

1. ROLL CALL

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm with the following members present: Jon Richardson [08/08] (Vice Chair, arrived at 6:45 p.m.), Brock Wells [07/08], Jackson Swearer [08/08], Valerie Roberts-Ropp [06/08], Terry Bisbee [07/08], Darryl Peterson [04/08], and Todd Carr [08/08] (Chair).

Planning Staff present were: Ryan Hvitløk, Director of Planning & Development; Amy Allison, Senior Planner; Aaron Barlow, Associate Planner, and Charlene Mosier, Planning Technician.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the July 23, 2019 meeting were approved on a motion by Bisbee seconded by Wells, passed unanimously.

3. CORRESPONDENCE & STAFF REPORTS

The documents and staff reports were accepted into the official record on a motion by Swearer, seconded by Bisbee, passed unanimously.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Study Session: Small Box Variety Stores (Dollar Stores)

Hvitløk provided a powerpoint presentation on small box variety stores, best known as dollar stores. He explained these types of businesses can have a detrimental affect to a community because their merchandise has a lack of healthy, fresh food options, as they offer mostly packaged or processed foods. In some neighborhoods this is the only store. Dollar stores are the fastest growing sector in retail and Dollar General is the largest chain. There are more of this type of store than all other major stores combined. A map was shown depicting the number and locations of grocery stores and dollar stores in Hutchinson. There are currently six grocery stores and five small box dollar stores. This did not include Smith's Market, the Farmer's Market or Braum's, which has a small food market. The green area on the map indicated that area is a mile from a grocery store and the area in orange is a half mile from a grocery store. A recent *Hutchinson News* article stated the concern of smaller towns losing their small local grocer to the competition of dollar stores which means they lose their options for fresh foods as the dollar stores act as a grocery store without the fresh food component.

Hvitløk reviewed regulations from Tulsa, Oklahoma that has a ban of new stores within one mile of an existing dollar store based on the square feet and on what they sell. Mesquite, Texas requires a conditional use permit for a new variety store and has a distinction between grocery and variety stores. Kansas City requires a special use permit and a separation requirement and excludes stores with a prescription pharmacy or gasoline sales. He said staff is not looking to ban these types of stores because they serve a need; however, if there are too many, we may want to study this issue further. This does tie in with our Comprehensive Plan and the City's desire for healthy food options, exercise opportunities and adequate medical services.

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
MEETING OF: TUESDAY, AUGUST 27, 2019

Staff recommends moving forward with drafting regulations pertaining to small box variety stores. Hviløk would like to meet with the Chamber of Commerce, HEAL Reno County and the Reno County Health Department to get their input and possibly have some regulations adopted by October, 2019.

Peterson said he does not want to micromanage stores and he is not in favor of regulating them or trying to regulate what people choose to eat. Roberts-Ropp said the price point draws customers and she is concerned about regulating competition. Some people will eat unhealthy regardless of the available options based on preference or cost.

Bisbee said some small towns have had negative outcomes with small box variety stores as they have lower prices and then the grocery store closes and they have no fresh food options in their town. We have organizations in Hutchinson that promote healthy food choices and in turn, healthy people have lower medical costs. He said he has not thought about these types of stores proliferating in Hutchinson but he would be in favor of taking a more in-depth look and getting input from other groups.

Wells asked if this is a Planning Commission issue when we have other organizations that address healthy eating options. Bisbee said the difference is those groups do not have any regulatory power and placing something in our regulations would be enforceable.

Barlow said if a grocery store closes and a variety store moves in then that limits the option of access to fresh food. Having a dollar store is better than not having a store and we may be able to regulate that they offer a certain percentage of fresh foods.

Hvitløk said dollar stores will usually only do exactly what they have to do to open a store in any town. If the requirements are to construct a certain style of building or carry a certain percentage of fresh food, they know they have to comply to open a store in that town.

Swearer is concerned about the perception in the community of making it more difficult to open businesses here. He asked about a timeline in developing a C-6 district, annexation and other Comprehensive Plan items and looking at those items before addressing dollar stores.

Hvitløk said annexation will wait until the new County Administrator is hired. The possible C-6 zoning designation will be a huge project that will not start until next year. He is confident we have the ability to draft something on small box variety stores and not take away from the other items.

A motion by Wells, seconded by Bisbee to direct staff to meet with other stakeholders for input and draft regulations for small box variety stores passed with the following vote: Yes – Roberts-Ropp, Peterson, Wells, Bisbee, Carr; No – Swearer.

b. Action Plan Updates

Land Bank – Barlow said the Land Bank is putting together a strategic plan for marketing, lot acquisition, adaptive reuse recommendations, and the possible interim use of properties they have. They will be reviewing 2019 tax sale properties for possible purchase. Currently the Land Bank accepts only residential lots with no buildings.

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
MEETING OF: TUESDAY, AUGUST 27, 2019

(Jon Richardson arrived from a previous meeting).

Historic Preservation – Barlow reviewed the Landmarks Commission work plan and said a large portion of the plan involves education. He reviewed the process of Hutchinson being a Certified Local Government, possible grants and tax credits available for historic properties and reviewed the three historic districts: Houston-Whiteside District and the Downtown Core North and Downtown Core South Districts.

Housing – Hvitløk reviewed housing items and said Jim Seitnater is currently the Housing Program Coordinator. The Housing Commission has been occupied with reviewing the Rental Registration and Inspection Program. Staff is working on a CDBG grant for a target area of the Creekside neighborhood to rehabilitate ten homes or more. Sidewalks need to be addressed, possibly with grant funding. Brush Up Hutch has been very successful this year. A subcommittee has been formed to address aging in place and housing design.

5. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **None**

6. UPCOMING CASES

- a. ZA19-000002 Zoning District Designation Change, 1624 E 23rd Avenue – September 10, 2019.
- b. SA19-000001 – Subdivision Ordinance Amendment, Minor Plat – September 10, 2019.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE CASES

- a. SIT19-000005 – Elliott Mortuary Office and Storage Building, 00000 E 13th Ave (Approved)
- b. SIT19-000008 – Southern Pines Development, 0 S Plum Street (Approved)
- c. SIT19-000007 – GeoChemical Addition, 1600 N Halstead Street (Pending)

8. COUNCIL ACTION ON CASES

- a. CUP19-000001 GeoChemical – Approved by City Council
- b. ZA19-000003 Public Hearings and Notice Amendments – Approved by City Council

9. OPEN COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE

- a. None.

10. ANOUNCEMENTS

- a. None.

11. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
MEETING OF: TUESDAY, AUGUST 27, 2019

Respectfully Submitted

Charlene Mosier, Planning Technician
Approved this 10th day of Sept. 2019

Attest:  _____