

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS  
ST. FRANCIS, MN  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
DECEMBER 18, 2024**

1. **Call to Order:** The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Dustin Pavek.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were Dean Becker, Gail Genin, Dustin Hingos, Marc McMullen, and Dustin Pavek.

Others in attendance: Jessica Rieland, Community Development Director; Beth Richmond, City Planner; and City Council Liaison Kevin Robinson.

3. **Adopt Agenda:** Motion by McMullen, second by Hingos to approve the agenda. Motion carried 5-0.
4. **Approve Minutes:** Motion by Becker, second by Genin to approve the October 16, 2024 minutes. Motion carried 5-0.
5. **Public Comment:** None
6. **Public Hearing:**
  - a. Cannabis Zoning Code Amendment - Public Hearing

City Planner Richmond reviewed the Staff report in regard to the cannabis zoning amendments.

Commissioner Becker asked if farming of cannabis is one of the allowed uses. Richmond said yes and explained that both cultivation and retail need to be allowed.

Commissioner Becker asked if they set the buffer zones at the maximum distance from schools, daycares, treatment facilities, and parks. Richmond said yes.

Chairman Pavek said it seems common for most cities to set the buffers for maximum distance and set the hours of operation similar to liquor stores. He asked if they have a maximum for how many retail locations they will allow in the City. Richmond explained that cities are allowed to limit the number of retail uses to one per 12,500 residents. She added that anything done by the municipality itself is not counted in this number.

Commissioner Genin asked if they will be allowing one municipal retailer and one public retailer. Richmond said yes.

Commissioner Becker asked if the City will be getting revenue off of the sales tax for the sale of these products. Richmond shared that she believes the City will get some of the revenue; however, she does not know the exact breakdown.

Commissioner Becker asked if they can dictate where these funds go. Councilmember Robinson shared that the Council discussed this at their Work

Session and they were told that they can dictate where this revenue goes. He added that he saw that there is an additional 10% sales tax on cannabis products on top of the standard sales tax. He stated the Council's general goal is to have a municipal dispensary as a revenue stream to benefit the City.

Commissioner Becker suggested putting this revenue towards unpaved roads and road maintenance. Councilmember Robinson shared that they have a street fund that was started several years ago that helps to fund road projects already.

Public Hearing was opened at 7:15 p.m.

No one came forward to address the Commission

Public Hearing was closed at 7:16 p.m.

Commissioner Becker asked if the tobacco shop across the street is far enough from the schools or parks. Richmond explained that tobacco shops that can sell low-potency hemp products do not have the same distance requirement. She added that they cannot limit the number of low-potency hemp retailers in the City.

Motion by Pavek, second by Becker, to recommend approval of the Zoning Code amendments pertaining to cannabis and hemp businesses as proposed by Staff. Motion passed 5-0.

b. 2024 Code Revisions

Richmond reviewed the Staff report concerning the 2024 code revisions.

Commissioner Hingos asked for the reasoning behind the changes to the parking of recreational vehicles. Richmond explained that this is coming from the Code Enforcement Officer. She noted that recreational vehicles already need to be parked on an approved parking surface; however, it was unclear where this could be on the property. She said this change is to clarify exactly where these vehicles can be located.

Commissioner Hingos shared that many of the surrounding cities do not have regulations like this in code. He stated that if Code Enforcement starts enforcing this, he thinks the residents will get vocal and upset over this. He suggested doing something similar to what Ramsey does for parking of recreational vehicles with just restrictions around businesses and is dependent upon acreage of properties.

Chairman Pavek said that he has a lot of people in his neighborhood that have trailers and boats parked on their properties or vehicles parked in their front yards. He stated if they are going to make a change like this then it needs to be enforced.

Community Development Director Rieland shared that the City does not police code enforcement, they operate on a complaint basis.

Councilmember Robinson asked for an explanation on the difference between an approved parking pad and an approved parking surface. Richmond shared that an approved parking pad or surface is anything from bituminous to Class 5 materials.

Richmond asked if the main concern with this is being able to park these vehicles on driveways or on the front yard. Commissioner Hingos explained that in his neighborhood and a lot of other neighborhoods in the City there is hardly any space to park anything on the properties.

Public Hearing was opened at 7:30 p.m.

No one came forward to address the Commission

Public Hearing was closed at 7:31 p.m.

Richmond suggested removing the language around restricting these vehicles behind the front plain of the building. Commissioner Hingos was in agreement with this change.

Motion by Genin, second by Becker, to recommend approval of the revisions to the City's Zoning Code as presented by Staff with the discussed changes to the parking requirements for recreational vehicles. Motion passed 5-0.

**7. Regular Business Items**

None.

**8. Planning Commission Discussion**

None.

**9. Adjournment:**

Motion by Becker, second by Hingos, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed 5-0

Meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Website Link to Packets and Minutes for the Planning Commission:

<https://www.stfrancismn.org/meetings>

Recorded by: Jessica Rieland

**DATE APPROVED:**