

City of Winsted
Planning Commission
City Council Chambers
January 11, 2012
6:00 p.m.

Present: JoLynn Cafferty
Dan Dickhausen
Marvin Ebensperger
Max Fasching
Mike Guggemos
Tom Ollig – Council Liaison

Staff Present: Brad Martens, City Administrator
Raquel Kirchoff, Administrative Assistant

1) Call the Meeting to Order

Ebensperger called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2) Approval of Minutes

Dickhausen motioned to approve the minutes from the Planning Commission Meeting on November 9, 2011. Cafferty seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

3) Public Hearings

a) C-1 Commercial Downtown Business District - Zoning Ordinance Amendment

Ebensperger opened the Public Hearing.

Martens stated that in 2011, the City of Winsted received a request to allow street level residences in the C-1 Commercial Downtown Business District. He explained that the current language in the Zoning ordinance does not allow for this type of residence.

Martens explained that permitting residences on street level would allow for an additional revenue source and make buildings more appealing to purchase or lease. Many of the buildings are deep enough to allow for a significant commercial space to exist in the front of the building. Conditions could require the residence to remain a certain distance from the street or limit the square footage of the residence. Martens stated that at least one property currently does have an apartment at street level.

Martens stated that the request was heard at the October 12, 2011 Planning Commission meeting where questions arose on what defined street level, parking requirements, and apartment vacancy rates in Winsted. Staff was directed to receive comments from current apartment owners, further review parking requirements, and street level issues.

Martens stated that at the November 9, 2011 Planning Commission meeting, Martens reviewed with the Planning Commission that he did contact several apartment owners in Winsted, who stated that apartment vacancies do exist and that additional competition is not needed; however, one or two units would not overly change the market and they were generally supportive if it can help the downtown area of Winsted. Martens also stated that the definition of street level was found to be ground floor and that parking requirements for Multiple Family Use require off-street parking of two (2) spaces per unit.

At that November 9, 2011 meeting, the Commission agreed that if approved, the language allowing the proposed change should be placed under Conditional Uses so each approval could be looked at individually and so that conditions could be placed upon that approval. It was also unanimously approved to schedule a Public Hearing to consider a language amendment number six (6) be added to the Winsted Zoning Ordinance Section 1501.008 – C-1 Commercial Downtown Business District; Letter D – Conditional Uses; as follows: “A single street level residence provided any such residence shall not occupy the front 25 feet of the building on that street level”.

Martens stated that the Planning Commission should consider a motion to approve Planning Commission Resolution PCR-12-01 recommending to the City Council to approve the proposed zoning amendment to City

Ebensperger asked Martens if there were any comments received from Winsted residents. Martens stated no.

Councilmember Ollig stated that he had spoke with a number of individuals in the community and the idea was well accepted, after it was explained that the store fronts would not be apartments.

Guggemos asked if the request for this type of apartment would be handled as a Conditional Use Permit. Martens stated yes. Guggemos asked if the requestor to occupy part of the front 25 feet, how would that process be handled. Martens stated that the requester would have to apply for a variance. Guggemos asked if the requester could apply for a Conditional Use Permit and a Variance simultaneously. Martens stated that the Conditional Use could be approved with the condition that the Variance was received.

Fasching asked Ollig if he received any negative comments about this type of apartment when he had talked with community members. Ollig stated no. They just wanted to assure that store fronts would not be removed and that there would not be overnight, on street parking.

Guggemos motioned to close the Public Hearing. Fasching seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Fasching motioned to adopt Planning Commission Resolution PCR 12-01 to recommend that the City Council of the City of Winsted approve the proposed text amendments to City Code Chapter 15, Section One (1), Zoning Ordinance Sections 1501.008, C-1 Commercial Downtown Business District by adding item number six (6.) to this section, "6. A single street level residence provided any such residence shall not occupy the front 25 feet of the building on that street level." Cafferty seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

4) Old Business

5) New Business

a) Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson Election

Martens stated that the City Council has re-appointed the current members of the Planning Commission to a new three (3) year term. Martens explained that the Ordinance that establishes the Planning Commission states that the Commission shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from among its members. The Commission should allow for its members to make nominations for Chairperson and elect a Chairperson; and then make nominations for Vice-Chairperson and elect a Vice-Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson is responsible for running the meeting in the absence of the Chairperson.

The Planning Commission members elected Ebensperger as the Planning Commission Chairperson.

The Planning Commission members elected Fasching as the Planning Commission Vice-Chairperson.

Martens and Councilmember Ollig thanked Ebensperger for his many years of service, and his continuation, as Planning Commission Chairperson. They expressed gratitude for Ebensperger's efficiency on running Planning Commission meetings, on preparedness for the meetings, and for ensuring that issues were reviewed thoroughly during the meetings before they went to City Council for review.

b) 2012 Work Plan

Martens stated that the City Council has established a Work Plan for 2012 with the purpose of directing staff and Commissions on their focus for the year. Martens requested that the Planning Commission comment on the established Work Plan, of the following items, and consider adding items to the list.

- Define egress window size in ordinance zoning code.
- Discuss privately owned wind turbines
- Public Hearing on residential in C-1 Downtown Commercial

Ebensperger requested that a review of the current land use plan be added, to make sure it is still current and accurate, since it is from 2009.

Ebensperger also requested that a review of the zoning and subdivision ordinances be completed section by section. Ebensperger feels that some wording could be changed for clarity. Fasching asked if Ebensperger had specific examples. Ebensperger stated that he did not have examples at this current meeting, but could provide examples from the Subdivision Ordinance.

Martens stated that he would schedule a meeting with Ebensperger to prepare an agenda for year 2012.

Guggemos asked why the egress window item was on the list. Martens stated that there was currently no size limit defined in the ordinance. Guggemos stated that our ordinance should state that the City follows the state building code and that code clearly defines the size limits. Martens stated that he would contact the Building Inspector to review this item.

No other comments were suggested for a work plan.

6) Other Business

Martens stated that the newly elected Chairperson is required to attend some City Council meetings throughout the year to report what activities the Planning Commission has been working on. Fasching asked that the dates of the meetings where the Planning Commission Chairperson needs to report would be forwarded to Planning Commission members, so that they could attend also.

7) Adjournment

Fasching motioned to adjourn the meeting. Guggemos seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Brad Martens

Brad Martens,
City Administrator
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Raquel Kirchoff

Raquel Kirchoff,
Administrative Assistant
City of Winsted