

CITY OF CHARLEVOIX
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Monday, July 10, 2017 - 7:00 p.m.
210 State Street, City Hall, Council Chambers, Charlevoix, MI

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Chamberlain.

B. Roll Call

Chair: Sherm Chamberlain

Members Present: Judy Clock, John Elzinga, Mary Eveleigh, Toni Felter, Nelson Fletcher, Dennis Halverson, Rick Golding, RJ Waddell

Staff Present: Elise Crafts, Regional Planner Networks Northwest

C. Inquiry Into Potential Conflicts of Interest

None.

D. Approval of Agenda

Regional Planner Crafts asked to add approval of the June 27, 2017 Minutes to the agenda. The Commission approved the agenda as amended.

E. Approval of Minutes – June 12, 2017 and June 27, 2017

Motion by Member Halverson, second by Member Eveleigh, to approve the minutes of the June 27, 2017 meeting as presented. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Member Clock questioned if there was a Code definition for “bedroom”. After discussion, it was determined that the existing definitions covered bedrooms. Motion by Member Clock to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2017 meeting as presented. *Clerk’s note: There was no second, however the Chair called for and received a unanimous voice vote. Therefore it was presumed that the motion passed.*

F. Call for Public Comment not Related to Agenda Items

Chair Chamberlain stated that he reviewed an old map of downtown Charlevoix and he visited the Taffy Barrel owner to show him the fact that there was a building where there was parking now. He agreed with the owner that there should be some type of screening around the restaurant’s cooler and screening has since been installed.

G. New Business

1. Planning Commission Bylaws Review

a. Planning Commission Discussion

Chair Chamberlain began a review of the bylaws and discussion was held regarding excused absences from meetings and Secretary duties. Member Waddell questioned if the review of donations/gifts to the City should be included in the list of Commission responsibilities. Regional Planner Crafts stated that such responsibility would fall under Section 9.2 of the bylaws. No changes were made to the bylaws.

H. Old Business

1. Zoning Code Review

a. Staff Presentation

Regional Planner Crafts stated that she needed to do further research to locate the “to-do” list requested by Member Waddell. Discussion followed regarding the topics that were on the list. Chair Chamberlain stated that a number of the issues were incorporated with the Redevelopment Ready initiative. He indicated that the Master Plan was “Redevelopment Ready” and now they needed to get the Zoning Ordinance to match the Master Plan.

Regional Planner Crafts began a discussion regarding current and proposed sign regulations including:

- Signage placed in the right-of-way – Signs are not allowed in the public right-of-way other than those signs that are part of the City’s highway banner program, however portable signs are allowed on private property which includes the A-frame signs placed outside businesses. She stated that due to the varying right-of-way widths, it was likely that some businesses have private property in between their business storefront and the public right-of-way. After discussion, no changes were recommended.
- Enforcement of sign regulations – Regional Planner Crafts noted several discrepancies in the ordinances she reviewed. After discussion, she agreed to research referencing MDOT sign regulations specifically in the ordinance.

- Sidewalk signs – Regional Planner Crafts stated that all types of signage on sidewalks, roads and grounds were prohibited which was a very wide prohibition and she doubted that this was enforced. After discussion, the Commission agreed to eliminate the prohibition against signage on sidewalks.
- Artwork – Regional Planner Crafts stated that the current ordinance allowed for architectural features and works of art in every district were allowed without a permit under certain conditions. After discussion, no changes were recommended, but she would research other regulations regarding works of art.
- Window Signage – Regional Planner Crafts stated that window signs less than 6 sq.ft. were permissible in all districts and exempt from permits, however the ordinance also states that a business was allowed a maximum of two types of signs per public frontage. She felt that those two rules may or may not work. She noted that there were several examples downtown where there are multiple window signs and additional signage on the exterior of the building. She suggested signage less than 6 sq.ft. be allowed in every district and there would be language added “and are not included in sign count totals”. After discussion, no additional changes were recommended.

b. Planning Commission Discussion

Discussion followed regarding language relative to temporary signs and content neutral signage. Regional Planner Crafts stated that the draft that she will present in August may have sections which include “ors” for a couple of options. Member Waddell recommended that she include examples as parentheticals in the draft ordinance.

I. Staff Updates

Regional Planner Crafts stated that she and Staff Planner Lucas would meet with Interim Zoning Administrator Larry Sullivan to discuss the site plan review process and any possible changes to the process.

Member Waddell recalled that at the May meeting they talked about asking City Council or the City Manager to draft a letter to the State Committee regarding not regulating short-term rentals. He indicated that the matter was scheduled for the August 7th City Council meeting along with the short-term rental ordinance discussion. The ordinance will be available by the end of the week. Member Golding suggested disbanding the Short Term Rental Subcommittee once Council approves the ordinance.

J. Request for Next Month's Agenda or Research Items

Regional Planner Crafts stated that Networks Northwest and the City were still working out the details for Planning and Zoning with Mr. Sullivan in place. Discussion followed regarding how concerns raised at Commission meetings would be relayed to City Staff.

Member Eveleigh felt that when a member recuses themselves, they should not be asked any questions during the meeting. Discussion followed regarding specifics of the recusal process.

K. Adjournment

Motion by Member Felter, second by Member Eveleigh, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Joyce M. Golding/fgm

City Clerk

Sherm Chamberlain

Chair