

Cambridge Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 2, 2019

A regular meeting of the Cambridge Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, April 2, 2019, at Cambridge City Hall Council Chambers, 300 3rd Avenue NE, Cambridge, Minnesota, 55008.

Members Present: Chair Julie Immel, Vice Chair Monte Dybvig, Member Aaron Berg, Member Robert Boese, Member Marisa Harder-Chapman, and Member Arianna Weiler.

Members Absent: Council Appointee Marlys Palmer (Excused).

Staff Present: Community Development Director Marcia Westover and Community Development Specialist Carri Levitski.

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

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

Approval of the Agenda

Berg moved, seconded by Boese, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 6/0.

Approval of Minutes

Berg moved, seconded by Weiler to approve the March 5, 2019 minutes as presented. Motion carried 6/0.

Public Comment

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

New Business

Sign Ordinance Amendment

Westover reported that the U.S. Supreme Court determined that any content-based regulation of signs is unconstitutional unless the government can satisfy a strict scrutiny test. This means the City would need to have a compelling reason for the content regulation and only very limited circumstances would allow for content-based regulation. Due to the Supreme Court decision, staff had the City Attorney's office review the language in the code.

Westover stated that several areas in the code have content-based language including religious and political messages. Also, the current language describes specific content-based signs: i.e. gas stations, non-profits, directional signs, and American flags. These areas have all been amended to remove the content-based language.

Westover noted that along with the content-based revisions, staff wanted to revise the entire code to make it easier to read. Each section has been cleaned up, the flow of the sections have been revised,

and staff has eliminated several areas with repeated content. Specifically, the Temporary Sign section.

Westover noted that overall, the basic content of the sign code remains the same. This includes the number of days temporary signs are allowed, the maximum sizes allowed for permanent signs, and the intent of permitted and prohibited signage.

Westover further noted that language was added to include what materials are allowed for permanent signs. This has been discretionary in the past and difficult for staff to enforce.

Westover asked the Commission to review B (2) which states "signs that are meant to be permanent shall be constructed of a material that is durable, rigid, and otherwise appropriate for a permanent sign and not of vinyl, cloth, cardboard, paper, or other non-durable material." Westover questioned if the Commission would like to add that hand painted signs are prohibited.

The Commission discussed in detail how to regulate the materials allowed for permanent signs and whether or not hand painted signs should be allowed. It was pointed out from an enforcement standpoint that if the regulations are not clear it is up to the staff member on whether or not they feel a sign is professional in nature. This gets complicated since one person may feel a hand painted sign is professional and looks nice, but someone else may not feel the same way. It was the consensus of the Commission to not regulate hand painted signs and to leave the permanent sign language in B (2) as presented.

Chapman moved, seconded by Dybvig, to recommend the Council approve Ordinance No. 690 as presented. Motion carried 6/0.

Other Business/Miscellaneous

City Council Update

Westover updated the Commission on the last City Council meeting.

Parks Commission Update

Westover stated Levitski is the new staff liaison for the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission. Levitski updated the Commission on the last Parks Commission meeting.

Commissioner Concerns

There were no additional concerns.

Adjournment

Being no further business before the Cambridge Planning Commission, Dybvig moved, seconded by Chapman, to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:01 pm. Motion carried 6/0.


Julie Immel
Cambridge Planning Commission Chair

ATTEST:


Marcia Westover, Community Development Director