
MINUTES**III. Regular Meeting - Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chair McDonald at 6:00 PM.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair McDonald led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

V. Roll Call

Present: Chair Ralph McDonald, Matt Pleasant, Jake Brown, Commissioner Dan Vigansky, Peter Lysy

Absent: Vice-Chair Tony Houser, Secretary Jen Garry

City Staff: Director of Community Development/Zoning Administrator, Rich Murphy; City Clerk, Kalla Langston; Administrative Assistant, Emma Lysy

VI. Approve Agenda

Motion made by Vigansky, supported by Brown to approve the agenda, as presented. Voice votes carry unanimously.

VII. Public Comments - Agenda Items

No members of the public were present.

VIII. Approve Minutes**A. Minutes**

1) *Consider approving the Regular Meeting Minutes from May 14th, 2024.*

Motion made by Brown, supported by Lysy to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes as presented with the correction of Jen Garry spelling and correct office titles. Voice vote carries unanimously.

2) *Consider approving Special Meeting Minutes from July 18th, 2024.*

Motion made by Pleasant, supported by Vigansky to approve the Special Meeting Minutes as presented with the correction of Jen Garry spelling and correct office titles. Voice vote carries unanimously.

IX. Old Business**A. Zoning Project**- *discussion on the Zoning Project objective and timeline.*

Murphy started the discussion by reviewing what has been accomplished so far and how we reached this point. The zoning code is over 20 years old, whereas it should typically be updated every ten to fifteen years. Undertaking this project is significant; we applied to the state for funding and were granted \$50,000 to pay for the zoning overhaul.

We began the process by hiring Placemakers as our consulting firm. Unfortunately, we encountered some challenges that made it difficult to advance such a large project. Murphy reached out to MEDC to communicate the challenges we were facing, and they understood our situation. They offered us an extension to complete the zoning code by 2025. We are currently

working towards obtaining the RRC certificate, and one of the final items we need to address is updating our zoning code.

E. Lysy took over the discussion to present her findings and outlined the provisions that the RRC would like to see in the new Zoning Code. Please refer to *Attachment A* for more details. The most significant difference between the old and new zoning is that the new code will implement form-based zoning instead of land-based zoning. The document outline covers several key areas: Housing Diversity, Concentrated Development, Green Infrastructure, and Parking Flexibility. E. Lysy provided recommendations for the "by right" uses in each section and preferred zoning district.

Murphy discussed the concept of Tiny Houses, noting that with the housing market at capacity, Tiny Houses become a viable option. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) have specific requirements for square footage and elevation, and it is important to prevent the establishment of substandard structures, or "shacks," in backyards. Therefore, regulations are necessary. Tiny Homes can thrive, particularly on properties with multiple acres, provided they adhere to regulations concerning setbacks, design, and construction quality.

A resident has submitted an ordinance regarding "Tiny Homes", which will need to undergo attorney review, receive recommendations from the Planning Commission, and ultimately gain approval from the City Commission. The Planning Commission generally agrees that this topic could be addressed by being incorporated into the new zoning code.

The upcoming meeting will focus on the Planning Commission reviewing Attachment A to select their "by-right" items. They will spend 30-40 minutes round table discussions to reach a consensus on the items within the categories.

X. New Business

A. Downtown Reconstruction Project and other Downtown Project Updates.

Murphy updated the planning commission on the USDA downtown reconstruction project. The downtown area will be under construction as new water and sewer lines are installed. This will create significant disruption, and we must rise to the challenge of keeping businesses open while effectively communicating with them and the public. We do not have a timeline for the project yet, but it is in progress. A communication plan is being developed, and the new streetscape will be beautiful.

The McCoy Creek trail extension has received two excellent bids, and the project will soon go under contract.

The ADA kayak launch project agreement has been signed by Murphy with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and it will be going out to bid soon. Additionally, Murphy received news that the grant for the boat launch scored the third highest in the state, and we will receive funding for that project.

The Livery Boutique Hotel is currently under full construction.

The Ross Sanders rehabilitation is a long-term project that is making progress. They are out for bids on complete historic rehabilitation and will be pursuing the National Register of Historic Places.

The Thistledown restaurant is set to open soon.

The Northside demolition project is also out for bid and is progressing.

There is a preliminary project in downtown involving a potential Vietnamese restaurant and a pharmacy developer who is looking in Buchanan.

XI. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only

No members of the public were present.

XII. Community Development Director Comments

None.

XIII. Commissioner Comments

Lysy informed everyone that the library community room project is currently under construction. The windows have been replaced, providing a clear view of the entire downtown area. Regarding the zoning project, which has been losing momentum, suggested that the commission consider meeting every two weeks to maintain progress.

Pleasant informed everyone that the Moose Lodge was sold today. The tree friends just did their fall planting.

Brown has no comments.

Vigansky complimented the Planning Commission with their intelligence. He's happy to be here.

McDonald is looking forward to working on the zoning project again. McDonald will share the minutes from the Trail meeting at next month's meeting

XIV. Adjournment

Motion made by Vigansky, supported by Pleasant to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 pm. Voice votes carry unanimously.

Kalla Langston, City Clerk

Chairperson, Ralph McDonald