

MEETING MINUTES WEST ST. PAUL PLANNING COMMISSION

The regular meeting of the West St. Paul Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Franzmeier on Tuesday, August 15th, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. in the Municipal Center Council Chambers at 1616 Humboldt Avenue, West St. Paul, Minnesota 55118.

Roll Call: Commissioners: Alex Dahlquist, Maria Franzmeier, Nathan Gallus, Liz Gillen, Tim Haubrich, Kyle Hoff, Lance LaRue, and Lisa Stevens.
Absent: Dan McPhillips

Also present: City Planner, Melissa Houtsma and City Council Liaison, John Justen.

Adopt Minutes: The minutes from the July 18th, 2023 regular planning commission meeting were approved as written.

Public Hearings:

PC Case 23-11 – An Ordinance Amending Section 153.346 of the Zoning Code Regarding Requirements for Bicycle Parking

City Planner Houtsma introduced the ordinance amendment and summarized the proposed changes, which included a minimum number of bicycle parking stalls, construction, design, and location requirements.

The public hearing was opened at 6:51 pm. The following persons came forward to speak:

- Ken Paulman, ward III resident
- Kevin Hendricks, ward III resident
- Emily Vergin, ward I resident

With no further comments or questions and no one calling in on the phone line, the public hearing was closed at 7:04 pm.

A motion was made by Stevens to recommend the City Council approve the ordinance amendment as written with the addition of ensuring that the racks have adequate spacing, be cleared of snow and other obstructions, the ability to be secure the bike with a standard U-lock, be installed on level ground, and have language regarding employee bike parking.

Haubrich offered a friendly amendment to recommend post-and-ring and inverted-U racks as the preferred rack design options. Stevens accepted the friendly amendment.

Haubrich seconded the motion.

LaRue asked for a point of clarification as to whether the recommendation was final and wished to discuss an item further. LaRue suggested adding language for multifamily housing and secured locations for racks. Staff explained that if multifamily apartments have both underground and surface parking, each respective lot would be required to comply with the minimum bicycle parking requirements. After some further discussion among the commission, LaRue retracted his requested friendly amendment.

Votes: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays
The motion carried.

PC Case 23-12 – An Ordinance Amending Multiple Sections of the Zoning Code Regarding Solar Carports

Houtsma presented some background information on the last several years of permits for solar panels and a recent proposal for a solar carport. Houtsma stated that in response to the most recent request, city staff recommends a more comprehensive approach that would allow solar carports in the residential, commercial, and industrial districts.

The public hearing was opened at 7:43 pm. The following persons came forward to speak:

- Ken Paulman, ward III resident

With no further comments or questions and no one calling in on the phone line, the public hearing was closed at 7:46 pm.

A motion was made by Haubrich to approve the ordinance amendment as written and presented by city staff.

Gillen seconded the motion.

Votes: 5 Ayes, 3 Nays (*Nay votes - Hoff, LaRue, Stevens*)
The motion carried.

Commissioner LaRue stated that he voted no on the motion because of the 30% coverage limitation, and that he has no issue with solar carports. Both commissioners Hoff and Stevens concurred.

New Business: None

Old Business:

Council Updates – Postponed due to Director Boike’s absence

Adjourn:

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 pm

All ayes. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon G. Hatfield
Recording Secretary