

CITY OF NORWICH
PLANNING COMMISSION WORKING SESSION
MAY 5, 2025, 6:00 PM
CITY COURT, NORWICH, NY

PRESENT: Robert Jeffrey Chris Hayes
 Marissa Phelps Matt Gladstone
 John Antonowicz Mark Parker
 Adrienne Zornow

ALSO: Erik Scrivener, Community Development Director
 Fred Gee, Ward 2 Alderman

ABSENT: Kyra Collier

CALL TO ORDER:

The working session of the Planning Commission was called to order at 6:30 PM

Meeting minutes were reviewed for March 17, 2025. Mark P made a motion to approve the minutes as written, Matt G seconded. All were in favor.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Mark P asked a question on the complaint process for a project. He was directed to contact the Code Enforcement Office.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Planning Commission revisited the motion to recommend removing two-family dwellings as a use permitted by special permit in the city's zoning use table. Robert J stated that preserving single family housing is critical for the city. Adrienne Z made a motion to recommend the change to the zoning use table, Marissa P seconded the motion. All were in favor.

John A entered the meeting at 6:47 PM.

The Planning Commission was asked to reconsider the language in Chapter 486, Streets and Sidewalks of the city code. Language was changed to make sidewalks and parking lots "safe and passable" in the Business Improvement District between normal operating hours of 9 AM to 5 PM. Alderman Loomis stated that his constituents felt the fines were too low. To make this effective the fines need to be increased. The fine schedule was also increased. The first offense for not clearing a sidewalk or parking lot within 24 hours of an ending snowfall is a warning, second offense is \$100, third offense is \$300, and every other offense is \$500. Adrienne Z made a motion to recommend the changes to the Common Council, Matt G seconded the motion. All were in favor.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Doliver and the aldermen have requested the Planning Commission to review ordinances in the city including but not limited to: Brush, Grass, and Weeds; Buildings, Unsafe; and Housing Standards. Alderman Loomis discussed a meeting with the City of Oneonta Code Enforcement Officer, Stephen

Yearly, and the initiatives that are underway in Oneonta. Alderman Loomis would like to see the city take a similar approach to addressing blighted and neglected properties. Erik S requested that the Planning Commission make a motion to bring this to the Common Council to officially recognize this action, and to have the firm representing the city, Bond, Schoeneck & King, involved from the beginning. Robert J made the motion to bring this to the Common Council, Marissa P seconded the motion. All were in favor.

OTHER:

Adam Spence was in attendance and had provided documents for the creation of a City of Norwich Land Bank. Alderman Loomis asked about the 31 existing land banks in NYS and if there would be issues in creating another since the state cap is at 35. Adam did not feel this was an issue and there have been 31 for some time. Robert J asked about the structure of the landbank and if the recent changes to the equity of properties would apply to the landbank. Erik S will investigate this further.

Mark P asked if a county land bank is being considered. Multiple commissioners stated that this was unlikely due to the conversations at meetings they have attended. Chris H asked about additional costs to the city. Robert J also requested that changes be made to the draft language for a Board of Directors to be appointed by the mayor with Common Council approval.

Since this was just presented, Robert J said this will be reviewed at a future meeting.

Marissa P and Adrienne Z both mentioned additional items they would like to see reviewed at future meetings.

Chris H stated that a recommendation on the Peddler's Permit will be made at the May meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Matt G made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mark P seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM.