

**Minutes of VERMILION MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
of May 5, 2021 @ 7:00 pm ~ Zoom**

**PRESENT:** Heather Shirley, Jim Chapple, Joe Williams. *Absent: Heidi Strickler, Jeff Hammerschmidt*

**In ATTENDANCE:** Bill DiFucci, Building Inspector; Barb Brady, Council Representative

**Call to Order:**

Joe Williams, Chairman called the Wednesday, May 5, 2021 meeting to order.

**Approval of Minutes:**

**H. Shirley MOVED:** J. Chapple seconded to approve the minutes of the April 7, 2021 meeting. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**New Business:**

Mayor Forthofer said he wanted the Planning Commission members to be aware that he mentioned at the last council meeting and will be putting it forth again before City Council at their committee meetings on May 10 that the administration will be proposing an overall city-wide review of the zoning. He said some of the zoning ordinances date back 50 years and there has been a lot that has gone on for the past 50 years. He said this board deals with outdated or possibly ill-defined zoning, as certainly does the Board of Zoning Appeals. If they intend to grow and try to grow with some discipline and fairness for both residents and commercial properties, he wanted them to be aware this is what is being proposed. The actual implementation will need to be defined with the boards input. They will want representatives from the Administration, Council, Planning, and BZA, as well as some residents. J. Williams asked what timeframe he was looking at to complete this. Mayor Forthofer said as long as it takes to do it right.

G. Fisher advised the members that City Council is currently reviewing transient rental legislation, which will come before the Planning Commission for their recommendation to City Council. Once Planning Commission makes their recommendation to Council, she will schedule a public hearing on this legislation. There is three pieces of legislation that correlate with this matter, which is currently on the Council agenda for a second reading, but Council will need to table the third reading until Planning reviews it.

**Mark Lisi – Property Location: Highbridge Road Formerly Parkland Blvd. (Street Vacation)**

Mark Lisi of 667 Highbridge Road said he has a piece of property next door to him that is supposed to be a paper street and it has been just sitting there, and he has been maintaining it and mowing it. Therefore, he is requesting the city to vacate this property since the city owns it. C. Howard said they reviewed the revised vacation plat as addressed by Patrick McGannon and they have no issues with the vacation as submitted. If Planning Commission approves it, then it needs to go before City Council for approval. He said when Thornwood is vacated, half of the property will go to the property owner to the north and the other half will go to Mr. Lisi. J. Chapple asked if the property owner on the north side knows this is happening. Mr. Lisi said yes, and she signed off on it. C. Howard said the land to the east is all metro parks property, so they are not creating a landlocked piece. J. Williams asked if the metro parks would have any input to this request. C. Howard said they still have access points to the city's street. B. Brady asked who was responsible for the cost of surveying. C. Howard said the applicant pays for it all.

G. Fisher advised the board that if this is recommended to City Council, then she will need to notify all the property owners by certified mail that live within 300' of the request. The applicant will need to supply her with the names and mailing addresses of those residents. Once she receives this information, she will schedule a Public Hearing and will prepare legislation to approve the street vacation.

**H. Shirley MOVED:** J. Williams seconded to favorably recommend to City Council the Thornwood Road street vacation request by Mark Lisi. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Mike Welch - Property Location: Liberty Avenue - Parcel #:0100003122018 (Site Plan)

Matt Hasel of Adaptive Engineering Group was present to represent Mike Welch in the proposal made by Tradesman Park at a prior Planning Commission meeting in December of 2020, and to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a comparable use permit, and a front yard setback. Both were approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals in December of 2020. In summary, he explained they are looking at eight proposed workshops with an owner office (10'x20') that will be located on the east side of the building. Each building is 64'x96' and each workshop is about 1,500 square feet (24'x96'). Each building will have an enclosed dumpster area. They treated both buildings as one project/one phase and they looked at the parking design as currently provided to the board. They have 12 visitor parking spaces, 24 employee spaces which provides up to three spots per unit, two owner management spots and two extra parking spots, and one motorcycle parking spot for a total of 40 combined parking spots. They also will have ADA spots – one per building. He reviewed the site plan change that has occurred since December. Originally, they had a row of parking along the western side of the access road and there was a Zoning Board of Appeals member that strongly opposed the conceptual design of the parking, so instead they provided parking along the south side of the building so the front yard had some

discussions with the city engineer and building inspector. They recognized there is a section in the B-3 code that references a 20' buffer requirement, however, when you get into Section 1284.04, it says the Planning Commission can approve the access driveway being used as an access way. They are asking for the Planning Commission to approve the 20' no parking buffer area to allow driveway access so they can have parking outside of that 20' area. It will just be pavement within the buffer area. He provided the board with the south elevation design of the office area, as well as the landscape plan that was recently prepared by Barnes.

J. Williams asked what the distance is from the street to the paved area. M. Hasel said from the right of way to the paved area on the southeast corner it is probably within a foot of the right of way. J. Williams asked what the city requires as a buffer from the sidewalk. C. Howard said code says in the B-3 you need to have a 20' buffer unobstructed, so they are asking the board to waive this requirement and approve it as is, so it would only be one foot. M. Hasel said in 1284.04 (2) Use - it says, designated buffered areas shall be used for no other purpose than plantings or screening. Required buffer areas shall not be use for open retention basins or driveway access unless approved by the Planning Commission. He said they are not seeking a variance but are asking for the Planning Commission to approve the use of this buffer area on the park accessway. J. Williams said the only problem he sees is that they are trying to get this whole area to look a little nicer, so they have been trying to get this buffer and some trees, and some things along the street and this will basically put it right up tight, and then they have precedence for the next persons that come in.

H. Shirley asked if there were any issues with the sidewalk. M. Hasel said the sidewalk is within the right of way; it is probably somewhere between 10' and 15' off the right of way.

B. Brady agreed with the comments made by the board. H. Shirley said if this proposed site plan is not approved, then how would they change their plan. M. Hasel said they would have to go back to what the Board of Zoning Appeals did not like because they need those parking spaces, and this meets code. They will just have a main access road with parking on both sides of it, versus just having it on the one side. They are looking at a net reduction of 4 parking spaces. J. Williams asked if they were pushed all the way to the north as their property exists. M. Hasel advised this was correct. Justin Miller said they still have green space in the right of way and the sidewalk in between, and they have one entrance.

J. Williams asked if the future phase is to repeat this and turn it. M. Hasel said the layout gets tricky and they looked at an overall plan for it. He explained Phase Two to the board by reviewing the site plan before them. It was noted these shops will be rentals. H. Shirley asked if they had individuals who are interested. M. Welch said yes, the first building is rented out. They are all about cleaning up the east side of town and building the east side

up. If they can add multiple jobs to each spot, then it is good for the city, so they are trying to get this going so they can add jobs. H. Shirley asked if there was any signage that identifies the entire area. M. Hasel showed on the site plan the area reserved for signage. They are still in discussions of what the signage will say. They would like to add each unit's name on the signage or the building. J. Chapple suggested them looking at the signage they put up at the Harbourtown Fine Arts Center.

H. Shirley asked if they anticipated any issues in correlation with the city engineer's comments addressed in his letter. M. Hasel said they will review all comments. H. Shirley said one of the issues pertained to a rental agreement which they should review with the city law director. C. Howard said they need to make sure the uses meet the zoning. This protects Tradesman Park and the city. Therefore, before having a rental agreement signed, they understand this is being used correctly.

M. Hasel asked the board if they felt the landscaping plan as submitted by Barnes was sufficient. C. Howard said he addressed this only because Mr. Hammerschmidt brought up the discussion at a prior meeting. He said the plan does not have to be final, but at least it shows ideas and concepts of the landscaping. H. Shirley said they should add the signage to the site plan. M. Hasel said it was addressed on page 9. H. Shirley asked if brick will be on the buildings as she would like to get a visual for what this will look like. M. Welch said it is stone like you put on a house and it will probably come up the building like 4'. The color choice has not been decided on, but it will look nice. The roof will be metal, and the color choice may be darker tan, with a lighter tan on the building. H. Shirley asked if Barnes is planning on doing the landscaping. M. Welch said yes.

The board continued to review the plans and have much sidebar conversations between several groups at the same time.

The following motions were entertained:

**J. Chapple MOVED;** J. Williams seconded to approve the site plan contingent upon ensuring they submit the remaining items to the city engineer for review. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**H. Shirley MOVED;** J. Chapple seconded to waive the requirement regarding the 20' buffer and allow them to proceed as submitted in the current site plan. Roll Call Vote 3 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

J. Williams adjourned the meeting upon no further discussion.

***Next Meeting:***

*The next meeting has been scheduled for June 2, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. – Vermilion Municipal Complex, 687 Decatur Street*

*Transcribed by Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk.*