

PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES

Wednesday, May 10, 2017

Present: Butch Trevor (Chairman), Bill Fitzsimmons (Vice Chairman), John Wetzel, Dan McConaghy, Pete McDermott, Jeff Nelson, Mike Crotty

Absent: Cindy Wermuth, Dennis Kelly, Matt Puck

Staff: Shawn Christ, Amy Keys, Ray Forsythe, Anamaria Vera

Others: Hemal Patel, Roger Strandlund, Ken Carley

1. Call to Order

Chairman Trevor called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

2. Reading and approval of Minutes – March 22, 2017

Motion made by Commissioner Wetzel; seconded by Commissioner Nelson, to approve the minutes for March 22, 2017. Motion carried unanimously.

Shawn Christ, Land Development Manager, began the public hearing by swearing in those persons present who wished to provide testimony.

3. Public hearing, PC 17-02 – Request from Hemal Patel, Moline Hotel Investments, LLC for a text amendment to Table 35-3301.1 of the Moline Zoning and Land Development Code to increase the maximum building height in the B-4 zoning district from 45 feet to 70 feet. (Shawn Christ, Land Development Manager)

Shawn Christ stated the public notice for PC 17-02 was published in the Dispatch on March 28. Mr. Christ also noted there have been two continued hearings since the date of publication. One interested party was also identified. Mr. Christ stated the staff report, application materials, and all attachments will be entered into the record for this case.

Mr. Christ indicated the applicant has requested a text amendment to Chapter 35 with regard to the allowable height within the B-4 zoning district from 45' to 70'. Mr. Christ identified some concerns with regard to the application and also noted that staff identified there was no provision for generators, cell equipment, or other equipment exceptions on the roof and recommended adding a provision with regard to those types of equipment.

Mr. Christ stated the application conforms to the Comprehensive Plan, noting the request is reasonable for consideration. Mr. Christ noted that currently, a Planned-Unit Development would be required for a 70' structure, noting that approval of the text amendment would eliminate that requirement. Mr. Christ also emphasized that approval of the text amendment would not automatically grant the height allowance around the airport; noting approval would be required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) before the City could approve a permit.

Brief discussion ensued among the Commissioners. Commissioner Nelson indicated he believed the airport should be involved in the process. Commissioner Fitzsimmons indicated the airport is a part of the process as FAA Regulations supersede City Code. Commission Nelson indicated he was not opposed

to the project but rather had a desire to be inclusive of the airport in the review process. Mr. Christ noted that FAA clearance has historically been a part of the process. Discussion continued among the Commissioners with regard to demand for the requested height. Commissioner Wetzel indicated he viewed the current project as a trigger for future projects to follow suit, noting the text amendment would serve as a proactive measure for future projects.

The applicant, Hamel Patel addressed the Commission and stated the projected project would be a Hilton Hotel with a phase II Hilton True hotel if phase I was successful. Mr. Patel indicated the current height restriction has impeded the project from developing within a seven acre lot. Mr. Patel noted that they do not wish to interfere with the airport and emphasized the project would create many employment opportunities. Commissioner Wetzel inquired as to the demand identified in the area. Mr. Patel stated the lot was purchased from bankruptcy and upon a market study, a Hilton model was selected based on the research.

Roger Strandlund, Attorney for the airport provided a chronology of communication between the airport and the City to the Commission and noted Ken Carley, Assistant Director would speak on behalf of the airport. Mr. Carley began by stating the airport was not present in opposition of development in Moline. Mr. Carley indicated the concerns of the airport stem from grant assurances that are required by the FAA, noting that buildings up to 70' may present a problem. Mr. Carley indicated he believed some buildings may be better handled as a variance and affirmed the airport's interest to be included as part of the review process. Mr. Strandlund also noted that pursuant to the Airport Zoning Act, the airport is in theory not required to communicate with the City.

Additional discussion took place. Those who provided testimony thanked the Commission.

With no further public comment, the public hearing was closed.

Motion made by Commissioner Wetzel; seconded by Commissioner Crotty, to approve a text amendment to Table 35-3301.1 of the Moline Zoning and Land Development Code to increase the maximum building height in the B-4 zoning district from 45 feet to 70 feet and to include text regarding equipment exceptions as presented. Motion carried 6-0. Motion approved.

4. Other business

Discussion took place on the topic of sidewalks and gaps throughout the City as well as discussions related to updating the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Christ indicated that City Planner, Jeff Anderson, and Planning and Development Director, Ray Forsythe, would need to be a part of those discussions. The Commission directed staff to obtain information regarding an update to the Comprehensive Plan for review at a future meeting.

5. Review of upcoming meetings

Mr. Christ stated there is no business for the May 24 meeting and stated the meeting would be cancelled.

6. Public Comment

No public comment.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anamaria Vera, Administrative Secretary