

PLANNING COMMISSION
Wednesday, March 17, 2021

#1 Call to Order

Planning Commission Chair Duval called the meeting of the Brainerd Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

#2 Roll Call

Noted present were Commissioners Yeager, Erickson, Woodward, Foley, Duval, and Gorham. Commissioner Kallroos was noted as absent. Community Development Director Chanski and Assistant Planner Kramvik were also noted as present.

#3 Pledge of Allegiance

Commission Chair Duval opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

#4 Approval/Change of Agenda

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS YEAGER AND GORHAM, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

#5 Approval of Minutes

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS ERICKSON AND YEAGER, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 17, 2021 MEETING.

#6 Old Business

None

#7 New Business

7a. Variance and Conditional Use Permit Amendment – Submitted by ISD#181 for Garfield School, 1120 10th Ave NE, Brainerd

Community Development Director Chanski gave an update of the applications submitted by ISD#181 for Garfield Elementary School for a variance and conditional use permit amendment. He explained the purpose of the variance is to request a reduced side yard setback from 20 feet to 16 feet 5 ¾" to expand the gymnasium to a full-size rather than the size initially proposed. The conditional use amendment request is to allow for the construction of an addition to the existing gymnasium.

The Chair opened the public hearing at 6:14 p.m.

The Chair recognized Mr. Reid Theisse, director of building and grounds for ISD#181, who explained the reason for the amendment is to provide a full-size gymnasium. He said bids for the school have come back favorably and they can now budget for a larger gym, as the original plan had the smaller 2/3 size.

The Chair recognized Ms. Jodi Kennedy, principal of Garfield Elementary, who thanked the Commission for considering the applications. She said it is exciting to have this opportunity to allow more space to families for programs and events.

The Chair closed the public hearing at 6:18 p.m.

Commission discussion took place.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS FOLEY AND WOODWARD, DULY CARRIED, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE VARIANCE REQUEST FOR ISD#181 GARFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOR A SIDE YARD SETBACK FROM 20 FEET TO 16 FEET 5 ¾" BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS ERICKSON AND WOODWARD, DULY CARRIED, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AMENDMENT BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT WITH THE CONDITION THAT TWO TREES ARE PLANTED BETWEEN THE PROPOSED ADDITION AND L STREET NE AS PRESENTED.

7b. Consideration of Amending Section 515-37: Signs of the Code of Ordinances

Community Development Director Chanski explained due to COVID, the City has handled code compliance issues on a complaint driven basis only. He said recently, there have been several complaints from residents about non-commercial speech signs being left up past the allowed timeframe, per City code. City staff sent letters to those residents that had any type of non-commercial speech signs posted, which resulted in some residents being opposed to the code as it is stated in Section 515-37.

Community Development Director Chanski reviewed details and areas of possible concerns with the code, as well as recommended revisions.

Commission discussion took place.

The Chair opened the public hearing at 7:03 p.m.

The Chair recognized Ms. Dolly Matten, realtor with Greater Lakes Association, who would like the real estate sign ordinance clarified. She wanted to confirm the procedures for posting real estate signs on properties for sale.

The Chair closed the public hearing at 7:08 p.m.

Community Development Director Chanski read through the red-lined changes that he recommended, and it was determined to revise the following:

Section 515-37-1: Findings

- A. Move #2. *Signs provide an important medium through which individuals may convey a variety of messages up to #1.*

Section 515-37-5: Permit not Required

- B. Non-commercial speech signs, subject to the following:

- Remove “Non-commercial speech” from the title
 - Combine numbers two (2) and three (3) into one bullet point - *“Signs shall be placed no less than fifteen (15) feet from the back of the curb and shall not be within the sight visibility triangle.”*
 - Number four (4) should specify “ground mounted” signs
 - Number five (5) should specify no more than two (2) ground mounted signs and two (2) flags are allowed
- E. Do not strike (*E: Official signs*) from the ordinance

Section 515-37-10: District Regulations

- A. Add district R-1A and remove districts R-4 and R-5

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS ERICKSON AND YEAGER, DULY CARRIED, TO ADOPT THE ABOVE RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO THE SIGN ORDINANCE AS IT RELATES TO NON-COMMERCIAL SPEECH SIGNS.

#8 Public Forum

The Chair opened the public forum at 8:28 p.m.

No one came forward.

The Chair closed the public forum at 8:28 p.m.

#9 Community Development Director’s Report

Community Development Director Chanski stated the April agenda will include reviewing the food truck overlay districts. He said there is currently a \$300 fee for the entire season, but discussion could take place of creating a one-time event fee instead.

He announced the Swanson Haskamp team will be holding two Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meetings between now and April to discuss elements of the zoning code revision. The first will be held on March 25th with several members of City staff and commissions.

He stated the Parking Commission has compiled several topics for discussion that may be brought to the Planning Commission for consideration.

#10 Commissioner’s Questions/Comments

None

#11 Adjourn – 8:40 p.m.

Michael Duval, Planning Commission Chair