded by Struss to approve the March 2, 2016 meeting minutes as amended. Motion carried 7/0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Godfrey opened the public comment period at 7:02 pm and without comments, closed the public comment period at 7:03 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing: In-Law Apartments, an amendment to Title XV Land Usage, Chapter 156 Zoning

Westover stated staff received a request to consider allowing In-Law Apartments in Cambridge. Westover pointed out this is a trend many families are considering in order to take care of an elderly parent or family member, including a small detached

temporary home or an attached separate living area for the person needing care. Westover stated our current city code would need to be amended to allow such use.

Westover stated staff is requesting that this item be tabled due to the fact the Minnesota legislature will be reviewing a bill to require cities to allow such temporary housing. Westover said work is already started on the bill and the legislative session will end in May. Westover reported staff has talked to the person requesting the consideration of the in-law apartment and they can wait as there is no rush at this time.

Westover stated staff is seeking a motion to table this item indefinitely until staff brings back discussion on it after the legislative session.

Godfrey opened the public hearing period at 7:03 pm and without comments, closed the public hearing period at 7:04 pm. Morin moved, seconded by Klossner to table this request to consider allowing In-Law Apartments indefinitely as the legislature is reviewing a bill regarding such temporary housing. Motion carried 7/0.

Garfield Business Park (Baas Builders LLC) Preliminary and Final Plat

Westover stated a request was received from Baas Builders LLC, 380 Garfield St S, Cambridge, MN 55008, to request a preliminary and final plat of Garfield Business Park. Westover explained the proposed plats are intended to create two lots out of several metes and bounds described lots and the plats will clean up the existing confusing lot lines and create two defined commercial lots.

Westover pointed out Lot 1 will have 2.25 acres and Lot 2 will have .76 acres. Lot 1 has an existing multi-tenant building on it. Baas Builders LLC is currently remodeling the interior and exterior of this aging building and intend to use it for their office location in addition to other tenants. Lot 2 will be an open lot subject to the uses allowed in the B-2 Highway Business Zoning district in addition to the utility easement.

Westover stated Lot 2 currently has sanitary sewer and water utilities running through the lot. Westover said these utilities service the east side businesses; they run under Highway 65 and service the Willow Wood area all the way to Walmart. Westover went on to say the utility easement and 4th Ave SE road were vacated in 1996 due to the Highway 65 bypass construction. Westover stated the utility easement was never re-established though the utilities still exist. Westover explained the easement is currently being re-established by the City and property owner, Baas Builders LLC, and the City will purchase Lot 2 with intentions to sell to Hirsch Motors.

Staff is recommending approval of the preliminary and final plat requests with the following conditions:

1. Within 30 days of approval, the preliminary and final plats must be recorded with the Isanti County Recorder's office. A copy of the recorded plat must be provided to the City within 5 days of recording.

2. Klossner moved, seconded by Erickson to recommend the City Council approve the preliminary and final plats with the following condition: Within 30 days of approval, the preliminary and final plats must be recorded with the Isanti County Recorder's office. A copy of the recorded plat must be provided to the City within 5 days of recording. Motion carried 7/0.

OTHER BUSINESS / MISCELLANEOUS

City Council Update

Westover updated the Commission on the previous City Council meetings.

Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission (PTRC) Update

Westover updated the Commission on the last Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Klossner moved, seconded by Struss, to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 pm. The motion carried 7/0.

Jim Godfrey
Cambridge Planning Commission Chair

ATTEST:

Marcia Westover
City Planner

Author: Marcia Westover

Background

At the March 2, 2016, Planning Commission meeting, the Commission tabled this item to the May 2016 meeting. I have attached the minutes from the March 2, 2016 meeting for your reference.

City staff is exploring the idea of limiting the number of certain businesses in the city and proposing ideas to the Planning Commission for discussion. The businesses currently being reviewed include: used automobile sales and thrift stores (to include all second hand stores).

Staff would like the Commission to discuss this idea and let us know if you would like to explore the option further. The reason we are discussing this now is to be proactive in shaping the future of our city. Other cities have had similar discussions after problems arose. Please see the attached article from the Star Tribune.

I had a discussion with City Attorney Jay Squires on the legalities of such limitations. He explained that there is more ability in State Statutes to limit thrift stores/second hand stores and it is more common for cities to limit these. Used car dealerships are different and the city could look at more performance based standards (stronger standards) if we choose. Standards could include: lot size minimums, traffic flow, parking, only one use per lot (no secondary business on a lot), separation (3,000 ft. from another) to reduce blight, etc. Reasons for this can include: building value, aesthetics, and a diverse economy.

Planning Commission Action

Discuss the issue of limiting the number of used automobile sales and thrift stores/second hand stores. Determine if you would like to further discuss the limitations and have staff bring back proposals or leave the businesses as is.

Attachments

1. Star Tribune Article: "Suburbs temporarily ban some businesses, hold out for better mix."
2. March 2, 2016 Planning Commission minutes

Search



NORTH METRO

Suburbs temporarily ban some businesses, hold out for better mix

In Columbia Heights, leaders want to limit auto businesses on Central Avenue.

By Shannon Prather (<http://www.startribune.com/shannon-prather/188067161/>) Star Tribune

JANUARY 16, 2016 — 6:33PM

Columbia Heights residents can buy an oil filter on nearly every corner of Central Avenue. But there's no coffee shop where they can linger over a newspaper and sip a latte.

That's a problem, city leaders say.

Fearful that a glut of mechanics, auto-parts stores and gas stations along Columbia Heights' main drag is pulling down the city's image and muscling out other businesses, the City Council is banning new auto-related businesses for up to six months.

City leaders figure that will be enough time to tighten up zoning regulations and set more design controls with an eye toward attracting a more eclectic mix of restaurants, shops and small service businesses along Central Avenue.

"Residents think we have too many auto places," said Mayor Gary Peterson. "Central Avenue has always been an auto-related corridor. It has an auto history. But we want to make sure we are planning for our downtown area, planning ways to make it more sustainable with salons, offices, restaurants."

Others believe that tighter controls and business bans can raise fears of gentrification or, worse yet, result in empty buildings.

"I think they are crazy to move it off this street," said Tricia Ayers, owner of Auto Max Muffler & Brake Shop in Columbia Heights for the past 23 years. "I believe in free enterprise. ... Automotive is what it is. It's hard to keep clean."

The old "take-what-you-can-get" mentality, in which businesses were accepted indiscriminately, left some suburbs with a mashup on Main Street. So suburban leaders often try to harness market forces to reshape their cities and meet demand for the jobs, amenities and businesses that city dwellers take for granted.

"Do you accept your fate because of decisions made 40 years ago or do you look to where you want to be?" said Brooklyn Park Mayor Jeff Lunde, whose city has made similar decisions.

Columbia Heights already has limited the number of thrift stores and check-cashing places that can operate in the city. Other suburbs have followed suit.

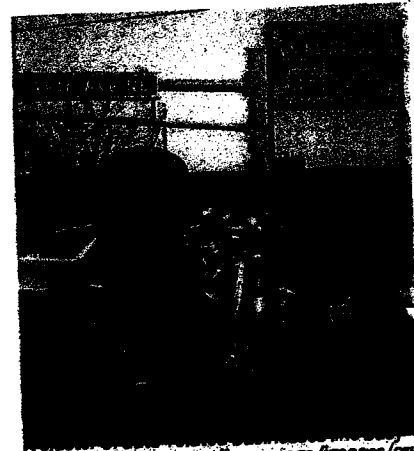
After the number of massage businesses in Blaine passed 20, the city this year limited their number to one for every 2,500 residents. The Spring Lake Park City Council halted all commercial and industrial development for a year so it could rework its 1970s-era zoning code.

Last winter, St. Louis Park passed a moratorium on issuing new off-sale liquor licenses through the end of this year. Burnsville officials temporarily banned thrift stores so they could rethink regulations.

In Columbia Heights, more than two dozen auto-related businesses line Central Avenue, ranging from small mom-and-pop garages to national chains. People entering the city from the south are greeted with an O'Reilly Auto Parts on one side and the colorful two-story Bobby & Steve's Auto World on the other.

Robert "Bobby" Williams, Bobby & Steve's co-owner, sits on the Columbia Heights City Council and voted for the temporary ban on auto businesses.

"I like competition. It makes us better, but we do have a lot of automotive stuff," Williams said.



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http://stmedia.startribune.com/images/ows_1450566
Central Avenue in Columbia Heights.

Drew Mickelson checked on the antilock brake system on a car at Auto Max on Dec. 11 in Columbia Heights.

More appealing, attractive

Talk about a temporary ban was jump-started by efforts to revive Columbia Heights' downtown, a row of Central Avenue storefronts between 39th and 40th avenues anchored by the historic Heights Theater, a retro Dairy Queen and a \$7 million city library now under construction.

An auto shop opened in an old building across the street from the library site, and Peterson said the city had no authority under its code to require improvements. "It's not the greatest asset to Columbia Heights," he said.

Peterson said he's leaning toward permanently banning new auto businesses in the downtown district and enacting new design standards for the rest of the city. Trees, landscaping, retaining walls and architectural standards can make a world of difference, he said.

Joe Hogeboom, Columbia Heights' community development director, said the city has cracked down on illegal signs along Central, will hang new banners on its downtown light poles and is looking into adding benches and other amenities.

"We are really trying to focus on making that street more walkable, more appealing, more attractive," Hogeboom said. "The revitalization of Central Avenue is the big goal. There are many pieces to it."

Neighboring Minneapolis restricts auto businesses along stretches of Central Avenue south of Columbia Heights, including the Lowry Avenue NE. intersection — a shopping and business district area that planners call "Northeast Downtown."

Hogeboom believes that's part of the problem. Turned away at Minneapolis City Hall, the auto businesses head north, he said.

'Too old-fashioned'

Some Columbia Heights business owners question the wisdom of trying to alter a bustling, established urban corridor known as an auto alley. They point out that the avenue reflects the working-class community in many ways.

Ayers, a longtime auto business owner in the city, said that the auto businesses serve the surrounding suburbs and working-class Columbia Heights, where residents tend to drive older cars. She said she would support efforts to beautify the boulevard with more trees, landscaping and architectural details, but said that design standards should apply to all types of businesses.

"I don't think they should pick on automotive," said Ayers, pointing to a bar across the street. "There are a lot of things we can talk about."

Juan Collier, who owns and operates the neat and tidy Heights Barber Lounge in downtown Columbia Heights, agreed that the city could use a more diverse mix of shops but added that he worries that vision may not match its diverse, urban vibe.

"It's too old-fashioned," he said.

Columbia Heights resident Dolores Strand said she has faith in the City Council.

"Hopefully it's going to be a positive thing," she said. "Their intention seems to be for the best. You never know because the economy and the financial climate is so uncertain."



(http://stmedia.startribune.com/images/ows_1450566)

The Heights Barber Lounge owner Juan Collier cut customer Senghor Shinwen's hair. Many of Collier's neighbors in Columbia Heights are...

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Cambridge Planning Commission was held at Cambridge City Hall, 300 – 3rd Avenue NE, Cambridge, Minnesota.

Members Present: Jim Godfrey, John Klossner, Joe Morin, Shirley Basta, and Chad Struss

Members Absent: Robert Nelson (Excused) and Bob Erickson (Excused)

Staff Present: Marcia Westover, City Planner

CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Godfrey called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Struss moved, seconded by Klossner to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 5/0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 2, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes

Morin moved, seconded by Basta to approve the February 2, 2016 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried 5/0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Godfrey opened the public comment period at 7:01 pm and without comments, closed the public comment period at 7:02 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing: Garfield Business Park (BJ Baas Builders) Preliminary Plat

Garfield Business Park (BJ Baas Builders) Final Plat

Westover stated a request was received from BJ Baas Builders, 380 Garfield St S, Cambridge, MN 55008, to request a preliminary and final plat of Garfield Business Park. Westover said the utilities are currently being reviewed for this plat request and it

appears the road and easements may have been previously vacated without providing new easements for the existing utilities that run through the proposed Lot 2. Westover added the developer, surveyor, and staff are working on this issue. Westover recommended to the Commission to table this item indefinitely until a resolution can be found for the utility easement.

Godfrey opened the public hearing period at 7:02 pm and without comments, closed the public hearing period at 7:03 pm. Morin moved, seconded by Klossner to table the Preliminary and Final Plats items indefinitely until a resolution can be found for the utility easement. Motion carried 5/0.

Discuss Potential Future Business Restrictions (used auto dealers, thrift stores/second hand stores, tattoos, massage)

Westover explained City staff is exploring the idea of limiting the number of certain types of businesses in the City and proposing ideas to the Planning Commission for discussion. The businesses currently being reviewed include used automobile sales and thrift stores (to include all second hand stores). Westover stated staff would like Commission to let staff know if they would like to explore the option further and have staff bring back proposals or leave the businesses as they are. Westover explained the reason staff wants to discuss this now is to be proactive in shaping the future of our City as other cities have had similar discussions after problems arose.

Westover stated she spoke with City Attorney Jay Squires about the legalities of such limitations. Westover said Squires explained thrift stores/second hand dealers are a common item to limit but used car dealerships are different and the city should look at more performance based standards. Westover stated Squires said the City could put a moratorium on these types of businesses which would limit any additional businesses of this nature coming into the City until a decision is made but pointed out this process would require a public hearing.

The Commissioners discussed these potential business restrictions. Godfrey asked if there are any businesses of this type applying for business licenses at the present. Westover stated no, but the city did have an inquiry into a used auto dealer last fall. Basta asked if there were any complaints regarding the number of these types of businesses. Westover stated there are no formal complaints about the number of businesses. Morin stated the City Council has heard informal complaints regarding the appearance and upkeep of the buildings and overcrowding of the parking on car dealership lots. Westover confirmed that the city does receive complaints on parking, appearance, and this is handled through the property maintenance process. Klossner stated if it came down to a choice, he would rather not see empty buildings or storefronts if a business wanted to move into Cambridge. Struss stated it would be difficult to choose which businesses can come in and which ones cannot. Westover stated this process may allow the City to either determine which businesses can be limited or at least develop stronger standards.

Further discussion centered around whether to table this discussion to May until after the Minnesota Design Team visit and the start of the Comprehensive Plan process. Godfrey stated Commissioner Nelson expressed an interest in being present for this discussion. The consensus was to table the discussion until a later meeting. Morin moved, seconded by Klossner to table this discussion until the May Planning Commission meeting. Motion passed 5/0.

OTHER BUSINESS / MISCELLANEOUS

City Council Update

Westover updated the Commission on the previous City Council meetings.

Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission (PTRC) Update

Westover updated the Commission on the last Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Morin moved, seconded by Basta, to adjourn the meeting at 7:19 pm. The motion carried 5/0.



Jim Godfrey
Cambridge Planning Commission Chair

ATTEST:



Marcia Westover
City Planner