

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE BROOKLYN PARK PLANNING COMMISSION Regular Meeting – February 12, 2025



I. ORGANIZATIONAL ITEMS

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM.

Those present were: Commissioners Arah, Fraser, Gaye-Bai, Udomah, and Wako; Council Liaison McGarvey; Planning Director Mogush; Senior Planner Cara Donovan, Senior Planner Erin McDermott, Associate Planner Matt Hayes-Regan, and Program Assistant Asma Jihad.

Those arrived late: Commissioner Korosso.

Those excused were: Commission Chair Cavin.

Those not present were: Commissioners Borer and Turner.

2. EXPLANATION BY CHAIR

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Korosso arrived.

MOTION FRASER, SECOND UDOMAH, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 12, 2025 AGENDA.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

II. REQUIRED DUTIES

4. CONSENT AGENDA

4.1 Minutes – January 8, 2025

MOTION WAKO, SECOND GAYE-BAI, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 12, 2025 CONSENT AGENDA.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

5.1 Planning Case #25-102 (True Blue – Clean Freak) – Variance Planning Application at 8555 Edinburgh Centre Drive N.

Senior Planner Donovan introduced the application for a variance request from True Blue for three freestanding signs. She provided details on the subject site and adjacent properties as well as zoning information. She stated that a carwash use has been approved for the site, and the applicant is requesting three freestanding signs that would direct traffic and ensure vehicles are not oversized for the wash. She reviewed the variance criteria and related findings, noting that

staff recommend approval of the request. She noted that the applicant is online and available for any questions.

Acting Commission Chair Fraser opened the public hearing.

Seeing no one approach the podium, Acting Commission Chair Fraser closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Wako asked if there are any freestanding signs on the site already.

Senior Planner Donovan replied that there is currently development on-site per the preapproved site plan, but no signs have been installed.

Commissioner Gaye-Bai asked if the site is within a residential or business area.

Senior Planner Donovan replied that the site is within the business district, surrounded by commercial properties.

Acting Commission Chair Fraser asked if it is common to exceed the six feet in height for this type of signage, recognizing that this is a clearance type of sign. She stated that if this is a common type of sign for businesses, perhaps a review of the zoning would be needed.

Senior Planner Donovan replied that staff would be doing a review of the sign code as they continue to see more requests of this type for clearance bars.

Commissioner Gaye-Bai asked if the traffic generated from this business has been reviewed.

Senior Planner Donovan replied that the site plan was reviewed and approved in February of 2024, and the only request being reviewed tonight is the sign variance.

MOTION WAKO, SECOND UDOMAH, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF FINDINGS OF FACT FOR THE APPROVAL OF A VARIANCE REQUEST FOR FREE-STANDING SIGNS, SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS IN THE DRAFT RESOLUTION.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Senior Planner Donovan stated the public hearing item is scheduled to be reviewed at the City Council meeting on February 24, 2025.

5.2 Planning Case #25-101 (JC Riders) – Conditional Use Permit Planning Application at 8432 Xerxes Avenue N.

Associate Planner Hayes-Regan introduced the application from JC Riders for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) at the property at 8432 Xerxes Avenue N. He stated that this request would bring the site into compliance as there has never been a CUP for a social club or banquet center for this property. He provided details on the site and surrounding properties, including zoning. He stated that staff recommend approval of the request with the conditions in the draft resolution, noting the addition of another condition that a Certificate of Occupancy must be obtained from the City's Building Department prior to operation.

Commission Vice Chair Fraser opened the public hearing.

Seeing no one approach the podium, Acting Commission Chair Fraser closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Udomah commented that he welcomes businesses to Brooklyn Park. He asked for more details on the definition of social club.

Associate Planner Hayes-Regan replied that the primary function would be a motorcycle club, and the majority of patrons are military veterans. He commented that this would be a private organization that would also hold some events.

Planning Director Mogush stated that the CUP is for both a social club and banquet hall. He stated that the banquet hall would allow the applicant to hold events that could be open to the public or that space could be rented by the public.

Commissioner Udomah asked if the organization holds a liquor license.

Associate Planner Hayes-Regan replied that there is not currently a liquor license for this property, and that is not being considered tonight.

Commissioner Wako referenced the use of the term nonprofit and asked for more information. He asked if there has been any feedback from the adjacent property owners or businesses, noting the proposed hours of operation.

Associate Planner Hayes-Regan replied that public hearing notices were sent to everyone within 500 feet. He noted that one call was received from the HOA President, and the agenda materials were sent to that individual, but no follow-up questions or comments were received.

Deshaun Mitchell, JC Riders, commented that many of the members are veterans and take pride in serving the community. He provided examples of different things the group does to support the community. He stated that they do lease out the space to third parties, such as birthday parties.

Commissioner Wako noted the current membership of 32 members and asked if those charity events are also open to the public.

Mr. Mitchell replied that the events are open to the public.

Commissioner Wako asked how the banquet hall would be used and whether that would only be available to members.

Mr. Mitchell replied that the banquet hall would be available to rent by third parties, as mentioned for birthday parties.

Commissioner Korosso referenced the letter submitted by the applicant that mentioned key activities, which mention private gatherings for fellowship and asked for more details.

Mr. Mitchell replied that would be for members to gather in attempt to make the organization better and discuss how they could better themselves and the community.

Commissioner Korosso asked if the fellowship is religious, or training related.

Mr. Mitchell replied that it is spiritual, even though members have different backgrounds. He stated that they do not preach the bible and are more about positivity and doing good.

Commissioner Gaye-Bai asked if the organization has other locations outside of Brooklyn Park.

Mr. Mitchell replied that currently, it is just the one location, but they are growing. He compared the use to a VFW.

Commissioner Gaye-Bai asked if members would have to register.

Mr. Mitchell replied that the members are registered, and they do have a Board and Committee, but they are a new organization and still working out details as they grow.

Commissioner Arah asked the size of the banquet hall.

Associate Planner Hayes-Regan replied that the size to be leased is to be determined. He stated that the final square footage would be determined in the building application.

Commissioner Wako asked and received confirmation that the nonprofit is registered with a 501-3C designation.

MOTION UDOMAH, SECOND GAYE-BAI, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION APPROVING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR THE OPERATION OF A SOCIAL CLUB AND A BANQUET HALL FOR PRIVATE EVENTS AT 8432 XERXES AVENUE N., SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS IN THE DRAFT RESOLUTION INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING CONDITION: A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY MUST BE OBTAINED FROM THE CITY'S BUILDING DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO OPERATION.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Associate Planner Hayes-Regan stated the public hearing item is scheduled to be reviewed at the City Council meeting on February 24, 2025.

5.3 Planning Case #24-102 – 2040 Comprehensive Plan Zoning Code Update

Senior Planner McDermott introduced the application for a zoning text amendment. They reviewed the administrative changes related to definitions.

Acting Commission Chair Fraser opened the public hearing.

Seeing no one approach the podium, Acting Commission Chair Fraser closed the public hearing.

Acting Commission Chair Fraser asked for more information on the proposed language related to greenfield development.

Senior Planner McDermott replied that the goal would be related to good development, ensuring that the final green space and greenfield development are not underutilized. They stated that they want to ensure that is used to the best extent to ensure that development helps to support the tax base of the City.

Commissioner Wako referenced the minor site plan review amendment and asked if there is a definition of what would be considered minor. He also referenced the minimum floor area ratio (FAR) and asked for more information on the desired outcome from that change.

Senior Planner McDermott replied that there is a list of what would be considered a minor site plan review, providing the example of a single-family home that meets all zoning criteria.

Planning Director Mogush provided information on where that list can be found within the packet. He stated that this is not new but simply a clarification as it has been within the Zoning Code for a long time.

Senior Planner McDermott commented that it came to the attention of staff that this was overlooked when they recently updated the Zoning Code. They provided details on a church that will be adding entryways that would total 12 square feet, which does not seem necessary to come forward to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Commissioner Wako provided some examples of short-term parking issues and asked for more information.

Senior Planner McDermott replied that there are a number of residential properties where people park next to the driveway, which can cause issues, and the amendment is meant to address those issues rather than special event parking.

Commissioner Udomah referenced the proposed definition of a fence and asked how the definition would handle a fence that could be deemed dangerous to people or wildlife.

Senior Planner McDermott replied that the definition adopts the Miriam Webster definition of a fence.

Commissioner Udomah recalled a recent discussion where an electric fence was proposed and wondered if the definition would address that situation.

Senior Planner McDermott replied that electric fences are prohibited. They stated that the portion of the Code related to signs still exists, this simply adds the definition of the word fence.

Commissioner Udomah commented that he finds it confusing that there are multiple places someone would need to look in order to find all the necessary information.

Planning Director Mogush confirmed that can be confusing, but that is the nature of regulation and ordinances. He stated that in the recent update of the Zoning Code, they attempted to simply do things to the best of their ability. He agreed that ordinances are very confusing, and you must look in multiple locations to find all the information. He stated that staff help homeowners understand all of that by supplying information in a much more understandable method.

Senior Planner McDermott clarified that in the Zoning Code update, the use of electric fence was changed to prohibited, which would mean that a variance could not be requested.

Commissioner Gaye-Bai referenced the site plan review amendment and asked for details on the administrative site plan review process.

Senior Planner McDermott stated that there are two types of administrative site plan review and provided details on those processes.

Commissioner Wako asked if the site plan review change would give undue power to staff decisions.

Planning Director Mogush replied that this is not new but something that was inadvertently left out of the Zoning Code update. He noted that this is the process that has existed.

MOTION WAKO, SECOND GAYE-BAI, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE #2025-AMENDING CHAPTER 152 OF THE BROOKLYN PARK CODE FOR CONSISTENCY WITH THE BROOKLYN PARK 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

No comments.

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

No comments.

IV. VERBAL REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

7. Old Business

No comments.

8. Council Comments

Council Liaison McGarvey provided an update on recent actions of the City Council on items of interest to the Planning Commission.

9. Commission comments

No comments.

10. Staff Comments

Planning Director Mogush stated that the survey from the northwest growth area plan open house is still open for residents to provide input. He stated that on March 17th, there will be a joint meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission to review the results of that survey and discuss

options for land use within that area. He stated that on April 23rd, in lieu of a Planning Commission work session, they will hold a development tour. He welcomed a new staff member, Program Assistant Asma Jihad. He also noted a change to the room number for the work session that will follow this meeting.