

**CITY OF COHASSET
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
305 NORTHWEST FIRST AVE, COHASSET, MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2015, 6:00 P.M.**

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Co-Chair Steve Otto called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

a. **Voting Members Present:** Josh Casper, John Chell, Johnnie Fulton, Brian Kielpinski, and Steve Otto

b. **Absent with Notice:** City Council Liaison Jason Tabaka, Chair Steve Brown, & Lois Kirschbaum

c. **Ex-Officio Members Present:** Zoning Officer Greg Tuttle

d. **Others Present:** Paul Shorma

3. **Review and Approve Agenda**

a. **Additions:** None

b. **Deletions:** None

A motion was made by Chell/Kielpinski to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Resident Input** – None

5. **Review & Approve Planning Commission Minutes of August 5, 2015:** *A motion was made by Kielpinski/Casper to approve the August 5, 2015 minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.*

6. **Review Blight Ordinance Regarding Noise:** Zoning Officer Tuttle explained the reasons for the proposed amendment to the blight ordinance. After discussion, *a motion was made by Chell/Kielpinski to table this item until the October PC meeting. Motion carried unanimously.* Tuttle will bring new language referencing State standards to the next meeting.

7. **Review Zoning Ordinance Sign Section Regarding Occasional/Incidental:** Zoning Officer Greg Tuttle reviewed the information in the agenda packet. A portion of the ordinance currently reads: “The following signs are unauthorized signs: a) Off-premise sign except off-premise signs that display commercial speech on an occasional or incidental basis.”

Property owner Paul Shorma explained he wants to install an electronic sign and sell advertising. The concern is the definition of occasional or incidental and Shorma wants clarification before purchasing the sign. After a lengthy discussion, *a motion was made by Kielpinski/Chell to recommend to City Council that the wording “occasional/incidental” is replaced with “no more than 25% in 24 hours.” A roll call vote was taken. Fulton-nay; Casper-nay; Chell-aye; Kielpinski-aye; Otto-aye. Motion passed.*

After discussion, *a motion was made by Casper/Fulton to rescind the previous motion and make a new motion that the wording “occasional/incidental” is replaced with “off-site advertising signs no closer than 1000 feet to each other” Fulton-aye; Chell-aye; Otto-nay;*

Kielpinski-aye; Casper-aye. Motion passed. Otto explained he voted nay because the motion is not consistent with the City of Cohasset Comprehensive Plan.

8. Land Use Training for 2015: Zoning Officer Tuttle reported that Scott Anderson was contacted and he is available to facilitate land use training. October 22, 2015 was set for the training.

9. FYIs/Updates

a. **Nelson Wood Shims:** They have completed construction and Tuttle will perform another noise check when they are up and running and he gets the noise meter from the MPCA.

b. **Minnesota Basic Code:** The future of this item is undetermined until further notice.

c. **Bed & Breakfast E-mail & Article:** Commission Johnnie Fulton presented the issue of licensing for Vacation Rental by Owner (VRBO) units. Fulton pointed out that Bed & Breakfast operators in your community have followed city and state of MN statutes by getting land use permits; registering with the state as a tax paying business; filing with the health department (paid for license and open to inspections at any time); and voluntarily pay city lodging fees. She added that the push is not to close down the owners of VRBO properties, but to protect the hospitality industry and to put everyone on an even playing field. Fulton pointed out that other communities are not waiting for their states to act first, but are being pro-active. It is Fulton's hope that this will start some wheels turning in time to have a policy for next year - or at least start a serious conversation.

Fulton provided an article on the subject from the Duluth News Tribune. Zoning Officer Tuttle pointed out that the City does have performance standards for Bed and Breakfast establishments and perhaps changing the language to include VRBOs would be feasible. It was noted there is a VRBO on the Lampi Road which the neighbors do not appreciate since law enforcement has been called to the property several times. The PC will continue to work on this item independently and it will be on a future agenda.

d. **Run-off Article & e. Hog-lot Article:** Tuttle explained there is nothing to discuss in regard to these two items but they were provided for the Planning Commission to read.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Submitted by Karen Mester, Deputy Clerk

Approved: 10/7/2015