

**BELLE PLAINE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 8, 2018**

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Chair Hetzel led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. CALL TO ORDER. 1.1. Roll Call.

The Planning and Zoning Commission met in Regular Session on Monday, January 8, 2018 at City Hall, 218 North Meridian Street, Belle Plaine, MN. Chair Anthony Hetzel called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm with Commissioners Ashby Carter, Omni Kiecker, Ashton Pankonin, and Catherine Tarbell present. Also present were Community Development Director Smith Strack and Council Liaison Chard.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

MOTION by Commissioner Pankonin, second by Commissioner Tarbell, to approve the agenda as presented. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES. 3.1. Regular Session Minutes of December 11, 2018.

MOTION by Commissioner Carter, second by Commissioner Pankonin, to approve the Regular Session Minutes of December 11, 2017. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

4. RECOGNITION OF INVOLVED CITIZENS.

5. BUSINESS.

5.1. Planning and Zoning Commission Annual Report.

Community Development Director Smith Strack referenced a draft 2017 annual Planning Commission Report as included in the meeting packet. The report is for submission to the City Council. It addresses: Planning Commission functions, work completed in 2017 and a starting point for discussion of 2018 goals. Smith Strack provided an overview of the Planning Commission's 2017 activities, including 12 regular meetings, one joint meeting with Council, one special meeting, two training sessions, and participation in three quarterly meetings relating to Destination 2040. Smith Strack highlighted planning, legislative, and regulatory activities completed by the Commission.

Smith Strack also highlighted potential 2018 goals by Commission function. Planning function: complete comprehensive plan update: *Destination 2040*; pursue land use policies which provide homes in Belle Plaine for persons working in Shakopee; pursue planned land use policies providing for additional quasi-industrial and industrial uses; advocate for sustainable land use practices as evidenced by: advancing to GreenStep Cities Step 3, receiving at least a bronze designation from the SolSmart Program, and supporting the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. Legislative function: provide for vertical (as opposed to horizontal) expansion throughout commercial/industrial zones and provide for higher clear ceiling heights in industrial zones by amending maximum height standards as appropriate; clarify code language regarding non-conforming expansion permit issuance criteria; clarify standards pertaining to outdoor storage and parking pads; consider amending the code to allow for accessory dwelling units; consider clarifying language pertaining to non-conformance expansion permits; review code for housekeeping issues as become apparent; and, as time permits review code standards to determine compliance with state/federal rules. Regulatory function: review requests for platting, variances, rezoning, text amendment, and conditional use permits in a timely, consistent, and professional manner with the process prescribed by the zoning and/or subdivision ordinance; and implement strategies within the Comprehensive Plan relating to land use and subdivision of property.

The Commission authorized the submission of the 2017 Annual Report with minor updates. The Commission directed the report to be placed on the consent agenda for approval by City Council.

MOTION by Commissioner Tarbell, second by Commissioner Carter, to present the 2017 Annual Planning Commission Report. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED

5.2. Destination 2040 plan outcomes: Livability, Stewardship, and Sustainability.

Community Development Director Smith Strack provided details on *Destination 2040* the City's outcome-based comprehensive plan update and its pending completion. Smith Strack explained three of five planned outcomes sought include: livability, stewardship, and sustainability. Livability pertains to factors adding up to the City's quality of life including: access to natural environments, a variety of housing options, walkability and connectivity, and access to cultural, entertainment, and recreation possibilities. Stewardship literally means conducting, supervising, or managing something, most often in a careful and responsible manner. We are the managers of that which our ancestors entrusted to us. As good stewards we are the protectors of what future generations will inherit. Sustainability means meeting the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Smith Strack explained livability, stewardship, and sustainability are intricate components of basic land use planning and development review. As such it is appropriate for the Planning Commission to be a leading voice on such efforts. Staff have identified three flagship programs to further efforts to positively impact livability, stewardship, and sustainability.

Smith Strack described each program. GreenStep Cities is a voluntary challenge, assistance, and recognition program to help cities achieve their sustainability and quality-of-life goals. It is a free program that connects cities to resources and technical assistance to complete up to 29 best practices in the areas of buildings and lighting, transportation, land use, environmental management, and community and economic development. There are five 'steps' in the program. Staff is currently working toward level "Step" Three.

SolSmart is a national designation program recognizing cities, counties, and towns that foster the development of mature local solar markets. By streamlining zoning and review process requirements and taking other steps to encourage solar development, communities become "open for solar business" thereby attracting solar investment which in turn generates economic activity and furthers sustainability. Staff is currently working on a 'bronze' SolSmart designation.

The Mayor's Monarch Pledge was created by the National Wildlife Federation and uses Monarch butterflies as a flagship species to call attention to habitat changes. Local resident Wendy Caldwell brought this program to staff's attention.

Commissioner Hetzel requested information on the final two GreenStep Cities steps, specifically what the last two steps are for the Green Step. Community Development Director Smith Strack explained steps four and five are not programming but metric based. Council Liaison Chard shared he planted milkweed over the summer and was able to keep it maintained. Commissioner Tarbell also a milk weed planter suggested the solar garden area as a possible area to plant milkweed for the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. Chard agreed with Tarbell's suggestion and added the sewer treatment plant as another possible area to designate for pollinator habitat. Commissioner Hetzel suggested forming an outreach committee to educate and engage citizens. Smith Strack opined Planning Commission can take these projects and make their own prioritized work plan. Smith Strack opined engaging citizens on helping the City make the world a better place is a positive step. Commissioner Pankonin expressed his concern with the Mayor's Monarch Pledge and the existing weed ordinance being a slippery slope. Tarbell believes education is important to avoid invasive species and although allowing milkweed is a fine line she believes it's an appropriate one. Commissioner Kiecker suggested not reinventing the wheel and reaching out to community members who are master gardeners and the FFA for help spreading the word.

Commissioners Kiecker, Carter and Tarbell suggested handing out information and sample packets at area events such as BBQ days' parade and the town cook out.

Council Liaison Chard expressed his interest in keeping solar energy in the minds of community members. Chard would like to see grant money and initiatives brought forward to make it more accessible for citizens. Community Development Director Smith Strack identified potential grant opportunities for Belle Plaine residents and opined Belle Plaine could lead the County in solar energy production. The Commission by consensus agreed to lead Green Steps, Solsmart, and Mayor's Monarch pledge.

5.3. Code Updates: Parking and Outdoor Storage.

Community Development Director Smith Strack explained the City Council has directed stepped up enforcement of code related to parking of vehicles and outside storage. The enforcement effort will include: educational outreach/notice of enforcement 'sweeps'; clarification of standards relating to often cited violations (i.e. parking on 'grass' and residential outdoor storage); and, updating/clarifying standards.

Smith Strack requested input from the Planning Committee pertaining to several standards contained in the outdoor storage regulations and off-street parking regulations. The Commission discussed the items and provided direction. Strack will update existing code standards and bring draft language to the next Planning Commission meeting.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS.

6.1. Commissioner Comments.

Commissioner Carter requested an update on Tatiana Fields. Community Development Director Smith Strack stated the inaugural opening will take place in July. The Property Owner is on setting up leagues at this time.

6.2. Director's Report.

Community Development Director Smith Strack provided highlights of the Director's Report

6.3. Upcoming Meetings.

1. Next Regular Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Monday, February 12, 2018.

The Commissioners were reminded of the upcoming meetings as listed.

7. ADJOURNMENT.

MOTION by Commissioner Carter, second by Commissioner Pankonin, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Eyrich
Recording Secretary