

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES
May 26, 2020

A regular meeting of the Hopkins Planning & Zoning Commission was held on May 26, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. by conference call through GoToMeeting in response to the COVID-19 emergency. Present were Commission Members Gerard Balan, Samuel Stiele, Nathan White, Emily Fiamova, Laura Daly and Kristen Hanneman. Also present was City Planner Jason Lindahl.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Balan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ADOPT AGENDA

Commissioner Fiamova moved, Commissioner Hanneman seconded, to adopt the agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.

OPEN AGENDA – PUBLIC COMMENTS/CONCERNS – None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Daly moved, Commissioner Stiele seconded, to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2020 regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Planning Application 2020-09 1201 Mainstreet Site Plan Review (Bear Cave Brewing)

Mr. Lindahl gave an overview of this item, stating the applicant, Brian Grafton of FMD Architects (on behalf of Bear Cave Brewing), requests site plan approval to allow rehabilitation of the property located at 1201 Mainstreet into a Brewpub. Mr. Lindahl further discussed the concept plans submitted by the applicant. Staff recommends approval of this item subject to conditions that include rooftop patio screening, limiting the hours of operation to 10:00 PM, creating an exterior lighting plan and additional parking options.

The City received two written comments prior to Planning Commission meeting which are summarized below:

Elizabeth Wright – 10 12th Avenue North has concerns over the height of the building on the north side and possible shadowing of her property.

Pete Hesse – 10 12th Avenue North has concerns over noise coming from the rooftop patio.

Commissioner Hanneman asked about the feedback from neighboring properties and if the City has any restrictions on outdoor music. Mr. Lindahl summarized the public comments received and explained that there are no specific standards related to music but there is a noise ordinance that would not allow activity outside after 10:00 PM. Adding a condition for loud music outside is something that could be discussed further.

Chairperson Balan opened the public hearing.

Available to address questions from the Commission and public were the applicants, Brian Grafton of FMD Architects and property owners Nathan and Jillian Bergeland. The applicants stated their intent to be thoughtful of the neighboring homes and plan to take any concerns into consideration when finalizing the design. Mr. Grafton presented the Commission with more detail on the current design of the rooftop patio and screening options.

Chairperson Balan asked if the applicant has discussed a shared parking agreement with any surrounding businesses. Mr. Bergeland replied that they did reach out to surrounding businesses but a shared parking agreement was not possible at this time.

Mr. Bergeland addressed the concerns of loud noises and music coming from the rooftop patio stating that they do not intend for the patio to have a raucous atmosphere. Any live music would take place indoors in the special event area.

Commissioner Stiele asked about the timeline for opening. The applicant responded that due to the unique circumstances created by COVID-19, the timeline for opening has been pushed to spring of 2021.

Elizabeth Wright emailed City Planner Lindahl during the meeting to clarify her previously submitted comments. Ms. Wright has concerns about height that could potentially affect the solar panels on the rooftop of her home. Mr. Grafton responded that they do not anticipate an issue with shadowing neighboring properties to the north. Mr. Lindahl asked the applicant to provide a shadow study that would be included in the presentation to the City Council.

With no further questions from the Commission or public, Commissioner Stiele moved and Commissioner Fiamova seconded to close the public hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner White suggested amending Condition 3 of the Resolution, which would require the screening of the outdoor patio area to be 9 feet high and 100 percent opaque along the northern side. Mr. Lindahl replied that the condition could be edited to say, “The applicant shall revise their plans to include an adequate screen along the entire north side of the rooftop patio. That screening should include 3 ½ foot solid masonry base with additional 3 ½ feet of lattice fencing. The final design should be approved by the City Council.” The Commission agreed to the amended condition.

After further discussion about parking options, Commissioner Daly moved and Commissioner Stiele seconded to approve Planning & Zoning Commission Resolution 2020-01 recommending the City Council approve the site plan application from Bear Cave Brewing to rehabilitate the property located at 102 Mainstreet into a Brewpub, subject to the conditions and amendments discussed during the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

City Planner Lindahl stated that this application would be presented to the City Council at their regular meeting on June 2, 2020 with the Planning Commission's recommendation of approval.

2. Planning Application 2020-10 227 Homedale Road Variance

Mr. Lindahl gave an overview of this item, stating the applicants, Matt and Trish Sieh, request a four-foot south side yard setback variance to allow construction of a 2-story addition to their existing single family home located at 227 Homedale Road. The property is zoned R-1-C which requires twelve foot side yard setbacks for 2-story dwellings. In this case, the applicants request a four-foot south side yard setback variance to build over their existing attached garage and maintain its existing eight-foot side yard setback. Variance requests require the applicant to establish there are "practical difficulties" in complying with the zoning regulations. Staff has reviewed the variance request against the State standards and found the applicant has demonstrated a practical difficulty and therefore recommends approval of the variance request.

Commissioner Hanneman had a question about the footprint of the addition. Architect Michael Eckardt addressed the Commission stating that the addition would add 110 square feet to the front of the garage and 220 square feet of first floor living space on the east side. The second floor of the addition would be added over a portion of the garage and the first floor living space. The 8 foot setback would be maintained along the south side of the property.

Chairperson Balan opened the public hearing.

City Planner Lindahl stated that staff received three email comments prior to the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting in response to published and mailed notice. All comments received were in support of the variance.

With no one from the public wishing to speak, Commissioner Daly moved and Commissioner Fiamova seconded to close the public hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

After general discussion from the Commission, Commissioner Fiamova moved and Commissioner White seconded to approve Planning & Zoning Resolution 2020-02 recommending the City Council approve a four foot south side yard setback variance for the property located at 227 Homedale Road. The motion was approve unanimously.

City Planner Lindahl stated that this application would be presented to the City Council at their regular meeting on June 2, 2020 with the Planning Commission's recommendation of approval.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

NEW BUSINESS – None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS –

City Planner Jason Lindahl stated that the City Council has planned an emergency City Council meeting on May 27 to address changes in the City standards to allow for more flexibility in outdoor seating for restaurants and bars in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Work on updating the City's zoning standards kicked off in January which included a meeting of the 16-person advisory board and a number of listening sessions with community members. A summary of the advisory board meeting and listening sessions is available on the City's website at <http://www.hopkinsmn.com/1037/Zoning-Regulations-Update-Project>.

The next step in the process will be to create a Directions Report, which will summarize what the new regulations could look like. Staff is currently working with the consultants in drafting this report. Once finalized, it will be presented to the advisory group and will be shared on the City's website.

Chairperson Balan asked for an update on light rail construction and if the schedule has been impacted at all by the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Lindahl stated that construction on the project has been deemed essential and the process is unlikely to see much disruption.

Commissioner Hanneman asked for an update on the Vista44 project from Beacon, which was approved by the City Council at the end of 2019. The applicant is seeking several sources of funding to help finance the project and hopes to move forward with the project by the end of 2020. The land use approvals from the City are in place and the applicant would need to enter into a formal planned unit development agreement before construction begins. Staff anticipates the planned unit development agreement would be presented to the City Council by the end of 2020, which would not require a public hearing.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Hannman moved, Commissioner Fiamova seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Courtney Pearsall
Administrative Assistant