

MINUTES of JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION, CITY COUNCIL and EDA MEETING  
February 9, 2015

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a joint Planning Commission, City Council and EDA meeting was held at City Hall on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2015 at 6:30 PM

**THE FOLLOWING PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS WERE PRESENT:** Dean, Sannes, Ferris, Richette, Torkelson and Stafford

**THE FOLLOWING WERE ABSENT:** none

**THE FOLLOWING CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS WERE PRESENT:** Buck, Borgstrom, Coleman, Eggler and Johnson

**THE FOLLOWING WERE ABSENT:** none

**THE FOLLOWING EDA MEMBERS WERE PRESENT:** Langan, Peterson and Stevenson

**THE FOLLOWING WERE ABSENT:** Sturgis, Wegner

**THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT:** Community Development Director Mike Martin, Admin Assistant Weigel, City Clerk Rappe, Finance Director Zaworski, City Engineers N. Britton & C. Britton, Mike Marti and Judy Ruport.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Dean called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Johnson called the City Council meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

**INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS:** Each person present introduced themselves and which board they were representing.

**DISCUSSION – WHERE/HOW SHOULD PROJECTS ORIGINATE?:**

**Jeff Stevenson** – We should go looking for business, don't wait for it to come to us.

**Doug Buck** – Some projects should be started with staff but committees are good too.

**Mike Peterson** – Agree with both Doug and Jeff, we need to keep an open mind, be proactive and make sure existing business are take care of as well.

**Mike Langan** – EDA and Planning Commission need to keep ears open and share information.

**Chuck Coleman** – Ideas can come from anyone but board & committee recommendations are good to.

**Tom Ferris** – Asked what the statement "Wanting to take the City in a new direction" made a few weeks back by the City Council meant. Wants to know what that direction is.

**Jason Rischette** – Staff and individuals. Support the idea of using surveys so people aren't put on the spot. Like the current setup where the committees do the dirty work before it gets to the City Council.

**Steve Dean** – Input from anyone is good. Everything has to come through channels. Always open to hear anything anyone has to say. He feels we will see a lot more things in the coming years if predictions of Rochester's growth are any indication, more people will be looking for places to live and locate businesses. Staff has the ability to weed out poor ideas. Getting the boards and committees together is a good thing.

**Steve Johnson** – Agrees that going and getting new businesses is a great thing, we can't wait for it to happen. The new direction is to be fiscally responsible and get out of debt.

**Dan Eggler** – We need to be looking for new business. New surveys, moving ahead with new businesses. Utilize staff more because of their knowledge.

**Troy Stafford** – Be proactive in getting new businesses and do surveys.

**Coy Borgstrom** – More commercial industry which creates more tax revenue.

**Mark Sannes** – These leads can come from anywhere. Maybe have a mixed committee with someone representing EDA, Planning & Zoning Commission, City Council and a resident.

**Sheldon Torkelson** – Surveys are good. Anyone can give ideas. What do the people want to see? Would like to see more industrial in town and continue to be the sought after community that it currently is.

**Comprehensive Plan:** In 2011 the Comprehensive Plan was updated. The expected life span of Comprehensive Plans is about 5 years. The new direction that the City is taking and doing new surveys are both indications that maybe it's time, although a year early, to start the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan.

**Steve Johnson** – Wait, there are more changes coming.

**Mike Peterson** – How long does it take to update the Comprehensive Plan?

**Martin** – it's about a 9 month process that we would start around September.

**Steve Johnson** – Wait

**Steve Dean** – Was disappointed that the plan didn't reflect all the input that was provided.

**Martin** – The project was okay, the presentation was lacking. We got a lot of meat, not many potatoes, no vegetables and definitely no dessert.

#### **DISCUSSION – ARE STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS APPROPRIATE?:**

**Sheldon Torkelson** – Staff recommendations are merely recommendations. Would like more information to look at, like to see what's behind the scene. The opinion of staff is nice to have even though may not be in agreement.

**Mark Sannes** – Like having staff recommendation but would like more time to review the packet and recommendations.

**Coy Borgstrom** – Will take staff recommendations on anything and everything; however feels that we may be becoming complacent on the recommendations and not doing the homework we need to. We need to dig into our book and do our homework too.

**Troy Stafford** – Staff lives and breathes it day in and day out.

**Dan Egger** – Staff recommendations are necessary but we still have to look at it, review it and do our homework too.

**Steve Johnson** – Agree, ideas from everyone in the community and listen to everybody to reach the goal of knocking down debt.

**Steve Dean** – No issue with staff recommendations. In most instances I generally tend to agree with staff and we have had no issues brought forward with projects, excluding one large one last year. City Council can differ with Planning & Zoning, but everyone gets input and needs to make a decision and have all the information needed at all levels. More lead time would be preferred so I could visit a site or ask questions, just a day or two more.

**Jason Richette** – Staff recommendations are good, helps me find flaws and understand things better; however more time and information would be beneficial.

**Tom Ferris** – No problems or concerns with staff recommendations, doesn't sway my opinion either way.

**Mike Langan** – Staff has the best angle. In the old days it was done the right way. Everyone used to live here, although Mike Martin has been here long enough and I think he has the City's best interest in mind. Council will always have the final say and they are all local.

**Chuck Coleman** – I rely on staff recommendations, they are appreciated.

**Mike Peterson** – Staff recommendations are important but more lead time would be nice to do our due diligence.

**Doug Buck** – Staff recommendations are necessary but also want to take weight and pay attention to recommendations from committees, they are there for a reason. Also need to keep communication open with residents.

**Jeff Stevenson** – Agree with most everyone in that we need staff help and we need to depend on staff, but we also need to push staff. The City has missed some great opportunities and we need to hold staff accountable. Committees need to know the nuts and bolts and just take recommendations and run with them. We need to develop relationships and get things done, when things get easy it can lead to problems.

**Martin** – To recap, staff and committees need to work harder and we need to get all packets out sooner.

#### **DISCUSSION – PLEASE DEFINE YOUR VIEW of MEMBER - STAFF INTERACTION:**

**Jeff Stevenson** – Committee members make recommendations to Council and do the best they can. City Council can choose to go with it or not. No problems with staff interaction.

**Doug Buck** – Any interaction needs to be transparent, if everyone talks about a project it will be a better project in the end.

**Mike Peterson** – We are all commercial business people and that means we need to keep transparency open for everyone.

**Chuck Coleman** – When I get my packet and I've had questions, staff has always been available to help and get my questions answered. There have been no issues.

**Mike Langan** – My only official interaction is with Mike Martin, the chair of the EDA and the EDA members themselves.

**Tom Ferris** – I have no issues or concerns

**Jason Richette** – Staff interaction is fine

**Steve Dean** – I think this refers back to staff recommendations and usually have sufficient information, there have been a few times I have wanted more information. I asked staff and it was immediately forthcoming. Once the discussion is had amongst the board or commission sometimes I change my mind from what I had previously thought. Staff availability has been sufficient.

**Steve Johnson** – Outstanding staff interaction since January 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Dan Egger** – Any of the staff in the office or public works or department heads are always able and willing to help. Being involved on EDA and Planning & Zoning as a Council Member has helped me learn more about what's going on and to feel connected.

**Troy Stafford** – Complete transparency is necessary. The more ideas, the better the discussion and the better the outcome.

**Coy Borgstrom** – Staff is great, always able to help with anything from email to budgets and projects.

**Mark Sannes** – 100% satisfactory, no complaints

**Sheldon Torkelson** – Communication with staff is good, just keep going forward. We are a well-rounded and successful city government.

**Martin (to the public audience)** – Any of you are welcome to see any emails at any time. Get more aggressive to get information on a proactive basis.

**Judy Rupert; 403 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave SW** – Mrs. Rupert asked if there was any way to move the public forum further into the meeting so people in attendance can ask questions regarding what is being said about the meeting?

**Steve Johnson** – There are different ways to look at it, it's something that the Council will look into.

**Martin** – What about an online public forum?

**Coy Borgstrom** – What if there was a public forum at the beginning and at the end of the meeting. That way people who have something don't have to sit through the whole meeting.

**Steve Johnson** – I like that idea, we will discuss it.

#### **DIRECTION – MARTI ZONING AMENDMENT REQUEST:**

No action is going to be taken on this tonight, but want each body to weigh in. Mike Marti with Marti Electric would like to expand his business but the setback in the C-M district is too big to allow for that

expansion at this time. Should staff work with the City Attorney to draft an ordinance change and be prepared and run through the process?

**Steve Dean** – What is the main reason to have a 50’ setback?

**Martin** – The standard setback is 30’ and semis can maneuver in a 25’ setback. He believe that aesthetics was the main reason, large business on a large lot.

**Dan Egger** – Will this help bring business to town?

**Coy Borgstrom** – The M-1 district has a 75’ setback, are we setting up to have to make more changes? This should go through the Planning Commission and let them hammer it out before sending it to the lawyer.

**Jeff Stevenson** – I agree with Coy.

**Steve Dean** – I’m not eager to change the requirements based off of one application but it’s something that needs to be investigated.

**Doug Buck** – We don’t want to make any hasty decisions.

**Jeff Stevenson** – See what other communities have for setbacks in this type of district.

**Other Business:** Martin informed the members present that this is a chance for them to talk about anything else.

**Mark Sannes** – This joint meeting was good, would like to see them more often. Martin agreed

**Mike Langan** – The noon timeframe works better though.

**Mike Peterson** – Could possibly rotate what body is the host for the meetings.

**Doug Buck** – Steve Roberts, the state electrical inspector asked who was in charge of the lighting of the “Welcome to Kasson” signs.

**Jeff Stevenson** – Also spoke to a resident regarding this today.

**Martin** – It’s outside of the Kasson jurisdiction, it’s actually Dodge County on both the east and west side. This is a Kasson Foundation project and Pine Island Solar is the contractor. Pine Island Solar was contacted today.

**ADJOURN:** Since the agenda had been met the Planning Commission and City Council meetings were adjourned at 7:25 pm.

**ATTEST:**

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Krista Weigel  
Administrative Assistant

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Michael Martin  
Community Development Director