

City of Winsted
Planning Commission
City Council Chambers
September 10, 2012
6:00 p.m.

Present: JoLynn Cafferty
Dan Dickhausen
Marvin Ebensperger
Max Fasching
Mike Guggemos

Staff Present: Brad Martens, City Administrator
Raquel Kirchoff, Administrative Assistant

1) Call the Meeting to Order

Mr. Ebensperger called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2) Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fasching motioned to approve the minutes from the Planning Commission Meeting on July 9, 2012. Mr. Dickhausen seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

3) Public Hearings

4) Old Business

a) External Solid Fuel-Fired Heating Devices Ordinance

Mr. Martens stated that this subject is a follow-up of previous discussions on alternative energy. Previous discussion has occurred regarding wind, solar and geo-thermal energy systems, and this is the last portion that was intended to be addressed this year.

Provided is re-drafted ordinance language regarding External Solid Fuel-Fired Heating Devices.

Mr. Martens stated that the purpose of this ordinance is intended to promote the public health, safety and welfare and to safeguard the health, comfort, living conditions, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City of Winsted by regulating the air pollution and fire hazards of outdoor fire boilers.

Mr. Martens stated that the applicability of the ordinance is as follows:

- Applies to all outdoor fire boilers within the City of Winsted.
- Does not apply to grilling or cooking food using charcoal, wood, propane or natural gas in cooking or grilling appliances.
- Does not apply to burning for the purpose of generating heat in a stove, furnace, fireplace or other heating device within a building used for human or animal habitation.
- Does not apply to the use of propane, acetylene, natural gas, gasoline or kerosene in a device intended for heating, construction or maintenance activities.
- Does not apply to campfires; a small outdoor fire intended for recreation or cooking but not including a fire intended for disposal of waste wood or refuse.

Mr. Martens asked for any comments that the Planning Commission members may have regarding the ordinance language before bringing the language back at a future meeting where a Public Hearing will be held.

No comments were received.

5) New Business

a) Sign Ordinance

Mr. Martens stated that the Planning Commission discussed a signage request to allow sandwich board style signs in the C-1 Commercial Downtown Business District at a previous meeting in April, 2012. No formal action was taken; however, staff was directed to place the Sign Ordinance on a future agenda for discussion.

Mr. Martens stated that several sign ordinances from other cities have been provided and is requesting the Planning Commission to comment on items they like or dislike in the ordinances as well as direct staff on how to move forward. Martens asked the Planning Commission members to comment on if the City should be more restrictive on signs in the new ordinance, or if the City should allow more signs.

Mr. Ebensperger questioned if the sign ordinance should be amended in certain sections or if the entire ordinance should be re-written. Mr. Martens stated that while he has enforced the Sign Ordinance, he has noted several issues with the current ordinance, so he would recommend a total repeal and replace of the ordinance.

Mr. Ebensperger stated that if a new Sign Ordinance is created, the Planning Commission should look into the definitions of signs, where they should be placed, and new technology of signs.

Mr. Fasching stated that he is in favor of the businesses being able to use signs and this must be thought of while creating the new ordinance; however, he does not want the City to be too overpopulated with signs. Fasching continued by asking how current signs on County Road One (CR 1) are defined; are they considered a ribbon/banner sign or a traditional sign. Under the current Sign Ordinance, a ribbon sign has a ninety (90) day regulation.

Mr. Martens stated that he has enforced Sign Ordinance regulations as he has received complaints. The signs that Mr. Fasching is referring to have not be categorized by City staff, but in his opinion those signs would be placed under the Temporary Sign category.

Mr. Fasching agreed with Mr. Ebensperger and stated that the definition of signs will need to be looked into in the new ordinance to prevent the City from becoming too overpopulated with signs.

Mr. Ebensperger stated that there are several number regulations within the City's current Sign Ordinance that may need to be re-looked at as to why the numbers were chosen; for example the eight feet (8') feet regulation for the Awnings Sign, (E. General Sign Condition, Number Five (5)) and the fifteen feet (15') regulation for Prohibited Signs (F. Prohibited Signs, Number Seven (7)).

Ebensperger also stated that the City's current Sign Ordinance prohibits billboard signs, yet a billboard sign is placed on County Road One (CR 1). The Planning Commission members stated that particular sign was maintained well and would be a non-conforming use within the Sign Ordinance but should be able to stay; however, they were not in favor

of having billboard signs lining County Road One (CR 1). They would still be in favor of billboard signs being prohibited.

Mr. Ebensperger stated that the Planning Commission will need to think about where sandwich board signs will be placed into the ordinance and how they will be enforced.

Mr. Guggemos questioned how many and what types of issues Mr. Martens has had to enforce from the Sign Ordinance. Mr. Martens replied that there were approximately five (5) – six (6) times and that most of those were regarding signs placed on public property. Martens explained that the City's current ordinance only allows government signs on public property and issues arise when a non-profit event, for example the Women's Expo, has placed signs on public property. Mr. Guggemos stated that this issue should be addressed in the new ordinance because he believes those types of signs should be allowed. Mr. Dickhausen stated that this could become an issue with many people wanting to place signs on public property.

Mr. Ebensperger again stated that the Planning Commission must decide how restrictive or how open the ordinance should be and who will enforce the ordinance.

Mr. Fasching stated that lighting of signs should be specified as to what type of lighting it is; there is a large difference between intensity of standard lighting versus LED lighting.

Mr. Guggemos stated that the Awning Sign definition should be specific about the size dimensions of the advertising on the awning.

Mr. Ebensperger stated that the duration of time that an abandoned sign is allowed should be looked at.

The Planning Commission members discussed Realty Signs in the new ordinance to include where temporary signs could be placed, the length of time they could stay, etcetera to avoid an overpopulation of these types of signs.

Mr. Ebensperger asked the Planning Commission members to read and compare the City's current Sign Ordinance with the sample ordinances that have been provided and note the changes that they would like to discuss to make an ordinance that will work for the City of Winsted; hopefully an ordinance that will not be too restrictive but will work for the businesses within the City. Ebensperger stated that he liked the layout of the Princeton, Minnesota ordinance.

Mr. Martens asked if the Planning Commission wanted to be involved in the approval of sign permits or if it should be the Zoning Administrator's responsibility, which is the City Administrator. The Planning Commission members stated that the permits should be approved by the City Administrator and that the Planning Commission should only be involved in sign permits when there is a new construction where a Site Plan is required.

6) Other Business

a) 2012 Winsted Pride Awards

The Planning Commission members requested that the Winsted Pride Awards be judged earlier in the year to enable plants and flowers on nominated properties to be viewed at their prime. They also suggested that the categories judged be changed to include new categories like condition of siding, condition of roof, condition of lawn, etcetera.

Mr. Martens thanked the Planning Commission members for conducting the judging of the 2012 Winsted Pride awards and stated that the winner, Steve and LouAnn Laxen of

312 South Shore Drive, would be recognized at the September 18th, 2012 City Council Meeting.

7) Adjournment

Mr. Guggemos motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Cafferty seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Brad Martens

Brad Martens,
City Administrator
City of Winsted

ATTEST:

Raquel Kirchoff

Raquel Kirchoff,
Administrative Assistant
City of Winsted