

City Planning Commission

Erie, Pennsylvania

October 20, 2020

-Minutes-

The regular meeting of the City Planning Commission was held Tuesday, October 20, 2020 at 1PM via Zoom webinar.

1. *Call to Order / Roll Call*

Member Name	Present	Absent
Mark Kloecker, Chair	X	
Richard Speicher, Vice-Chair	X	
Armand Chimenti	X	
Erica Jenkins	X	
Jason Wiczorek	X	

Five of five members present; quorum achieved

2. *Approval of September 15, 2020 meeting minutes of the City Planning Commission*

On a motion by Mr. Kloecker, seconded by Ms. Jenkins, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes as received.

3. *Review and recommend guidelines for possible short-term rental regulations*

Mr. Welsh, City of Erie Zoning Office, gave members an overview, indicating that City Council has requested the Planning Commission to explore possible regulations for short-term rentals (STRs). Mr. Welsh explained the need for the resolution, citing a recent PA Supreme Court case that prohibited STRs in zoning districts limited to single-family dwelling units unless expressly permitted in the municipal zoning ordinance.

The primary tasks to consider are to create a suitable definition for the use, designate what zoning districts to allow the use in, and describe any additional conditions required for operation.

After additional discussion among the commission members, the floor was opened to public comment. Opinions and comments from those attending were mostly supportive but there were also opposing comments as well.

Supportive comments for STRs included:

- Encourages investment in residential properties, increasing property values

- The demand for STRs is growing and is becoming a preferred alternative to traditional lodging
- Would create an attractive housing option for families to stay in when visiting the City
- Would encourage tourism in Erie
- Could result in additional revenues for the City

Negative comments for STRs included:

- Takes away from the character of low-density residential districts
- Some neighbors do not want transient uses in R-1 districts
- STR's could lower neighboring property values
- Concern over STR users disturbing the neighborhood

A big talking point was the legality of whether STRs are allowed in R-1 districts based on the PA Supreme Court decision. After some discussion, it was decided to refer the question to the City Solicitor for a legal determination before finalizing any recommendations for R-1 districts.

After further discussion, the Planning Commission unanimously agreed that additional research and discussion is required prior to drafting and finalizing recommendations to Council.

4. *Adjournment*