

Planning Commission Minutes
Monday, October 1, 2018
5:00 p.m. Council Chambers

Chair Peroutka called the Cokato Planning Commission to order at 5:03 p.m. on Monday, October 1, 2018 in the Council Chambers. Members present were Peroutka, Harju, Nelson, and Wilson. Member Jones was absent. Also present were City Administrator Annita Smythe and members of the public.

Approval of Agenda

MOTION by Harju to approve agenda as presented, seconded by Wilson. All voted aye. **Motion carried.**

Public Hearing for Variance – Linder

Public hearing was opened at 5:04 p.m.

Administrator Smythe gave an overview of the application. Applicants are requesting a variance from the side yard setback for purposes of building a single family home. Because applicants own a corner lot, the side yard setback is 10 feet on the side nearest the neighbor, and 25 feet on the side street. Applicants are requesting a variance of 4 feet, which would result in a 21 foot setback on the street side.

Resident Carol Impola was concerned that a precedent would be set which would allow others to build closer than the current 10 feet side yard setback. Members did not believe that is a concern, as applications are considered on a case by case basis on their merits. A corner lot has different characteristics than the others, and members would not want homes too close together. In addition, this is a corner that will have very little traffic due to the dead end, and the reason for the additional setback in the ordinance is to allow a visibility triangle for traffic.

Member Wilson questioned why applicants chose this floor plan. Cary Linder explained that they wanted to have some space between them and the neighbor, they wanted the garage on the side street to preserve the aesthetics of the neighborhood on the main street, and they wanted a floor plan/footprint that best fit the contours and grading of the parcel with a minimum of additional soil work, which could add to the costs of the building.

There were no other comments from the public, and no written comments submitted.

The public hearing was closed at 5:18 p.m.

Discussion & Recommendation – Variance – Linder

Members had no further discussion.

MOTION by Wilson to recommend approval of the variance, seconded by Nelson, all voted aye. **Motion carried.**

Mobile Home Park Ordinance - Status

Smythe explained that she had spoken to the city attorney about members' concerns that a previous lack of enforcement tied our hands on current enforcement within our mobile home parks. The city attorney does not believe this is an issue.

The city attorney also advised that he does not believe the roads through our mobile home parks have been adopted by the city, but should be maintained by the parks at their cost. Residents with issues should be taking those to their landlord to be addressed, not to the city.

Smythe also asked the city council for input about enforcement of vacant and substandard units within the parks. Council wanted further information about costs of this project. Smythe will work with Member Wilson and the building inspector to put together a list of properties with concerns, and get a cost estimate for inspection time. This will then be brought back to the city council for authorization.

Members reviewed the amended ordinance proposal, and decided to wait on moving ahead with the changes until after the substandard building and road issues had been addressed.

Comprehensive Plan - Status

Smythe updated that she had reached out to graduate programs, seeking a student to assist with the Comprehensive Plan, but so far there had not been any interest from students.

The city has also recently approved a new software package called ClearGov, which is a web-based financial transparency tool used by government agencies. The tool includes demographic and other statistical data about cities based on the census and other public data. It's possible that this new tool could address our needs for demographic and other data updates within the Comprehensive Plan. The launch date for the tool is January 1st.

Approval of Minutes from August 20, 2018 Meeting

MOTION by Harju to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Wilson, all voted aye.
Motion carried.

Set Meeting Date

Next meeting is to be determined.

Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn was made by Nelson, seconded by Wilson, all voted aye. **Motion carried.**
Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Attest:

Annita M. Smythe, City Administrator