

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

A meeting of the Planning Commission was held on Monday, March 14, 2022, 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	Larry Dahl	Present
Commissioner	Eric Mathwig	Present
Commissioner	Jeff Woods	Present
Commissioner	Tom Zens	Present
Commissioner	James Ellingson	Present
City Planner	Hannah Rybak	Present

**B. ANNOUNCEMENT OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved by Commissioner Dahl, seconded by Commissioner Woods, to approve the minutes of the November 8, 2021, meeting. All members present voted aye.

Motion Carried.

**III. SCHEDULED ITEMS**

**A. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- 1. SITE PLAN AND VARIANCE REQUEST** – *by Overland Engineering, LLC, dba Dollar General at 701 Sibley Ave N. Variance would allow a reduction in required parking spaces. Site plan review has also been requested.*

City Planner, Hannah Rybak, provided an overview of the request. She reviewed the consistency of the request with the standards for granting a variance and provided an evaluation of the development’s conformance to the zoning code.

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 5:49 p.m., March 14, 2022, to consider a Variance Request by Overland Engineering, LLC, dba Dollar General, at 701 Sibley Ave N.

Ryan Swenson, owner 715 N Sibley Ave. parking lot, dental office. He would like something to separate the Dollar General parking lot and his parking lot. He stated that

he doesn't want trees planted too close to his parking lot, as the roots could disturb his paving.

Sue Scott from 713 N Ramsey Ave. asked what the back side of the building will look like. Staff clarified that it would be the yellow color metal siding, not the brick façade. She also stated that it is possible have bigger trees delivered and planted on the back side of the building. She would like to see some sort of planting on that side to screen her view.

Sam Deleo, Applicant, stated that the parking lot will have curb and gutter, which should prevent people from driving over. It can be difficult to get larger trees from a nursery. They are happy to plant a couple of trees on the north side. The retention basin is going to be a infiltration basin to hold water for 24 hours max while it filters in to the ground. Engineering & MPCA permits are required. Anticipated hours of operation are 8:00 am to 10:00 pm, seven days a week. Most variances he does for Dollar General are related to parking. Other cities have and approved similar requests. He never sees issues with parking at other Dollar General stores.

Commissioner Dahl asked do they have dedicated senior parking. Deleo said no, but it probably won't be difficult to find a good parking space.

Commissioner Asmus asked about fence location. Deleo said stops at the notch along the north property line.

Commissioner Asmus asked Deleo to confirm that the company is good with working with the City to add trees. He stated that they are.

Commissioner Ellingson has concerns with the parking lot functioning during deliveries. Deleo stated trucks would park as far South as possible. Deliveries are quick. They are every day to every third day, based on demand.

Commissioner Ellingson asked is there a benefit to coniferous vs. deciduous? Like an arborvitae line on back. To be used for screening.

City Planner, Hannah Rybak asked can metal siding color be changed.

Sam Deleo stated that the color cannot be changed as it is a Dollar General requirement.

No further comments were heard and the hearing was closed at approximately 6:06 p.m.

Commissioner Dahl stated that thirty spaces are adequate. Sounds like they are willing to work with city the on land.

Commissioner Woods stated that a similar building to the south has 16 spaces for a similar use. Precedent is somewhat set.

Commissioner Asmus asked Planning Commission members if they have concerns with parking. All said no.

Commissioner Asmus asked the commissioners to shift focus to site plan. He stated that his concern is beautification and protecting views for neighbors. He would like the Planning Commission to send a recommendation to City Council regarding landscaping requirements.

Commissioner Ellingson wants substantive trees to be planted that grow quickly. Partial to coniferous trees due to lack of leaves.

Commissioner Woods completely is in favor of this. We have to remember this is a B-3 District. If this B-3 project is required to do this, the next person has to be as well.

Commissioner Flaata stated that we just approved SJJ Designs with no landscaping. He expressed concerns with lighting given that the business will be open until 10:00 p.m., so some required screening is needed. Some bushes would even be good.

Staff explained that the areas of the property that are adjacent to residential properties are across a public street, thus no screening is technically required. The amount of traffic generated from this business during nighttime hours should not create a noticeable impact over vehicles traveling on the existing streets.

Commissioner Asmus stated that he understands the storm water and ROW needs, which make plantings on the west side of the property difficult, but he would like the City Council to consider greater landscaping requirements.

Based on the findings of facts and submitted plans, Commissioner Dahl made a motion to recommend approval of the Site Plan and Variance requests by Overland Engineering, LLC, dba Dollar General, at 701 Sibley Ave N, subject to the 12 conditions recommended by staff, with condition #5 amended to require the planting of five trees at a minimum of four caliper inches. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Woods. All members present voted aye.

Motion carried.

Planner Rybak explained that the project also requires an easement vacation, which is not reviewed by the Planning Commission. The City Council holds the public hearing and acts on vacation requests. A condition of approval in the resolution will be that the requested easement vacation is approved at a later date.

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

##### ***A. STAFF UPDATE ON ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT PROJECT***

City Planner, Hannah Rybak, gave an overview of the work completed in Month One of the Zoning Ordinance Update project.

- WSB staff has reviewed the existing ordinance and list of items to be amended.
- New table of contents drafted for better organization and clarity
- Existing code reformatted into new order per table of contents
- Identified duplicate and unnecessary areas of code
- Created "Appendix A – Definitions" (is referenced in code but did not exist)

- Matrix of other cities' code provisions pertaining to common code enforcement issues

The Planning Commission provided initial input on what they would like to see for edits to the provisions dealing with common code enforcement issues.

The next areas of focus will be redline modifications to provisions dealing with common code enforcement issues and amendment options for parking requirements, landscaping requirements, and permitted/conditional uses.

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

**VI. ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

Several commission members wished for comments to be included in the record during Additional Items:

Commissioner Woods stated that he was blind sighted by the loss of a commission member. He commends former Commissioner Hudson for her service. He welcomes Commission Ellingson. He stated concern that the Planning Commission was not made aware of or involved in the process of recruiting a new member when there was a vacancy.

Commissioner Woods also expressed concern with the process for the potential sale of some City-Owned lots. He stated that it would be preferable to have the potential developer present their project to the Planning Commission before the City Council. His reasoning is that the process of City Council, to Planning Commission, back to City Council may cause unnecessary delay to the project.

Commissioner Asmus would like to acknowledge the hard work that Commissioner Hudson put in to the Planning Commission. She brought a unique point of view that will be missed.

Commissioner Asmus also noted that the public hearing process must be respected once it is closed. No further comments from the public may be made or considered by the Planning Commission outside of the public hearing.

**VII. SET HEARING DATES AND TIMES**

The next scheduled meeting is Monday, April 11, 2022, at 5:30 p.m.

**VIII. REVIEW OF COUNCIL ACTIONS**

- A. VARIANCE REQUEST GRANTED** – by Dave Welker for Juan and Rosa Perez at 510 West Ripley Street. Variance to allow for a reduction to the minimum side yard setback to allow for a garage addition to the principal structure.

- B. SCHILLING ADDITION FINAL PLAT REQUEST GRANTED** – by Gregg Schilling for approval of the final plat for Schilling Addition.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Asmus adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:17 p.m.

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Hannah Rybak  
City Planner