

CITY OF HARBOR SPRINGS  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES  
June 18, 2015

Acting Chairperson Bowman called the Planning Commission Meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. in the City Council Chambers of City Hall, 160 Zoll Street, Harbor Springs, MI 49740.

1. Roll Call and Verification of a Quorum

Present: Jeanne Benjamin, Andrew Bowman, John Cupps, Lee Kramer, Sara Smith and Carrie Wiggins

Absent: Jack Deegan, Jeff Ford and Fred Walstrom

Also Present: City Manager Thomas C. Richards, City Planner Larry Nix, and City Clerk Ronald B. McRae

City Clerk McRae acknowledged that a quorum was present.

2. Approval of Minutes

A spelling error was noted for the May 21, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. It was:

Item 3, page 1, first paragraph, the first sentence, the word "Sopping" was used. It should have been "Shopping".

Motion by Cupps, second by Wiggins, to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting as amended.

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

Motion carried.

3. Public Comments and Correspondence

City Manager Richards stated that a letter was received from Rob Mossburg, Chairman of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA)/Principal Shopping District (PSD) Board, supporting sidewalk café/outdoor dining, including alcoholic beverage service in the City of Harbor Springs.

4. Old and New Business

A. 117 West Main Street – Small Batch of Harbor Springs – Outdoor Seating Request

City Manager Richards reviewed the application submitted by Scott Reiss, the owner. Planner Nix stated that the Small Batch of Harbor Springs appears to have met all of the requirements for outdoor seating and the drawings illustrate a seven (7) foot public right-of-way for pedestrians.

After a brief discussion, the following motion was offered:

Motion by Cupps, second by Wiggins, to approve the application from Small Batch for outdoor seating as proposed on the application and drawings submitted May 5, 2015.

Ayes – 5

Nays – 0

Motion carried.

B. Sidewalk Café/Outdoor Dining

Planner Nix discussed the conceptual plan presented to the Planning Commission to illustrate points of the discussion from the May 21, 2015 meeting. Planner Nix discussed the tree boxes that are on East Main Street. Planner Nix also passed out two other conceptual drawings. Planner Nix discussed maintaining the six feet pedestrian walkway. He also discussed maintaining a 6 foot walkway, but allowing the walkway to be serpentine or curving from the outdoor seating areas to the curb. Discussion also included allowing for space for doors to be opened along the designated pedestrian walkway within the right-of-way to allow for car doors opening and closing.

Commissioner Bowman stated that he believed the 6-foot pedestrian walkway should be maintained because of the heavy foot traffic along East Main Street between State Street and Gardner Street. There was discussion about allowing a five (5) foot pedestrian walkway along East Third Street, East Bay Street and State Street because the foot traffic is lighter. Further, there are no trees along State Street in the public right-of-way.

Planner Nix also stated that the City's Zoning Code would need to be amended to allow a restaurant to do business outside of the structure in the Central Business Zoning District (CBD). In an effort to amend the City's Zoning Code and the City Code to allow for the Sidewalk Café /Outdoor Dining, City Manager Richards suggested a special meeting for 5:00 p.m., Thursday, June 25, 2015 to allow the Planning Commission to review the proposed ordinance and set a public hearing for the July 15, 2015 Planning Commission.

City Manager Richards stated that if the Planning Commission voted to recommend the proposed ordinance to amend the City's Zoning Code and the City Code to City Council for adoption, City Council could consider this issue at their July 20, 2015 City Council Meeting. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission to schedule the special Planning Commission Meeting as proposed.

C. Consideration of Off-Street Parking Requirements

City Manager Richards discussed the seminar he attended dealing with municipal parking. City Manager Richards stated that the issues that need to be resolved is the agreement on the policies that control the regulation of the downtown parking and the funding of additional downtown parking.

City Manager Richards stated that the cost of the downtown parking includes the maintenance of current parking spaces along the streets and maintenance of the parking lots. It would also include setting aside funds to purchase property and construct new parking lots. City Manager Richards stated that in Harbor Springs, providing parking has typically been the responsibility of new businesses. Many communities have the user of a parking space pay to park, with the revenues being used to support downtown projects including parking lot expansion.

Planning Commissioners stated that parking spaces were used mostly from mid-June through Labor Day. Many people would just park where there was no cost to park. City Manager Richards stated that the parking fees could be adjusted based on the varying demand for parking spaces, utilizing the "85% capacity goal".

[Enter Smith at 7:18 p.m.]

Due to the lack of a consensus on the off-street parking issue, City Manager Richards and City Planner Nix suggested a work session for the Planning Commission, the Downtown Development Authority / Principal Shopping District Board and City Council. City Manager Richards stated that he would try to coordinate a joint meeting for all three groups.

[Wiggins left at 7:19 p.m.]

Planner Nix discussed the appropriate time period to accumulate the "Payment in Lieu of Parking" fees. Planner Nix stated that perhaps a timetable should be developed to determine the estimated time additional parking would be necessary due to the increase in the intensity of parking in the CBD. For example, perhaps the parking intensity is estimated to increase to a level in ten (10) years to the point where parking area is needed. The cost of parking spaces could be amortized over a 10-year period.

The suggestion from Planner Nix was discussed, but no consensus was established.

5. Member Comments

None

6. Next Meeting

City Manager Richards stated that the next Planning Commission Meeting (a Special Meeting) is scheduled for 5:00 p.m., Thursday, June 25, 2015. The next regular Planning Commission Meeting is scheduled for 6:00 p.m., Thursday, July 15, 2015.

7. Adjournment

With no further business, Acting Chairperson Bowman adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

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Ronald B. McRae, City Clerk