

Minutes
of the
NORTH MANKATO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
North Mankato, Minnesota
April 11, 2019

A regular meeting of the North Mankato Planning Commission was held at 7 p.m., April 11, 2019, in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

Planning Commission Members present: Chair Stephanie Stoffel, Nick Meyer, Isaac Kerry, Bryan Bode, and Corey Brunton. Staff members present: City Attorney Mike Kennedy and Community Development Director Mike Fischer.

A motion was made by Commissioner Meyer, seconded by Commissioner Bode, to approve the minutes of the March 14, 2019, regular meeting of the North Mankato Planning Commission. Vote on the motion: all ayes, 0 nays; motion carried.

Request to Amend Swimming Pool Setbacks

Staff presented a request from Richard Sawatzky to reduce the rear yard setback for in-ground swimming pools to 10 feet and stated this request was tabled by the Planning Commission in March of 2019 to obtain additional information from the City Engineer. City Engineer Dan Sarff was present and indicated that he consulted with Braun Intertec for an opinion related to ravine lots and noted the ongoing ravine management efforts by the City. He stated a 10-foot ravine breakline setback is generally acceptable on most lots but not all due to the condition of the ravine. He indicated that water weight is less than soil weight and in-ground pools are self-supporting. He recommended that each lot be reviewed individually by City staff, City Engineer and possibly geotechnical staff. The Planning Commission held discussions regarding ravine setbacks for other uses, the determination of ravine breaklines, discharge of pool water and changes to ravine conditions over time. Richard Sawatzky, 2141 East Dream Drive, stated it is difficult to construct in-ground pools in North Mankato due to the setbacks and brought structural literature for the Planning Commission and talked about general construction of pools. Taber Sawatzky, 27 Howard Court, recommended the setback reduction for in-ground pools on non-ravine lots from 15 feet to 10 feet. Barb Church, 102 Wheeler Avenue, stated that if pool setbacks are reduced, citizens may question why setbacks for other uses are not changed and stated qualified persons do the determination of ravine breakline. Nicole Sandmann, 2207 Willow Lane, stated she plans to build an in-ground pool and believes there is no difference for 10 foot rear yard setback and a 10-foot side yard setback. The Planning Commission held continued discussion regarding setbacks for in-ground and above-ground pools. It was moved by Commissioner Kerry, seconded by Commissioner Bode to amend swimming pool rear yard setbacks as follows:

1. Reduce rear yard setback for in-ground pools or ravine lots from 25-feet to 10-feet with the provision that upon inspection by City staff, the setback can be increased to 25 feet.

2. Reduce rear yard setbacks for in-ground pools on non-ravine lots from 15 feet to 10 feet.
3. Reduce rear yard setback for above-ground pools on non-ravine lots from 15 feet to 10 feet.

Vote on the motion: Bode Kerry, Brunton, Stoffel voting aye, Meyer nay; motion carried.

Review of Off-Street Parking Regulations

Staff presented a request for review of the City's current off-street parking regulations as a continued discussion from the February 2019 meeting where the Planning Commission requested staff survey off-street parking regulations used by other cities. The Planning Commission reviewed the survey and held discussions regarding non-conforming uses, current enforcement, types of parking surfaces, cost for hard-surfacing and desire to maintain clean neighborhoods. Barb Church, 102 Wheeler Avenue, stated that in Lower North lot sizes are small, most garages were originally built to store minimal vehicles and citizens now have multiple vehicles and other recreational equipment. She stated citizens should talk to their neighbors if they have concerns. The Planning Commission held continued discussion regarding potential code changes and recommended this issue be reviewed again at a later date.

Review of Small Cell Communication Facilities Ordinance

Staff presented a Small Wireless Communication Facilities Right-of-way Ordinance and supplementary material for review by the Planning Commission and summarized the development of the ordinance with special counsel and the City Attorney to accommodate the installation of small cell equipment in the right-of-way by wireless providers. The Planning Commission held discussions regarding changes in technology, need to regulate installations in right-of-ways, ability to regulate the appearance of equipment and recent changes to Minnesota law prompting the proposed ordinance. It was moved by Commissioner Kerry, seconded by Commissioner Meyer, to approve the ordinance as presented. Vote on the motion: all ayes, 0 nays; motion carried.

Other Business

There being no further business, it was moved by Commissioner Kerry, seconded by Commissioner Brunton to adjourn. Vote on the motion: all ayes, 0 nays; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Chairperson

Secretary