

CITY OF HARBOR SPRINGS  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES  
October 20, 2016

Vice-Chairperson Smith called the Planning Commission Meeting to order at 6:06 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 L. Cupps, Lee Kramer, Sara Smith, and Carrie Wiggins

Absent: Jack Deegan, Jeff Ford, Fred Walstrom

Also Present: City Manager Thomas C. Richards, City Planner Larry Nix, Assessor / Planning & Zoning Administrator C. Jeffrey Grimm, and Deputy City Clerk Michelle R. Main

2. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Cupps, second by Wiggins, to approve the September 15, 2016 meeting minutes as read.

Ayes – 6

Nays – 0

Absent: Deegan, Ford, Walstrom

Motion carried.

3. Public Comments and Correspondence

None

4. Old and New Business

A. Re-consideration of a Special Land Use at 500 W. Summit

Planner Nix stated that applicant, Mr. Barry Baccus of 500 W. Summit, had originally obtained approval for special land use to construct a guest quarters on his property and that the special land use expiration date of 6 months had passed by the time he brought forth his plans. Zoning

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Administrator Grimm noted the new plans brought forth by the applicant were different than the original plans, however, they still meet the zoning requirements within the R1-C district in which the property belongs. The primary differences in the new plans are that the guest quarters are to be constructed within the confines of the existing building and a proposed addition of a small storage shed on the west side of the building. The planned storage shed will meet the setback requirements of the district.

Motion by Bowman, second by Benjamin, to approve the Special Land Use for 500 W. Summit as submitted with the condition that the accessory living quarters (guest quarters) is restricted to the current footprint of the existing building and for use as described in the zoning code.

Ayes: Benjamin, Kramer, Smith, Wiggins, Cupps, Bowman  
Nays: None  
Absent: Deegan, Ford, Walstrom

Motion carried.

B. Public Hearing re: Definition of Family – recommendations for Ordinance 401

Vice Chairperson Smith opened public hearing. Planner Nix discussed the recommended Definition of Family and read City Attorney Jim Ramer's suggested definition. No public comments were made. Commission Member, Lee Kramer, suggested adding additional language to the first sentence to read "An individual; or an individual plus one". Kramer additionally suggested changes to the wording "as one functional family". He suggested "unit or group" in lieu of "family". Public Hearing was closed by Motion from Bowman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Smith.

C. Recommendation of Ordinance 401 - Definition of Family

Upon closing of the public hearing further clarification was made by Kramer regarding his suggested revisions for the Definition of Family – Ordinance 401.

Motion by Bowman, second by Cupps to submit the recommended Definition of Family with the changes noted above to City Council for their consideration.

Ayes: 5  
Nays: 1 (Kramer)  
Absent: Deegan, Ford, Walstrom

Motion carried.

D. Discussion – Special Land Use expiration

Zoning Administrator Grimm discussed the expiration period of 6 months on Special Land Use requests. Grimm further explained how the expiration date works in conjunction with the timing of our local building cycles. Grimm recommends that we expand the Special Land Use expiration date to 12 months to coincide with building permits and site plan review timing. These proposed changes should be incorporated into the next meeting that addresses zoning changes. The commission agreed.

E. Discussion – Downton Signs

Zoning Administrator Grimm summarized the discussion from the September 15<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting, further clarifying the signage size allowance percentage per building. City Manager Richards discussed what constitutes a “sign” as opposed to window decal and temporary signage. Planner Nix discussed the option of writing the rule to match the needs versus enforcing a rule that does not meet the needs. Zoning Administrator Grimm cleared up the number of signs specified in the current rule; one wall sign and one projection sign. Further discussion by the Commission related to other signage used by some businesses (which does not comply with the zoning code) such as menu displays, displays of goods, temporary notices, artwork, chalkboards, electronic signs, and awnings. Additionally, how we would proposed to re-write a rule to account for all of these types of signs and the enforcement of said rule.

Business owner, Barbara Boz, of Barbara Boz Boutique at 139 State Street spoke about the signage on her retail building, in particular, the number of fixed signs and their total size. She discussed the negative aspects of the physical layout of the building in which her boutique is located; specifically its angle, step-up, and lack of window display, all of which present unique challenges to her business. Boz further discussed that due to these challenges, and being an experienced designer, she took the plan and design of her signage very seriously. She felt that her signage should fall within the limits of the current zoning code and further compared the Harbor Springs sign codes to those of the Historic District in Grand Rapids. Zoning Administrator Grimm sited that Boz’s business is a good example of the current issue and went on to discuss size, content, etc. and his restriction on enforcement of content or aesthetics.

Planner Nix discussed Barbara Boz Boutique’s signs and affirmed their proportionality to the size of the building and that her dual entry way signs make sense. Planner Nix stated whatever decision is made in regards to the sign ordinances we would have a lot of non-conformities, Grandfathering in said businesses, the option of putting zoning rules into the City Code, as well as giving businesses a timeframe in which to become conforming if said rules were to be changed and/or enforced. Commission Member Cupps suggested Planner Nix write something up for discussion at the next meeting. Assessor Grimm further explained the size limitations for

businesses and that the percentage used is based on the linear footage of the entire building, not the individual business, therefore, each business within that building must share that total square footage limitation. Boz also discussed her temporary "SALE" signage and whether or not it is considered temporary or not. She puts the sign up around Labor Day and removes it when she closes for the season at the end of October, indicating that the 30 day rule for temporary signage is not reasonable for a retail store in this environment. Planner Nix and the Commission further discussed the possibility of changing the 30 day rule to accommodate for the shoulder seasons.

F. Discussion – Mini-Libraries

Commission Member Cupps opened the discussion. Amelie Dawson and Eliece Aiman, representatives of the Harbor Springs Public Library (HSPL) explained to the Commission the concept of Little Free Libraries (LFL). The Harbor Springs Public Library is looking to sponsor and be stewards of a series of LFL's within the City limits for the purpose of promoting literacy, the joy of reading, and enrichment of the community. The HSPL is proposing to build and install LFL's on the private grounds of the Harbor Springs Area Historical Society at 349 E. Main Street and on city property at Zorn Park next to the water fountain. HSPL and its staff would be responsible for the building, installing, maintaining, and stocking of the libraries. Dawson also discussed the LFL mission statement and its 501(c) 3 non-profit status. There are currently three other LFL's in the area one in Wequetonsing on Pennsylvania, one on Pleasantview Rd., and one in Good Hart.

Zoning Administrator Grimm discussed the placement of LFL's on private versus public property and their size limitations. City Manager Richards indicated that any potential encumbrance of traffic and the content within the library should also be considered.

Motion by Bowman, second by Cupps to submit the recommended proposal to City Council for their consideration.

Ayes: 6  
Nays: 0  
Absent: Deegan, Ford, Walstrom


Motion carried.

5. Member Comments

Commission Member Lee commented on the good work performed by Mr. Andrew Bowman on the Planning Commission, it is one of the things that make him a Harbor Star.

6. Adjournment

With no further business, Vice-Chairperson Smith adjourned the meeting at 7:39 p.m.

  
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Michelle R. Main, Deputy City Clerk