

1. ROLL CALL

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm with the following members present: Jon Richardson (11/11) (Vice Chair), Brock Wells (09/11), Valerie Roberts-Ropp (09/11), Terry Bisbee (10/11), Jackson Swearer (10/11), Darryl Peterson (07/11), Logan Leuenberger (2/2); Jane Gamber (2/2), and Todd Carr (11/11) (Chair).

Planning Staff present: 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 September 24, 2019 meeting were approved on a motion by Wells, seconded by Bisbee, passed unanimously.

3. CORRESPONDENCE & STAFF REPORTS

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

4. PUBLIC HEARING

a. None.

5. STUDY SESSION

a. Small Box Variety Store

Hvitløk said this is a request for a Planning Commission study session to review proposed amendments to Sections 27-202 (Definitions) and 27-406 (Table of Land Use Categories) of the Hutchinson Zoning Regulations, concerning regulations related to small box variety stores, also commonly referred to as dollar stores. He presented a powerpoint on the details and definitions of the proposed amendment.

On September 24, 2019, the Planning Commission held a study session regarding proposed regulations on small box variety stores. The Planning Commission voted to table the item until the October 8, 2019 Planning Commission meeting. The Planning Commission wanted staff to obtain feedback from HEAL Reno County prior to additional action on the item.

Staff presented this information to the Chamber Public Policy Committee and provided copies of the proposed ordinance to the Chamber, HEAL Reno County and the Reno County Health Department. The Chamber of Commerce stated opposition to additional regulation on retail businesses. HEAL Reno County stated this is not a top priority with them at this time.

Staff recommends moving forward with the proposed amendments pertaining to small box variety stores.

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
MEETING OF: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2019

Bisbee asked about comments from HEAL. Hvitløk said he spoke with Lisa Gleason and she explained HEAL has a lot of projects they are currently working on and they would not be looking at this issue now.

Gamber asked if existing small box variety stores would be required to comply if the regulations are approved. Hvitløk said the new regulations would apply only to new stores.

Richardson said his opinion is a new small box store would probably not locate in the areas considered a food desert and with additional regulations they would have less incentive to locate here altogether.

Swearer understands regulations to promote the health of residents in our community; however, these regulations may not ultimately change much. He would rather take direction promoting regulations from HEAL as that is their focus. He made a motion to postpone this item indefinitely, seconded by Peterson.

Wells said the proposed regulations came about because of a news article. The Planning Staff and Planning Commission have been streamlining regulations the past few years and the proposed amendment may give the impression to residents that we are adding more regulations. His concern is that our Comprehensive Plan lists access healthy food strategies as part of our plan. If any of the Dillons stores were to close in our community there could be a large portion of the city in a food desert. The proposed regulations only call for small box variety stores to dedicate a minimum of ten percent of retail floor space to fresh or fresh frozen food. He would like to proceed with a public hearing.

Roberts-Ropp said there are a lot of what-ifs and we could address the issue in the future if we need to. Other options such as food delivery, RCAT transportation to stores, and ordering online help to fill in some of the food gaps.

Carr said the food deserts tend to be in lower income neighborhoods that are often less mobile, which limits their options. He noted that comments he received from residents were opposed to regulating small box variety stores.

Peterson said the trend of small box variety stores is to offer more options and his opinion is we do not need to further regulate these businesses. Some variety stores are already carrying fresh foods items. They can do this on their own without our regulations.

Hvitløk said we may get a generic model and not one that offers extras if it is in a lower income area. However, if it is required, this would bring the standards of the area up. Many residents do not understand options can be hard for those in low income areas, or those who do not have their own transportation.

Motion by Swearer, seconded by Peterson to postpone drafting an amendment to the Zoning Regulations pertaining to small box variety stores indefinitely, passed with the following vote: Yes – Richardson, Leuenberger, Gamber, Peterson, Bisbee, Roberts-Ropp, Swearer; No – Wells.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. None.

7. OLD BUSINESS

- a. None.

8. UPCOMING CASES

- a. ZA19-000003 & CPA19-000002 – Rezone to Commercial, 00000 Brentwood Street (10/22/2019).
- b. SDP19-000001 & SDF19-000001 – Preliminary and Final Plat, 00000 E 11th Avenue (10/22/2019).

9. ADMINISTRATIVE CASES

- a. SIT19-000007 – GeoChemical Addition, 1600 N Halstead St (Pending)
- b. SIT19-000009 – Department of Children and Families Office, 00000 E 11th Avenue (In Process)

10. COUNCIL ACTION ON CASES

- a. None.

11. OPEN COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

- a. None.

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. None.

13. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 6:05

Respectfully Submitted

Charlene Mosier, Planning Technician
Approved this 22nd day of Oct. 2019

Attest:  _____