

**BIG LAKE PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

APRIL 7, 2021

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Ketti Green, Alan Heidemann, Scott Marotz, Lisa Odens, Paul Seefeld, and Scott Zettervall. Commissioners absent: Dustin Vickerman. Also present: City Planner Lucinda Meyers, Recreation and Communication Coordinator Corrie Scott, and Community Development Director Hanna Klimmek.

4. ADOPT AGENDA

Commissioner Heidemann moved to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Green, unanimous ayes, agenda adopted.

5. OPEN FORUM

Chair Zettervall opened the Open Forum at 6:01 p.m.

No one came forward for comment.

Chair Zettervall closed the Open Forum at 6:01 p.m.

6. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

6A. APPROVE REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 3, 2021

Commissioner Seefeld motioned to approve the March 3, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Odens, unanimous ayes, Minutes approved.

7. BUSINESS

7A. PUBLIC HEARING: SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

Meyers reviewed the drafted new ordinance language that was proposed in the Planning Commission meeting packet. She stated that the City has received a second building permit for installation of a residential roof mounted solar energy system, which under current ordinance cannot be issued. Meyers asked the Commission to conduct a public hearing and consider making a motion to recommend approval or denial of the proposed ordinance amendments, either as presented or with modifications.

Chair Zettervall opened the public hearing at 6:04 p.m.

No one came forward for comment.

Chair Zettervall closed the public hearing at 6:04 p.m.

Green asked if the City's Building Official had additional comments regarding proposed language in the draft. Meyers confirmed that the City's Building Official had no further comment, but that he wanted to ensure the Minnesota building code is referenced along with the documents listed under Item j.i. Zettervall asked if an amendment should be made to Item g. so that it is only referencing ground systems rather than rooftop systems. Meyers stated that rooftop systems are generally used for commercial buildings with flat rooftops. She stated that there is no practical extent that the City would screen a single-family rooftop. Zettervall recommended amending verbiage in Item g. to exempt roof mounted systems from screening requirements. Green agreed with Zettervall's suggestion.

Odens asked if it is typical for verbiage in Item g. to state 'to the extent possible' and if it should be changed to 'to the extent practical.' Meyers stated that the proposed change can be made to Item g.

Commissioner Heidemann motioned to recommend to City Council approval of the proposed ordinance amendment with the following changes: 1) require screening for ground mounted systems only, and 2) change verbiage for screening from 'to the extent possible' to 'to the extent practical' Seconded by Commissioner Odens, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7B. PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE AMENDMENT MODIFYING THE BUILDING PERMIT SECTION OF THE ZONING CODE TO REFLECT EXPECTED REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATE OF SURVEY

Klimmek reviewed the drafted new ordinance language that was proposed in the Planning Commission meeting packet. She stated that the new language would accomplish consistency between the Zoning Code and handouts that inform the public on building permit application submission requirements. Klimmek asked the

Commission to conduct a public hearing and consider making a motion to recommend approval or denial of the proposed ordinance amendments, either as presented or with modifications.

Chair Zettervall opened the public hearing at 6:11 p.m.

No one came forward for comment.

Chair Zettervall closed the public hearing at 6:11 p.m.

Green asked if these changes will be helpful for staff. Klimmek stated that surveyors have been making complaints to Meyers and that this will help reduce future complaints.

Commissioner Green motioned to recommend to City Council approval of the proposed ordinance amendment as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Marotz, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

7C. PLANNING COMMISSION GOALS DISCUSSION

Meyers stated that after reviewing City Code Section 250 she realized that the ordinance does not reflect the Planning Commission's current practices. She recommended that Planning staff and the Planning Commission review the ordinance and recommend some revisions for purposes of consistency with current policies and practices at a later date.

Zettervall stated that he would like to talk about what was defined in the agenda regarding the City's code prior to talking about goals specifically. He stated that after this discussion he would like the Commission to decide if they would like to put together a formal Strategic Plan or talk more informally about goals. Zettervall stated that Item C. in Section 250 of the City's code is what should be focused on. Meyers stated that she interprets Section 250 to be targeted toward the implementation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. She stated that she views Program of Work to be synonymous with Chapter 17 of the Comprehensive Plan. Meyers stated that she believed that Items A and B of Section 250 reference the initial establishment of the City's Planning Commission. Martoz agrees with Meyers that Item C can be used to revise the Comprehensive Plan with the creation of a Resolution. He stated that it is normal for the Comprehensive Plan to be updated periodically.

Zettervall asked if Section 250 needs to be revised. Marotz stated that he doesn't feel revision of that section is a priority. Zettervall asked about the subcommittee that created the BLEDA's Strategic Plan. Heidemann stated that the Strategic Plan was created in order to keep the BLEDA on track and that it is referenced throughout the year and updated annually. Klimmek stated that the Strategic Plan helps with her position as Big Lake's Community Development Director and understanding the priorities of the BLEDA. Meyers agreed that a Strategic Plan would be helpful for her position as City Planner.

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Green stated that she doesn't mind putting together a Strategic Plan as long as it is used. She doesn't view that the time put into creating a Strategic Plan is worthwhile unless it is being consistently referenced and updated. Marotz stated that he likes the action steps portion of a Strategic Plan as it forces the Commission to move forward. Marotz stated that he feels the Planning Commission's Strategic Plan needs to be simplified compared to the BLEDA's. He stated that the goals need to be measurable and reasonable. Odens and Seefeld agreed with the Commission's prior statements. Zettervall asked if the BLEDA's Strategic Plan is reviewed regularly. Heidemann stated that it is reviewed quarterly and referenced regularly. He stated that there is a subcommittee that created the document and then brought it to the full Commission for approval. Zettervall recommended that three members from the Planning Commission along with City staff make up the subcommittee. Green asked if anyone outside of the BLEDA and City staff have participated in creating the BLEDA's Strategic Plan. Heidemann stated that there hasn't been anyone outside of the BLEDA and City staff that have participated in creation of the Strategic Plan.

Odens asked if this subcommittee would be considered a quorum. Zettervall stated that as long as the subcommittee only has three members, it wouldn't be considered a quorum. Meyers stated that the next step is to decide whether to have a loose discussion or a more structured approach that is coordinated with staff. Meyers stated that a third option would be to go without a subcommittee and bring the discussion to a future meeting. Zettervall asked the Commission if they would like to go forward with a subcommittee. The Commission unanimously agreed. Zettervall asked which Commissioners have interest in joining the subcommittee. Odens stated that if the full commission wants to participate that it is brought up at a regular meeting rather than a subcommittee meeting. Marotz stated that it would be interesting for the members on the Code Revision Task Force to participate in the Strategic Plan subcommittee. Meyers stated that another option is for the Chair, Vice-Chair, and a third Planning Commission Member who has Strategic Planning experience to make up the subcommittee. Zettervall recommended that Green, Heidemann, and himself along with City staff make up the Strategic Plan subcommittee.

Zettervall stated that the Comprehensive Plan has two volumes; in the first, issues are identified and in the second, a plan is made to solve the identified issues. Zettervall stated that he feels one of the goals for the Commission should be establishing an update cycle for the Comprehensive Plan. Odens stated that the last time the Comprehensive plan was reviewed was ten years ago. She stated that as the Code Revision Task Force continues to meet they will likely find things in the Comprehensive Plan that need to be updated. Odens stated that there are also portions of the Comprehensive Plan that aren't code related that likely need to be addressed.

Odens stated that she looked at Chapter 17 of the Comprehensive Plan that has action steps. She feels that there are a few action steps that are directly related to the

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Planning Commission. One of those priorities is adopting a road functional classification system to apply to streets that are under municipal jurisdiction. Odens stated that she would like to see a more detailed classification system that determines which streets are a priority for reconstruction and that it would need to be created with the help of the City's Engineer. Marotz stated that this type of system would be similar to the City's Complete Streets Plan, but with more strategy involved.

Zettervall stated that there is a flowchart in the Comprehensive Plan that helps staff decide when a street needs sidewalks. Odens stated that this type of flowchart is specifically quantitative and that there are other qualitative aspects that should be considered. Zettervall stated that too complex of a flowchart could hinder potential variances. Odens agreed and stated that a classification system should include a note stating that it is a recommendation. Zettervall asked Seefeld if a classification system would have been helpful for City Council when they were making decisions for the 2021 street project. Seefeld stated that the goal of the Code Revision Task Force is to simplify things, and that a classification system might not do that.

Odens stated that a potential classification system wouldn't need to be included in the Comprehensive Plan, but could be a tool for the City Engineer to reference. Marotz stated that he views a classification system could appease subjectivity and be used as a baseline for when the City Engineer starts implementing a street project. He stated that this is why he likes the Complete Streets Plan because it acts as some sort of baseline to reference when implementing street projects. He stated that although Complete Streets and a potential classification system for streets are a baseline, that there is always going to be exceptions where you need to deviate from those plans.

Odens stated that another action item she views should be a priority is to amend the zoning ordinance to greatly reduce or eliminate minimum off-street parking requirements for businesses and industry. She stated that without a minimum requirement for off-street parking, there is a possibility that a business would like to work with their neighboring businesses to share parking and that she would like to work with the City's attorney to ensure the City is prepared for this potential outcome. Zettervall stated that this has already been addressed to a degree and that it might be a better priority for the Code Revision Task Force. Odens stated that the Planning Commission hasn't focused on business parking specifically and she would like to discuss it further. Marotz stated that parking is an important goal because it is a topic that comes up frequently. Zettervall stated that signs are another topic that comes up frequently. Marotz stated that sign ordinance revision will likely come up often due to changing technology.

Seefeld asked what has been discussed the most at prior meetings that needs to be addressed. Marotz confirmed that parking and signs are two that come up often. Marotz stated that the section in the City's code that references electronic reader boards is outdated along with other portions of the code regarding signs. Zettervall asked if

updating the zoning map to reflect the land use map should be considered a goal. Green stated that it needs to be worked on, but that she isn't sure it needs to be included in a Strategic Plan. Heidemann stated that the current discussion is best used as a starting point that the Strategic Plan subcommittee can then narrow down and make more detailed.

Meyers stated that she feels that the goals being discussed should be broadened. For example, she stated that a goal could be to implement the Comprehensive Plan and then this goal would have specific action items associated with it. Green asked what Meyers views as priorities for the Planning Commission. Meyers stated that the zoning code and subdivision ordinance needs to be completely overhauled. She also stated that staff has been working with the City Attorney. Meyers commented that having a street classification system would be a great tool for City Council, but that the creation of the system would be led by the City Engineer. She stated that it is ultimately up to the City Council on whether they would like to implement a roadway classification system.

Marotz stated that the Planning Commission has the ability to look into the Complete Streets Plan and that he would like the Commission to approach City Council to see if they support the creation of a classification system. Marotz stated that all of the Planning Commission's goals should be brought up at a Council workshop to ensure that the Commission's time is being well spent. Klimmek stated that she believes the City Engineer would support a street classification project.

Zettervall stated that the goals listed in the BLEDA's Strategic Plan are more general and then underneath each goal are multiple more detailed objectives. Marotz stated that some of the goals that are listed in the BLEDA's Strategic Plan are standing goals and the objectives underneath are more actionable items that change over time.

Zettervall confirmed that the subcommittee will create a draft Strategic Plan and bring it to the Planning Commission for review before bringing it to City Council. Odens asked if there should be a softer goal regarding educational opportunities or collaborating with City Council. Marotz stated that making the Joint Committee Meeting bi-annual rather than annual would be a benefit, especially with a number of new individuals on City Council. Zettervall asked if there should be a standing agenda item regarding Strategic Plan. Meyers agreed and stated that it is more realistic to bring the draft Strategic Plan to the first Planning Commission meeting in May rather than April.

7D. CODE REVISION TASK FORCE UPDATE

Meyers reviewed that during the Code Revision Task Force's March 16th meeting, the volunteer group welcomed a new member: Councilmember Halverson. She stated that the next meeting is scheduled April 20th and the group anticipates the onboarding of additional members: Planning Commissioner Scott Marotz and Parks Advisory Board member Jack Merwin. The group intends on introducing themselves and the project to

the City Council during the May 26th City Council Workshop.

Zettervall asked the Commission if they have any feedback on the two goals that were created by the task force. Zettervall stated that the first goal comes off as trying to strip the code to as minimal as possible and that his understanding was that the revision would result in a more user-friendly code, not one that was absent quality of life provisions. Heidemann stated that although it may read that way, the final decisions are made by City Council rather than by the Code Revision Task Force solely. Seefeld stated that he has been advised by someone who works for the City of Maple Grove to view the second goal as important as it will reduce the need for PUDs, CUPS, and IUPs at Council Meetings. Zettervall stated that to a degree it is important to have PUDs, CUPS, and IUPs.

Marotz stated that there is a good mix of individuals on the Task Force that will likely not allow for the code to be stripped completely. He stated that having a more simplistically written code is beneficial in many ways, including to save time for staff and consultants. Odens stated that CUPs and PUDs should be reserved for creative ideas rather than things that are standard in the industry and that the constant need for these is likely because the City's code is out of date.

Heidemann asked if there was any interest from the public in joining the Code Revision Task Force. Meyers stated that there was one individual that showed interest and that she has their contact information on file.

7E. CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING PARTNERSHIP (CMRP) FRAMEWORK 2030 UPDATE

Meyers reviewed the following:

- The Round 2 Engagement process has ended. The preponderance of input has come from regional leadership within the partner jurisdictions.
- In addition to the Partnership workshop conducted in late February, workshops were conducted with appointed and elected officials in Monticello, Monticello Township and Sherburne County to collect feedback on the draft vision and strategies for regional economic growth, land use and collaboration.
- City Administrator Wilfahrt and Planner Meyers conversed on the topics of the Partnership and the Framework 2030 project during a Facebook Live event held in March.
- Partnership and Staff attended a retreat in late March with the purpose of addressing concerns that have arisen amongst members regarding the partnership itself. During the retreat, partners produced a SWOT analysis to deepen their understanding of their mission. Action steps for the Partnership are an anticipated result of the analysis.
- Next Steps: PlanningNext team is compiling draft findings from the R2 Engagement which will be presented to the Partnership during the April 22nd

meeting. Refinement of the vision statement and prioritization of the strategies expected April/May.

Marotz asked if the concerns in the partnership were internal or external. Meyers stated that there were some elected officials that sit on the partnership that passed on concerns they heard from their constituents. Odens asked what a SWOT analysis is. Meyers outlined that SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Seefeld stated that not only were direct strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified, but also more indirect strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Seefeld stated that an example of a weakness for this group is having an entirely new City Council in Big Lake.

Meyers stated that the City of St. Cloud is also looking into adding a bridge crossing in their area. She stated that MNDOT is also exploring the addition of a bridge crossing between Elk River and Brooklyn Center. Zettervall asked if these potential crossings are considered a threat in the SWOT analysis to CMRP. Meyers stated that this topic is outside of the scope of information that was considered in the SWOT analysis but could be considered a threat to the Partnerships hopes for an additional bridge crossing.

Odens asked if CMRP is competing for funding with these potential bridge crossings. Meyers stated that there is no funding set aside at this point. Marotz stated that funding is not earmarked, but that other bridge crossings are a direct threat to potential funding. Klimmek stated that this would especially be difficult because MNDOT is more likely than CMRP to receive funding. Meyers also stated that St. Cloud is likely to have more resources in a project like this.

7F. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Klimmek discussed the status of various projects within Community Development as of April 7, 2021. This update included Housing, Commercial and Industrial, BLEDA, Planning and Zoning, Building, Recreation and Communication, and Streets and Parks.

Klimmek reviewed the following handout during the meeting:

PERMIT ACTIVITY REPORT – THROUGH MARCH 31, 2021

Permit Type	Permits Issued in March of 2021	2021 Total
Single-Family	14	36
Multi-Family	0	0
Commercial New / Remodel / Addition	0	5
Remodel / Decks / Misc.	25	51

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HVAC / Mechanical	7	25
Plumbing	5	17
Zoning	16	17
Land Alteration	0	0
Fire	0	2
TOTAL	67	153

	Permit Fee	Plan Review	TOTAL
Total Fees in Mar. 2021	\$47,751.10	\$7,807.18	\$55,558.28

YTD 2021 Total Valuation (through 3/31/21)	YTD 2021 Permit Fee + Plan Review (through 3/31/21)
\$11,708,709.00	\$171,983.58

PREVIOUS YEAR COMPARISON – THROUGH MARCH 31, 2020

Permit Type	Permits Issued in March of 2020	2020 Total
Single-Family	3	5
Multi-Family	0	0
Commercial New / Remodel / Addition	1	3
Remodel / Decks / Misc.	13	35
HVAC / Mechanical	4	20
Plumbing	2	10
Zoning	4	12
Land Alteration	0	1
Fire	0	10
TOTAL	27	96

	Permit Fee	Plan Review	TOTAL
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Total Fees in Mar. 2020	\$8,763.95	\$3,145.57	\$11,909.52
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YTD 2020 Total Valuation (through 2/29/20)	YTD 2020 Permit Fee + Plan Review (through 2/29/20)
\$1,294,478.76	\$25,048.62

Klimmek updated that Norm Michels and Dan Childs are now considered Department heads and Norm is no longer part of the Community Development Department.

8. PLANNER'S REPORT

Meyers reviewed the following:

- During the March 24 meeting, the City Council:
 - Rezoned 18 parcels consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, per the Planning Commission recommendation, with the exception of 1 parcel which they rezoned from B-3 to R-2 (as opposed to R-3).
 - Provided feedback on the Marketplace Crossing Concept Plan (60-unit multifamily).
 - Approved the final plat for Big Lake Car Condos Second Addition (final approval for this project).
 - Authorized staff to move forward with advertising the street reconstruction project to collect bids. Highland Avenue was removed from the scope and sidewalks are included on Powell Street from Glenwood to Hiawatha. Construction anticipated May through November.
- The Planning Commission will be meeting twice per month, the first and third Wednesday of the month from April through August.
 - The next meeting is scheduled April 21st. Items anticipated for this agenda include:
 - 2 Public Hearings:
 - Amendments to the City Ordinance regulating public hearing notification procedure.
 - CUP for impervious surface coverage over 25% for a property located within the Shoreland Management district allowing construction of a single-family home on a vacant lot.
- The City is in receipt of the following development applications:
 - Norland Park 7th Addition (completing this residential development). Scheduled for Council approval April 28th.
 - Update to be provided during meeting. Application anticipated April 5.
- Staff, and the Mayor, continue to work with the Meadowview Estates applicant on development options for their property west of 172nd St NW.

9. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Marotz stated that at the Parks Committee meeting there was a discussion about finalizing the questionnaire that will be sent out to residents near the City owned parcel off of Brom Lane requesting feedback on what kind of amenities are valued by those who live in the area. Scott stated that the neighborhoods within walking distance of the parcel are included in the mailing.

10. OTHER – None.

11. ADJOURN

Commissioner Green motioned to adjourn at 7:56 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Heideamnn, unanimous ayes, motion carried.