

**CITY OF WILLIAMSTON
PLANNING COMMISSION
MARCH 7, 2017
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Williamston City Hall Council Chambers by Chair Peter Schall and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Roll Call:

Chairman Peter Schall, Commissioners John Bisard, Jeffrey Roland, Brandon Gilroy, and Chad Munce. Absent: Matthew McHale (arrived at 7:13 p.m.)

Also present: City Clerk Holly Thompson, Community Development Director Mario Ortega, City Manager Alan Dolley, City Attorney Timothy Perrone, citizens Noah Belanger, Tammy Gilroy, Sky Cheney, Lina Chapman, Dennis & Deb Conrad, Barbara Zaremski, Heather Eisthen, Mark Hagerty, Randy Arnold, Tom & Pam Wing, Charles & Tammy Howard, Frank Marxer, and other members of the public.

4. Approval of Agenda:

Motion by **Bisard**, second by **Gilroy**, to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

5. Audience Participation:

Chairman Schall called for public comments at this time and there were none.

6. Planning Commission Minutes of December 6, 2016 and January 3, 2017:

Motion by **Bisard**, second by **Gilroy**, to approve the December 6, 2016 and January 3, 2017 regular meeting minutes as presented. **Motion passed by voice vote.**

7. Public Hearing- Zoning Map Amendment- Parcel 33-18-03-35-376-029

7a. Open Public Hearing:

Chairman Schall opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m.

7b. Chair States Purpose of Hearing and Rules of Procedure as Deemed Necessary:

Chairman Schall stated the purpose of the public hearing and rules of procedure.

7c. Presentation by Staff Summarizing the Item:

-McHale arrived at 7:13 p.m.

Zoning Administrator Mario Ortega submitted a written report in support of the request to rezone the property from R-1C to C-3. He went over the report in detail with the Planning Commission.

7d. Questions from Board to Staff:

Commissioner Gilroy asked if this should be taken up at the Zoning Board of Appeals level.

Administrator Ortega replied rezoning requests are heard by the Planning Commission.

Commissioner McHale asked if everything surrounding the property is residential.

Administrator Ortega replied there is also some industrial next to the property along with the residential.

Commissioner Roland asked what the R-1C zoning means.

Administrator Ortega answered the R-1C zoning refers to one family residential district.

7e. Presentation by Applicant:

Sky Cheney reported the two parcels have already been combined through the County. Asbestos abatement was done on the former dwelling and the dwelling has been removed. All of the utilities are still on the site. The current parcels surrounding the vacant parcel are zoned Industrial, C-3, and Residential. A Special Use Permit would need to be obtained to build the second car wash bay. He would like to add the second car wash bay to help the gas station remain viable in an economy where people burn less gas, and everything they're selling is under pressure. He wants to provide services the community needs and this will not create any more noise, lights, or problems with neighbors.

7f. Questions from Board to Applicant:

Commissioner Gilroy asked if his intention is to only put another bay behind the current one.

Mr. Cheney replied it is.

Commissioner Munce asked if he is planning to install fencing to around it.

Mr. Cheney responded there is already a fence around the car wash currently, so yes, it will be screened.

7g. Testimony from Public:

i. Presentation of Written Comments:

Chairman Schall asked if any written comments were received. The City Clerk replied there were no written comments received.

ii. Presentation of Oral Comments:

Dennis Conrad asked how this will affect his property values.

Deb Conrad asked if the City could check with the Assessor on this. She also asked about the noise level, what sort of plantings are being used, if there will be fencing, and how much rezoning to C-3 on Grand River Avenue has been done.

Heather Eisthen commented she is concerned with the noise. She hears the loudness of the current car wash. There is a 30' foot gap in between the intersection and driveway. She is concerned with increased traffic as it is already difficult to merge onto Grand River Avenue in that area.

Barbara Zaremski stated she is very concerned with the increased noise. It currently wakes up her kids. The traffic in that area is awful and she does not allow her children to cross Grand River Ave. She runs four days a week and has almost been hit multiple times. She will not ride her bicycle past there. She pointed out there is already another car wash across the street available for people to use. She enjoys living where she is, but does not want to see increased traffic.

A resident commented the former owners of the little house that was torn down loved it and took care of it when they were able. She has lived in her home for more than 30 years and you cannot sit outside in the evening without hearing the loud buzzing noise and air dryers on the current car wash. She would asked for additional fencing and stated originally the car wash was only supposed to be open until 9pm and currently operates from 6am-11pm. She invited everyone to come to her house and hear what she's talking about. She's also concerned if the parcel is zoned commercial, anyone can do and put in anything they want. There are 3 automatic car washes in the City already and she does not feel they need more.

A resident commented he is the only long-term resident there besides the Conrads. He is concerned with what other commercial business could locate there. He has to deal with loud music from cars waiting to use the car wash and never sees that many people waiting there to use the wash.

Barbara Zaremski commented there are not a lot of buildable lots left in the City and we need more residential.

7h. Concluding Comments From Staff:

None.

7i. Concluding Comments From Applicant:

None.

7j. Concluding Questions or Comments From Board:

None.

7k. Close Public Hearing:

Chairman Schall closed the public hearing at 8:10 p.m.

8. Action Items

8a. Zoning Map Amendment- Parcel 33-18-03-35-376-029:

Motion by **Gilroy**, second by **Munce**, to definitely postpone this item until the next meeting. Yes: Munce, Gilroy, Roland, Schall, Bisard. No: McHale. **Motion passed.**

9. Discussion Items

9a. Main Street Program:

Lina Chapman introduced herself to the Planning Commission. She has coordinated a baseline site visit on April 18th from 4pm-8pm with the MEDC Main Street Program to tour downtown Williamston and meet with City Staff and the DDA to give their impression of the community. Being a Main Street Community is a big commitment and would cost money to hire a full-time Main Street Director. She encouraged everyone to “Like” the Discover Williamston Facebook page to keep up with the progress.

9b. Garage Setback for Single Family Homes:

Administrator Ortega commented there was a mistake made when approving a garage on Williams Street by the building department. He asked the Planning Commission if they would be interested in a Zoning Ordinance Amendment to change setback requirements of garages to meet the many different designs throughout the City.

9c. Ground Mounted Solar Energy Systems Ordinance Amendment:

The Planning Commission would like to see language that is not so narrow and could encompass multiple situations throughout the City. They would like to move forward with a public hearing and a proposed ordinance amendment.

9d. Development Policy at I-96 and Williamston Road:

Administrator Ortega commented over the past 6 weeks he has received interest in development near the highway. He relayed prior Planning Commission’s views on development at the highway and asked what the current Commissioners thoughts are on the issue.

The Planning Commission felt they would consider any proposals for development at the interchange.

Administrator Ortega would like to perhaps hold a worksession to come up with a plan for the corridor to see if changes need to be made to the Zoning of the vacant parcels.

11. Staff Reports

11a. Community Development & Planning:

No report.

12. Audience Participation:

Chairman Schall called for public comments at this time and there were none.

13. Planning Commissioner Comments:

Commissioner Bisard commented he did not know the merger of two lots could be done without City approval.

Commissioner Roland commented there was a lot of healthy dialogue tonight and the zoning amendment decision is a big challenge. ~~There was a lot of good information and would also like to know if the zoning change will have a detrimental impact on surrounding assessments.~~ There was a lot of good information and he would challenge commissioners to come to the next meeting with their reasons why they feel the zoning change may have a detrimental impact on surrounding assessments.

Commissioner Gilroy commented he would also like to speak with friends and family regarding the car wash issue.

Chairman Schall commented he is stepping down as Chair at the next meeting due to scheduling conflicts.

Commissioner Munce commented this is a tricky issue with the gas station and felt there was good discussion tonight.

13. Adjourn to the Call of the Chair:

Chairman Schall adjourned the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

THE PRECEDING MINUTES ARE A SYNOPSIS OF A PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AND DO NOT REPRESENT A VERBATIM RECORD.

Respectfully Submitted: _____
Holly M. Thompson, City Clerk

Date approved: _____