

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

A meeting of the Planning Commission was held on Monday, July 8, 2019, commencing at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Chairperson Asmus called the meeting to order.

**A. ROLL CALL:**

Chairperson	Shannon Asmus	Present
Commissioner	Michael Flaata	Present
Commissioner	Judy Hudson	Present
Commissioner	Larry Dahl	Present
Commissioner	Eric Mathwig	Present
Commissioner	Jeff Woods	Absent
Commissioner	Tom Zens	Present
City Planner	Hannah Rybak	Present

**B. ANNOUNCEMENT OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

**1. Code Enforcement Discussion**

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved by Commissioner Mathwig, seconded by Commissioner Dahl, to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2019, meeting. All members present voted aye.

Motion Carried.

**III. SCHEDULED ITEMS**

**A. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**1. Amendments to Section 154.124 – Fences, Hedges, Walls and Obstructions**

City Planner, Hannah Rybak, provided an overview of the request. She explained the current ordinance requirements and the proposed amendments.

A summary of changes and requested action were reviewed.

Commissioner Asmus questioned if there could be restrictions or different wording when describing types of materials allowed for fences to make things esthetically pleasing. Commissioner Mathwig felt that might be taking away some of a person’s rights. Commissioner Zens said that should be something done as a covenant in newer developments.

Commissioner Mathwig discussed chain link fences in front yards and if shrubs were to grow on the fence and block vision.

Commissioner Zens asked about hedges in the front and City Planner Rybak clarified that this code section covers hedges as well.

City Planner Rybak asked the commissioners how they felt about the requirement for the three (3) foot fence along rear yards that abut front yards, if they like the idea of a thirty (30) foot setback from the curb or if the minimum required front yard setback for that property should be used. The Commission was in agreement that the front yard setback for the property should be used so that it would line up with the front of the house.

Commissioner Asmus opened the Public Hearing.

This being the time, date and place set, with all mailed and published notices given as required by law, the hearing was opened at approximately 5:53 p.m., July 8, 2019, to consider amendments to the Zoning Ordinance Section 154.124 Fences, Hedges, Walls and Obstructions.

An attendance list is on file.

No written comments were received.

Following discussion, no further comments were heard and the hearing was closed at approximately 5:54 p.m.

A motion to recommend approval of the ordinance amendments to the Zoning Ordinance Section 154.124 Fences, Hedges, Walls and Obstructions was made by Commissioner Mathwig and seconded by Commissioner Dahl. Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye.

Motion Carried.

**2. Amendments to Section 154.270 – Minimum Requirements and 154.281 - Height**

City Planner, Hannah Rybak, provided an overview of the request. She explained the current ordinance requirements and the proposed amendments.

The requested action was reviewed.

Commissioner Asmus questioned the deck setback in shorter yards. City Planner Rybak stated that the deck setbacks didn't change, and the property owner would need to apply for a variance.

City Planner Rybak requested discussion on principal height structure.

After discussion, Commissioner Asmus opened the Public Hearing.

This being the time, date and place set, with all mailed and published notices given as required by law, the hearing was opened at approximately 6:03 p.m., July 8, 2019, to consider amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, Section 154.270 Minimum Requirements, and Section 154.281 Height.

An attendance list is on file.

No written comments were received.

City Planner Rybak asked for consensus on the building height modifications. Commissioner Mathwig said he would like to see the height be at forty (40) feet for both Business and Industrial Districts and an increase in setbacks for the Industrial District. The Commission was in agreement.

The Commission also agreed to modify the additional setback requirements from fifteen (15) feet in height to forty (40) feet.

Following discussion, no further comments were heard and the hearing was closed at approximately 6:04 p.m.

A motion to recommend approval of the ordinance amendments to the Zoning Ordinance Section 154.270 Minimum Requirements and Section 154.281 Height was made by Commissioner Mathwig and seconded by Commissioner Dahl. Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye.

Motion Carried.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

**VI. ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

**A. CODE ENFORCEMENT**

Commissioner Asmus asked what the City is actually doing as far as code enforcement. City Planner Rybak stated that though she is not a full time Code Enforcement Officer, she takes care of what she can. She explained how she drives the streets of Litchfield and writes down violations that she can see from her car. Those residences then receive a letter from her explaining their violation(s). If someone submits a complaint, she will check them out when she is here or have Jim take a look and send her pictures. She said that the response has been pretty good. If the council wants more done than what she can do, they will need more resources.

Commissioner Asmus stated that he would like the City Council to hold a bigger discussion on code enforcement.

Commissioner Flaata made comment on the recent Rossow house move request and how it turned into not so much about him moving a house in but about his current properties being nuisance properties. Had code been enforced on those in the past, maybe he would've gotten it figured out or may not have tried to move more houses in.

City Planner Rybak explained how code enforcement can be difficult because the current ordinance isn't very specific in some parts.

Commissioner Mathwig, also the City Council Representative, said he will bring this to the Council.

**VII. SET HEARING DATES AND TIMES**

The next scheduled meeting is Monday, August 12, 2019, at 5:30 p.m.

**VIII. REVIEW OF COUNCIL ACTIONS**

**A. VARIANCE REQUEST GRANTED** – *by Van Zwettler at 302 South Donnelly Avenue  
To allow a decrease in the minimum required side yard setback of one (1) foot*

**B. CONDITIONAL USE REQUEST DENIED – BY RICK ROSSOW AT 315 EAST 10TH STREET**  
*To allow moving a house older than ten years old onto the property*

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Asmus adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

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Hannah Rybak  
City Planner