

MINUTES
City of Alpena Planning Commission
Regular Meeting (Council Chambers and Virtual)
September 20, 2022
Alpena, Michigan

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Randy Boboltz, Planning Commission Chairman.

ROLL CALL: PLANNING COMMISSION

PRESENT: Boboltz, Kostelic, Gilmore, VanWagoner, Wojda,

ABSENT: Sabourin, Peterson

STAFF: Montiel Birmingham (Planning, Development, and Zoning Director), Rachel Smolinski (City Manager), Kathleen Sauve (Recording Secretary)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Agenda was approved as printed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting June 14, 2022, minutes were approved as printed.

Boboltz explained the procedures for the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMISSION ACTION: Case # 22-Z-05 – Richard Stedman has requested a Rezoning for the property that he owns located at 216 South Eighth Avenue from R-2 to R-T to allow for a residential duplex rental dwelling which will provide housing for homeless veterans.

Birmingham presented the Approval Standards and Findings of Fact report (See Appendix A & B).

FAVOR: Richard Stedman, property owner, explained his wishes to create housing for homeless veterans. He stated that it will be families living in each, as they are two- and three-bedroom units. He said they will be able to live there rent free for six months. His goal is to create safe, clean home environments for two younger veteran families who may be facing adversity challenges; it is in a premier location for these types of families as it is centrally located and within walking distance to the hospital and the VA services, public transportation is available,

He said they have worked hard at getting the property cleaned up, less blighted and increasing the curb appeal. He stated that the house will stay in the VA program until there is no VA program and never has any intentions of selling the home.

Richard Stedman Jr stated that it is a good program and he was in it. He supports this cause because it helps people, and it is real.

OPPOSITION: None.

Boboltz closed the public hearing at 6:18 pm.

Gilmore asked Birmingham if they are constrained by the need to have an impervious surface for tenants to park on. Birmingham responded yes; the ordinance requires that. Wojda asked if there is a limitation on the amount of time they can give to have the driveway paved. Birmingham stated that it is not spelled out in the ordinance, but that she would expect it to be a reasonable amount of time.

Gilmore asked Stedman if there will be two separate entrances to the units. Stedman stated that there would be separate entrances and neither apartment would be handicapped accessible, as there is not room for ramps.

Birmingham touched back on the driveway discussion and read Ordinance 3.30 D.2. Boboltz asked if these requirements are triggered when property changes hands or if it is new construction. Birmingham explained that it is when the property changes use. Wojda stated that his issue is approving something that is in violation of the Ordinance, and he believed that they had to approve something that required it. Stedman asked the Commission if, five years down the road from now, he would still be beholden to the current standards and requirements for driveways, even if the Ordinance changes. Wojda stated that if they allowed the rezone, the driveway could be done as a phased approach, as funds allowed. VanWagoner stated that if they placed fines down and compacted it, that would be the first phase of putting down pavement. He did not wish to step outside of the Ordinance requirement, but that would be the first piece of the process along with all of the other stuff to improve, so giving him a reasonable amount of time to finish the driveway, gives Stedman some leeway room to get other things done and keep working toward his goal. Stedman countered that he could have the fines in place and compacted prior to occupancy of the first unit, and then within five years, have the whole apron all the way to the rear and the four parking spaces asphalted. VanWagoner asked Stedman where the funding is coming from to complete this project. Stedman replied that up to this point, they have not received help from anyone, but they are hopeful that Home Depot will contribute; the Veteran's Administration Homeless Veteran's program is who will be paying the rent for six months to a year. He stated that even if that program goes away, they still wish to provide affordable housing for veterans.

Wojda ***motioned*** to adopt the proposed fact findings contained in Appendix B of the report, and based on those factual findings he moved to approve the rezoning request from R-2 to R-T with the following conditions:

- *all repairs satisfy the standards to remediate any blight that exists
- *the driveway area be paved to Ordinance standards within five years of approval.
- *all necessary approvals and inspections be completed upon successful completion of the project.

Chairman Boboltz repeated the motion to approve.

Gilmore ***seconded*** the motion to approve.

Motion ***approved*** by unanimous vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

COMMUNICATIONS OR REPORTS: Birmingham told the Commission that she did not want to go into great detail at this time, but that they would be reviewing the Zoning Ordinance for updates and then plan to have a joint meeting with City Council at the next meeting. She said she would be looking for feedback from City Council and Planning Commission on topics such as housing, lot sizes, lot coverages, setbacks, and manufactured or “Tiny homes”. Boboltz agreed that these topics should be discussed further.

Birmingham went on further to inform that the Planning, Development and Zoning department has received complaints from residents who live next door to short term rentals within the City; complaints such as frequency of neighbors changing and the fact that it would be a commercial use of a property. Although there have not been immediate concerns about the number of short-term rentals currently, but that does need to be addressed before it gets too out of hand. Birmingham mentioned some things that other communities are doing to regulate short term rentals, including not allowing them at all. She also explained that currently, short term rentals are treated like long term rentals in the City of Alpena, requiring rental registration and inspections every three years.

Birmingham addressed parking requirements based on business and residential needs; possibly introducing parking minimums and maximums rather than our current ordinance, and off-street

parking needs for multi-family residential. Overnight street parking currently has restrictions in the City of Alpena, and Birmingham suggested some other options that could be reasonable.

CONTINUING EDUCATION: Training document included in Commissioner's packet from the MSU Extension – Approval of Meeting Minutes when Absent

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

MEMBERS' COMMENTS: None.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m., by Boboltz, Planning Commission Chairman.

Clayton C. VanWagoner, Secretary