

OWATONNA PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES FOR JUNE 8, 2021

The Owatonna Planning Commission met in regular session at 5:30 pm in the Council Chambers of the City Administration Building with Senior Member Dan Boeke conducting the meeting. Present at roll call were Commissioners Dan Boeke, John Eickhoff, Mark Meier, Nicholas Peake, Kelly Rooks, and Mark Wilson. Commissioner Rachel Springer-Gasner was absent. Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke and Planning Technician Kristen Kopp were also present.

A motion was made by Boeke and seconded by Meier to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 11, 2021. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Application No. V-1448, which is a request by Mary Hitzeman to allow a Multi-Family dwelling on a 12,340 square foot lot where a 13,000 square foot lot is required for a Multi-Family dwelling in the R-5, Medium Density Residential District at 109 School Street East, was presented by Community Development Manager Kruschke. The applicant is proposing to have 5 units in the structure. (Refer to report on file.) He said that up to this time, they have not heard from any neighbors. Public hearing opened at 5:35 pm. Tracy Ackman Shaw of 116 School Street East expressed concern about parking. She said that it is very realistic that each unit would have two cars. There's not room for 10 parking spots, and parking is only permitted on one side of the street. She said a few of the neighbors who live near also have concerns. She is also concerned about who the purchaser is because there is a history of landlords who do not have a respect for the area. There is a concern about safety and public welfare and congestion on public streets. Matt Gillard was present representing the applicant. He said that, in addition to the big parking pad, there is a good-sized garage that would park two cars. Two of the units are very small, and he said he didn't imagine there would be a need for parking for 10 cars. He said that before Mary bought it, there was a concern about less desirable tenants. She bought it and has put a lot of money into it, she is past 80 and needs to retire. The person who is buying it is not from here, but his wife is. Mr. Gillard said that he's talked to him at length about keeping the property up. Another neighbor on Cedar Avenue South said that she's also concerned about parking in front of her driveway. Ms. Ackman Shaw asked, based on the drawing, how many parking stalls were assigned, as she didn't know how they could have more than five stalls. She said she appreciated hearing about the smaller units. Mr. Gillard said that there is a two-stall garage, and he's reasonably sure that they can get more than five stalls on the driveway. Kruschke said that Planning Commission can't require more parking than what the ordinance requires. How we would consider it is that there are four stalls and two stalls in the garage and two stacked in front of the garage for a total of eight stalls. This property is only required to have six stalls. We cannot require more than what the ordinance requires. Public hearing closed at 5:44 pm. Kruschke said that they also cannot regulate who owns the property, only that the property owner register the property with the Rental Registration program. The parking count ordinance was amended about four or five years ago; it used to be 1-1/2 stalls per unit. It is assumed the size of the parking stalls has been in place since about 1974. Boeke asked if parking was restricted on School Street. Kruschke said that they don't look at on-street parking as an option at all. Rooks asked what the science is behind the 13,000 square feet. Kruschke said that it's the same reasoning as the setbacks that came up at the last public hearing. That is what was decided in the past and those are the bulk density requirements that Owatonna has used in construction. Eickhoff said he appreciated the neighbors' concern about the parking. A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Peake to approve this variance request with the following provisions:

- 1) All 5 units shall be registered with the Rental Registration program.
- 2) The property shall not contain more than 5 units at any one time.

All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Kruschke updated the Commissioners on previous items. He said that the House setback variance was approved by City Council and the Streetscape bid was awarded to JJD.

Kruschke highlighted the Building Permit Reports for May. He said that they're at 17 new single family homes, where last year they were at nine at this time. The mini-storage units on State Avenue and Morton Buildings permits were issued in May.

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission at this time, a motion was made by Meier and seconded by Eickhoff to adjourn the meeting at 5:51 pm. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Kruschke
Community Development Manager

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