

OWATONNA PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES FOR DECEMBER 12, 2023

The Owatonna Planning Commission met in regular session at 5:30 pm in the Charles S. Crandall Center – Chambers at City Hall with Chairperson Kelly Rooks conducting the meeting. Present at roll call were Commissioners Rachel Springer-Gasner, Kelly Rooks, John Eickhoff, Mark Wilson, Nick Peake, and David Effertz. Commissioner Mark Meier was absent. Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke, Planning Specialist Sydnee Stroeing, and Administrative Technician Kristen Kopp were also present.

A motion was made by Wilson and seconded by Springer-Gasner to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 14, 2023. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

VAR-11, which is a request by Josh Jenke for a lot size variance on a 5,544 square foot lot where 13,000 square feet is required for a minimum lot size for a three-unit, multiple-family dwelling in the R-6, High Density Residential District for the property located at 406 Elm Avenue South has been resolved due to a variance previously granted in 1952 for the same request. Public hearing opened at 5:31 pm. No comments were made regarding this request. Public hearing closed at 5:32 pm.

VAR-13, which is a request by Michael Spitzack for a lot size variance on an 8,712 square foot lot where 10,000 square feet is required for a minimum lot size for a two-family dwelling in the R-6, High Density Residential District for the property located at 139 Rice Street West was presented by Planning Specialist Sydnee Stroeing. (Refer to report on file.) Public hearing opened at 5:33 pm. Applicant and owner, Michael Spitzack, said this has been rented out as long as he's owned it since 2019. He's pretty sure the previous owners were renting it out. They've had no issues with tenants or received any complaints. Public hearing closed at 5:34 pm. Eickhoff said we seem to get a lot of these requests. He asked if there is any fine or penalty for all the extra work. Kruschke said if they end up having to send out enforcement letters they do, otherwise it's just the application fees. The Fire Department has some on their side. A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Effertz to recommend City Council approval of this Variance request with the following provisions:

- 1) The units shall be registered with the Rental Registration program.
- 2) The property shall not contain more than two units at any one time.
- 3) All units shall be inspected and approved within the Rental Registration process. If any repairs are needed, they shall be completed to be in full compliance with the Rental Registration License.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

VAR-14, which is a request by Brycen Gregor, on behalf of Anna Lee, for a lot size variance on an 8,712 square foot lot where 10,000 square feet is required for a minimum lot size for a two-family dwelling in the R-6, High Density Residential District for the property located at 322 Elm Avenue South was presented by Planning Specialist Sydnee Stroeing. (Refer to report on file.) Public hearing opened at 5:41 pm. No comments were made regarding this request. Public hearing closed at 5:42 pm. Effertz asked if the lot size was common as both requests were the same size. Stroeing said that it's a fairly common size in that part of town. Kruschke said they have met with Brycen Gregor and Anna Lee last Friday. They had questioned if they could have three units and we informed them that it would be a completely separate request as this had already been noticed for two units. He said they let them know these are the requirements and if they weren't in favor of the conditions, they would recommend against this request. Wilson asked if a fence would require a building permit. Stroeing said a Zoning Permit is required if the fence is in an easement. There is no easement on this property, so no permit would be required. Wilson asked if they would need to

add curb and gutter to the parking on the front. Kruschke said that is actually the back, off the alley. The picture is a little disproportionate. The 45 gate off the alley doesn't work, so they need to do some work in the backyard. They have more room than the drawing shows. (Brycen Gregor and Anna Lee arrived at 5:44 pm.) Effertz asked if Ms. Lee is a new owner to the property. Anna Lee said she has owned this property for a while. Effertz said they've noticed some complaints on the refuse and asked if she's done anything to combat that. Ms. Lee said that was the last renter and they have cleaned it since. Peake said he thinks two units in this type of residence makes sense, and as long as the provisions are met, he doesn't see a problem with it. A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Peake to recommend City Council approval of this Variance request with the following provisions:

- 1) The units shall be registered with the Rental Registration program.
- 2) The property shall not contain more than 2 units at any one time.
- 3) All units shall be inspected and approved within the Rental Registration process. If any repairs are needed, they shall be completed to be in full compliance with the Rental Registration License.
- 4) A code analysis prepared by a MN Licensed Architect shall be submitted to the Building Inspections Department to determine approval of increased occupancy. In the case that alterations are required to increase the occupancy to two units, building permits shall be applied for and approved of prior to alterations.
- 5) An approved parking plan that meets all applicable City Code requirements shall be submitted prior to installation of parking stalls.
- 6) The gate entrance for rear yard parking shall be moved to be located off the alley and a minimum of 20 feet from the east property line.
- 7) The parking stalls shall be installed prior to the occupancy of a second unit.
- 8) Debris and refuse shall be removed from the property or stored properly. The property shall be maintained in an adequate manner.
- 9) All the above requirements shall be met before occupancy of a second unit is granted.

Commissioners voting Aye: Springer-Gasner, Rooks, Eickhoff, Peake, Effertz. Commissioners voting No: Wilson. 5-1, the motion carried.

Kruschke said that things are starting to come together for the Vine Street Parking Lot downtown and they will likely have more information at their January meeting. They've taken down that Monson building and it will be temporarily signed for now. Eickhoff asked how many stalls that would create. Kruschke said he believed an extra 30-40 in the lot with additional on the street. He said there will be more greenery, more lighting, and a trail on Vine Street. The parking will mostly face north/south rather than east/west. They're planning to go out to bid in February.

Community Development Manager Kruschke provided updates on previous items. He said City Council has approved everything. Mineral Springs Estates is still kind of on hold and looking at coming back with a development agreement for spring construction. It hasn't been recorded yet.

Community Development Manager Kruschke provided the November building reports. We're roughly \$100,000,000 and they're at about 27 single family homes. It will be a record year. Climate by Design and KAMP will be in their buildings by the time we meet next and Home 2 Suites is coming together quickly too.

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Community Development Manager Kruschke said that a sign variance for NewLife Church will be on the January meeting, as well as another item or two.

Community Development Manager Kruschke thanked Planning Specialist Sydnee Stroeing for all she has done and said she is unfortunately leaving us at the end of this month as she took a job in another community. He congratulated her on her new job and thanked her for her work while she was here.

A motion was made by Effertz to adjourn was seconded by Springer-Gasner at 5:51 pm. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Kruschke
Community Development Manager