



**Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 3, 2023
6:30 PM**

North St. Paul City Hall – Council Chambers
2400 Margaret Street

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Patrick Blees called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

COMMISSION

Patrick Blees, Chair
Andrew Wise, Vice-Chair
Erik Brenna, Commissioner
Cameron Muhic, Commissioner
Jim Rathe, Commissioner
Jason Nordby, City Council Liaison absent

STAFF

Brandy Howe, Community Development Director

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Blees asked for a motion to adopt the 08-03-2023 meeting agenda.
M/Rathe, S/Wise.
Motion carried 5-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of July 6, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Blees asked for a motion to approve the July 6, 2023 meeting minutes.
M/Brenna, S/Muhic.
Motion carried 5-0.

V. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public comments.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no public hearings scheduled.

VII. COMMISSION BUSINESS, ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Zoning Code Update

Howe presented a reorganized draft of what would be Article I and Article III of the municipal zoning code. Howe stated adding articles will make it easier for a reader to navigate the code. The following are the proposed articles of the zoning code:

Article I – Introduction

Article II – Definitions

Article III – Administration and Enforcement

Article IV – Establishment of Zoning Districts

Article V – Land Use Regulations

Article VI – Design and Performance Standards

Article VII – Nonconformities

The following are the proposed changes for Article I – Introduction:

1. Create Section **154.001 Title**, which is standard practice for a zoning ordinance.
2. Create Section **154.002 Authority** that cites the authority from state statute for a city to establish a zoning ordinance.
3. Create Section **154.003 Purpose and Intent** that has been modified to focus on the areas that the zoning ordinance can affect.
4. Create Section **154.004** to identify the relationship between the zoning ordinance and the City's comprehensive plan.
5. Create Section **154.005 Interpretation** from the existing Section 154.002 Introductory Provisions and make the following modifications:
 - a. Subsections (D), (B)3, (F) and (G) have been moved to better fitting Sections.
 - b. Subsection (E) has been eliminated as it is captured under **Section 154.004**.
 - c. Howe asked the Planning Commission to consider whether Subsection (C)2 (measured distances shall be measured to the nearest tenth of a foot) is too restrictive or appropriate to retain.
 - i. Wise stated that distances should be measured to the nearest tenth of a foot. Blees agreed.
 - d. Howe asked the Planning Commission to consider whether Subsection (C)4 (a use which is not allowed is prohibited) is appropriate to retain. Staff suggest some flexibility be given to the zoning administrator to determine if uses not imagined are in alignment with ones listed in the use table.
 - i. Blees stated that as long as a use is not identified as a prohibited use, staff should have the flexibility in determining whether a use is acceptable or not.

The following are the proposed changes for Article III – Administration and Enforcement:

1. Eliminate former Section 154.004(I) Design Review as design will be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council for approval.
2. **Section 154.009** clarifies that the zoning administrator is the enforcing officer of the ordinance, and that person is appointed by the City Manager rather than the City Council.
3. Remove Section 154.004(B) on advisory bodies as the Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission are established in Chapter 32 of the City Code.
4. Create **Section 154.010 Fees** which sets expectations for staff and customers on what fees the City has the authority to collect and the procedures to do so. The City has the authority to request a performance bond to ensure the maintenance of public right of way.
5. Create **Section 154.011 Recovery of City Costs and Expenses** to set expectations for costs the City can recover related to plan review, legal publication, inspections, etc.
6. Create **Section 154.012 Requirements for Zoning Applications** based on former section 154.004(C) but streamlined.

7. Create **Sections 154.013 – 154.017** to address zoning applications, including conditional use permits, interim use permits, site plan review, variances and zoning map and text amendments. The new sections improve clarity, procedures, review criteria and ease of use.
 - a. Create **Section 154.015** to make site plan review a staff-level review rather than require applicants to receive Planning Commission and City Council approval. Applications that meet the ordinance without the need for other approvals should not be required to undergo additional scrutiny that could lead to subjective decisions. After some discussion, the Planning Commission agreed with the change but requested the group still hear about the site plan reviews via a staff report, rather than conduct any formal reviews or approvals.
8. Create **Section 154.018 Zoning Permits** to codify the types of zoning permits that the City processes to ensure compliance with the zoning regulations.
9. Create **Section 154.019 Zoning Verification** to codify the procedures for a zoning letter request.

Blees requested that language be put in the zoning code that objectively states when a development agreement is required or not. Rathe stated that he appreciates the new organization of the proposed zoning code update and that it is much easier to read than the current zoning code. Howe stated she will bring more updates to the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting.

VIII. REPORTS

Howe reported that the Lillie project is underway and some permits have been pulled, including demolition. All City Commissions, including the Planning Commission, are encouraged to participate in the Fall Roundup Parade on September 14th.

Commissioner Brenna stated he and his family had attended the Hause Park food truck event. The event was a fantastic family-friendly event, and he provided kudos to City staff for putting on the event.

Chair Blees attended the History Cruzers Car Show and indicated it is always a great event and very well attended. Blees shared that he is impressed by the new park signs.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Blees asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 PM.
M/Muhic, S/Rathe.
Motion carried 5-0.

The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting is Thursday, September 7, 2023 at 6:30 PM.

Members, please notify any planned absences to:

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