

**CITY OF ISANTI
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
April 9, 2013**

1. Meeting Opening.

A. Call to Order.

Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance.

Everyone rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Roll Call.

Members Present: Dave Englund, Kristi Gordon, Sue Larson, Cindy Lind-Livingston, and Sean Stevens.

Members Absent: Steve Lundeen (gave prior notice) and Michael Streiff III (gave prior notice).

Staff Present: Lisa Wilson, Planning and Parks Director.

D. Agenda Modifications.

Wilson stated that she had none.

2. Approval of Minutes from March 12, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting.

Stevens questioned if there were any comments or changes on the minutes.

Motion by Larson, second by Englund to approve the March 12th, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Motion was unanimously approved.

3. Public Hearings.

A. Request from Greg Biskey for an Amendment to Ordinance No. 445 Zoning, Section 7 Business Districts, Article 1 "B-1" Central Business District to allow for museums within this district and subsequently allowing for the establishment of such a use on the property at 117 Main Street W.

Stevens questioned if the applicant was present that evening to review the item with the Commission.

Stevens requested that the applicant approach the podium and state their name and address for the record.

Greg Biskey, 4919 125th Ave, Blaine, MN 55449 was present for the item.

Wilson presented the information provided in the staff memo and outlined the proposed definition.

Wilson stated that the intent would be for this use to be listed as a permitted use within this district.

Wilson stated that it has been the policy of the Planning Commission to review text amendments first.

Wilson stated that if additional approvals are necessary, the petitioner would be required to obtain those through the necessary process.

Stevens questioned if the petitioner had any questions or comments regarding the findings.

Biskey stated that he did not have any.

Stevens stated that since the item was a public hearing, he would open the hearing at that point. Stevens opened the hearing at 7:05 p.m.

Stevens stated that the concerns that he has is how this fits within the downtown area. Stevens questioned what feelings the petitioner had about maintaining a more open door and flexible schedule for the business. Stevens stated that folks are going to want to come in and view a really cool collection.

Biskey stated that he had not considered that at first. Biskey stated that this was to be a one man operation. Biskey stated that he is not retired and still has a full time job and a home commitment. Biskey stated that he had not considered it being open on a daily basis. Biskey stated that he can understand why they would want it open on a daily basis and he would like to see that too.

Stevens questioned his ability to take the jump into being open full-time. Stevens questioned if there was a time frame on that.

Biskey stated that he did not plan on having it open until later this fall. Biskey stated that it will take some time to get the materials in there and set-up. Biskey stated that there is work that needs to be done on the inside the building as well, such as painting. Biskey stated that this will give him some time to get a plan together. Biskey stated that he has talked with some people that may be able to come up and help man the facility. Biskey stated that it did not seem as though it would be a problem to do what the City wants in terms of open times.

Stevens questioned if the space in the building was adequate for the items that he would like to have displayed for viewing.

Biskey stated no. Biskey stated he would like a building three times as big. Biskey stated that he was however drawn to the building because of its history. Biskey stated that the building used to be a car dealership. Biskey stated that the interior is still very well suited for what he wants to do. Biskey stated that he has way more vehicles and items than will fit in the building. Biskey stated that he is going to take the best and put things in there.

Stevens questioned if there would be any maintenance occurring at the location, such as fluid changes or other items. Stevens questioned if they are all in show condition.

Biskey stated that they are all in show condition. Biskey stated that they would just be kept polished. Biskey stated that there will be no repair work done there, as that is done somewhere else.

Lind-Livingston questioned if he would be rotating the items that could be viewed.

Biskey stated that he has some that could be rotated in the building. Biskey stated that he doesn't have that big of a collection. Biskey stated that he will be selling a few before moving into the building.

Stevens stated that in terms of staffing, he feels that this would be a great attraction into downtown Isanti. Stevens stated that people would come to Isanti in conjunction with other shopping and events; and would come to this to view the collection. Stevens stated that he would be interested in talking about hours of operation. Stevens questioned if a Monday through Friday schedule or a Tuesday through Saturday schedule would work for him.

Biskey stated that he did not know at this time. Biskey stated that he just learned of the desire to have it open on a schedule this week. Biskey stated that he will not be ready to open full-time immediately anyway. Biskey stated that he is busy with some other projects later this summer.

Lind-Livingston questioned if he was thinking of certain days or hours that he could be open.

Biskey stated that he does not know many people here. Biskey stated that old cars attract people. Biskey stated that he has been speaking with someone at the Creamery and they are excited.

Larson stated that she would see more of a Wednesday through Sunday. Larson stated that they could be open more in the evenings.

Biskey stated that he agreed. Biskey stated that he was thinking a Thursday through Sunday.

Larson stated that there is a car show at Lake State Federal Credit Union each year.

Stevens stated that for him it is not so much about which days and hours, but he would like to see some predictability in a schedule. Stevens questioned what could be committed to that people coming to the area to view the collection know when they could view to the collection. Stevens stated that for the downtown, the openness and welcoming feeling of a business with a set schedule is important.

Larson stated that a condition should be added that they work with staff on when they get further down the line to schedule regular days of operation and hours. Larson stated that they can move forward with their plans, but be able to work with staff to get some of the other things done that they know we want to see.

Stevens questioned how Mrs. Larson saw that coming forward. Stevens questioned if the language would state that the operation shall maintain regular hours of operation numbering 25 a week. Stevens questioned what Mrs. Larson was thinking.

Larson stated that she would like to see it open in the evenings, so when there is a car show, people could come and visit. Larson stated that the early morning hours are not needed. Larson stated that maybe by noon or so. Larson stated that she sees it being open on Wednesdays through Sundays. Larson stated that the weekends would be a good draw into the downtown area. Larson stated that she there are car events on Wednesday and Friday evenings.

Biskey stated that he had not intended on charging admission to the facility. Biskey stated that he would appreciate if they would go easy on him at first. Biskey stated that if he has to start paying people to be there, then this situation is being presented in a whole different light.

Larson stated that she would think that once they are in an operation stage, he will be able to judge with the foot traffic, if a charge should be made or a donation bucket be placed to help with maintenance of the facility.

Stevens stated that he may be able to get some guys that are part of a local car club and just like to sit around and talk about vehicles.

Biskey stated that the people from the senior center could come over and help.

Larson questioned how staff would feel if the motion stated that the applicant would need to work with staff on days and hours.

Wilson stated that staff had created a definition that tried to ensure open hours for the facility, but allowed the applicant to choose the days and times to meet those requirements. Wilson read through the proposed definition. Wilson stated that in working with legal counsel, staff wanted to ensure that there would be open hours; however, the applicant had some options and ability to determine how to run the museum.

Stevens stated that he felt that was a good way of doing things. Stevens stated that foot traffic needs to help determine the open hours.

Larson stated that when they first open, there will be a lot of curious people. Larson stated that the people viewing may taper off a bit after the initial viewing, but it will then build clientele.

Biskey stated that the original idea of an appointment only was for car clubs. Biskey stated that car clubs like to tour and he could then be open when they wanted to visit. Biskey stated that he understands why the City would want him to be open during designated times though. Biskey stated that we can see how things go with foot traffic.

Larson stated that if he wanted to give a tour in off times that would be fine.

Stevens questioned if Mr. Biskey would be comfortable with a stipulation that they would recommend approval providing that he would maintain 20 hours a week with a regular schedule.

Biskey stated that he found that doable.

Wilson stated that she wants to make sure that she is hearing what the Planning Commission is asking for. Wilson questioned if the intent was to change the draft language presented. Wilson stated that there is a proposed definition. Wilson stated that the review and recommendation for the approval is for a text amendment only. Wilson stated that this text amendment would apply to more than just Mr. Biskey someday. Wilson stated that this amendment would apply to the gallery that may want to operate downtown as well.

Stevens stated that moving it open to the larger scope, if it were something different, the same issues are going to arise with wanting an open schedule for these uses. Stevens stated that the definition should state that the museum or gallery must maintain an operating schedule that is consistent with opening and closing hours.

Larson stated that she like the options found in the proposed definition. Larson stated that if we just use a number of hours, then we could have two long days and a little short day. Larson stated that she would like to see a museum in the downtown that is open more days for set hours. Larson stated that this would allow the City to market the use.

Biskey stated that museums do not make any money. Biskey stated that he has to be careful of how much commitment he has to make towards the hours of operation. Biskey stated that the four hours at five hours a day, is not too scary.

Englund stated that there should be a number of minimum hours roughly and the petitioner needs to work it out as to what works for him. Englund stated that a set number of hours a week are fine. Englund stated that, if he is open three days a week at a certain time, people will come. Englund stated that there are other businesses that people want to come to, but no one knows when it will be open.

Stevens questioned if there was number Mr. Englund had in mind.

Englund stated that for him it would be 15-20 hours a week. Englund stated that he needs to be comfortable with his open hours. Englund stated that if he lived in Isanti, it may be different.

Stevens questioned if anyone else had comments.

Lind-Livingston stated that she was fine with the 15 hours. Lind-Livingston stated that could be a starting point and if he needs more, then he can add more.

Biskey stated that most foot traffic will be on weekends. Biskey stated that he has Chyslers and this is not the most popular car out there. Biskey stated that there are not a lot of Chysler people and it can be difficult to get people interested in the brand.

Stevens questioned if there were any hazards in the proposal that has been suggested.

Wilson stated this will become the standard for everyone that is looking to open this type of use. Wilson stated that this does not just apply to Mr. Biskey. Wilson stated that he will determine when he is open without more specific requirements. Wilson questioned based upon the discussion, if the Planning Commission was leaning towards this being a Conditional Use within the district.

Stevens stated that it makes the most sense to him, so that we can have this conversation with an applicant. Stevens stated that one of the things that goes with the conversation as we move forward with this item and others to follow; City staff is going to be in the position of ensuring that the businesses are maintaining those hours. Stevens stated that the community is looking for the predictability and to use the asset that is being offered in the downtown.

Biskey stated that he is surprised that we do not have these types of amenities.

Stevens stated that we are a small community. Stevens stated that he did not think one was in Blaine either.

Biskey agreed. Biskey stated that a lot of art galleries are in smaller communities.

Stevens questioned if there were any additional comments for the public hearing portion. Having none, Stevens closed the hearing at 7:24 p.m.

Motion by Larson, second by Lind-Livingston to recommend approval of the text amendment with the modifications to the proposed language as indicated by the Planning Commission with the Findings of Fact as presented. Motion was unanimously approved.

B. Request from Therapy Associates, Inc. for Site Plan and Building Appearance Approval for a professional office building to be constructed on the property located at 904 6th Avenue Court NE.

Stevens questioned if there was anyone present in the audience for this item and requested that they approach the podium and provide their name and address.

Brian Baas, 330 N Emerson St, Cambridge, MN 55008 was present for the item.

Wilson presented the information provided in the staff memo and outlined the conditions that staff had recommended for approval of the item.

Stevens opened the public hearing at 7:31 p.m. Stevens questioned if there were any questions or concerns with the conditions as presented.

Baas stated that they have reviewed the comments and there is nothing out of the ordinary that has been requested. Baas stated that he thought they could comply with the requirements.

Larson stated that the project is really exciting.

Stevens questioned the scope of services for the project.

Naomi Plemon and Lonnie Kirkendall, Therapy Associates, Inc., stated that they are a physical therapy, speech therapy, and mental health facility. Kirkendall stated that they have been in Isanti for 7 years and have enjoyed their time here.

Stevens questioned if there were any additional questions or comments for the hearing portion. Having none, Stevens closed the hearing at 7:33 p.m.

Motion by Stevens, second by Larson to recommend approval of the site plan/building appearance approval for the property located at 904 6th Ave Court NE with staff's conditions based upon the Findings of Fact as presented. Motion was unanimously approved.

4. Other Business.

A. None.

5. Discussion Items.

A. None.

6. Adjournment

Motion by Larson, second by Englund to adjourn the April 9th, 2013 meeting of the Planning Commission. Motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Dated at Isanti, Minnesota this 14th day of May 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa M. Wilson, AICP
Planning and Parks Director