

Unofficial Draft Minutes

Meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission for Thursday, November 17, 2011.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Patt Olsen at 7:00 p.m. Present were Dale Hughes, Don Bagley, Don Bormann, Mark Mustain, and Tim Grenke. Also attending were Lynn Behrns, Dennis Haubein, and James Smith.

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Hughes moved approval of the minutes of September 1, 2011. Bormann seconded the motion. The question was called. All members present voted "aye". There were no "nay" votes, and the motion carried.

Behrns presented a request from Dennis Haubein on behalf of Forrest Chevrolet, to vacate the east twenty feet of North Rollins Street adjacent to Forrest Chevrolet. Forrest is working on an expansion of its facilities. They would like to construct an addition on the west side of Forrest's building for use as a covered customer drive up. The present setback distance between the building and the east right-of-way line of Rollins Street ranges from 12.7 feet to 13.2 feet. The proposed 18 foot-wide addition would encroach into the required 10-foot setback.

Rollins Street at this point is platted as part of the Original Town of Centralia. The street right-of-way is 80 feet wide. In the block north of this and adjacent to the Centralia City Cemetery, the right-of-way is dedicated at just 50 feet wide. The west right-of-way line for Rollins matches for both blocks. All of the right-of-way to be vacated would be adjacent to property owned by Forrest Chevrolet. This area is presently used as parking for the Forrest service department. There are no known utility lines in the area requested for vacation. The extra 20 feet will allow for the building addition to Forrest's to be allowed within the parameters of the Zoning setback requirements. The vacation will still leave a 60-foot wide right-of-way in this block. Behrns said that staff does not find a problem with the request. A public hearing has been advertised for this meeting. After the hearing, if the Commission agrees with the proposal, the appropriate action would be to make a motion to recommend that the Board of Aldermen proceed with an ordinance vacating the portion of street adjacent to Block 3.

Olsen opened a hearing for public comment on the application.

Haubein said that Behrns' memorandum which accompanied the mailed agenda implied that the building addition would only be an open canopy-like entrance. Instead Forrest plans the addition to be fully enclosed. Behrns said the same setback standards apply in either case.

Bormann noted for the record that he was doing survey work at the property, but the work does not depend on the outcome of this request.

Behrns showed Bagley a draft survey of how the street aligned in this area. He said that after a vacation, the new addition would still have a 14- to 15-foot front yard setback.

Olsen closed the hearing for this evening and the Commission briefly discussed the issue.

Bagley then moved that the following be adopted: It is the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission that the Board of Aldermen vacate the east twenty feet of the street right-of-way of Rollins Street adjacent to Lots 9 through 16 of Block 3, Original Town, now City of Centralia. Hughes seconded the

motion. The question was called.

On roll call vote, the following members voted aye: all members present.

The following members voted nay: none.

The following members abstained: none.

The motion passed.

The Commission took up the past request from Charles and Karen Stewart to amend the Zoning regulations so that the Stewarts could construct a covered porch on the front of their house. The porch would be 12 feet wide by 16 feet wide. Thus, it would violate the front yard setback requirements for the R-1 zone district which apply to this property. The Stewarts' house appears to be 30' from the front property line. A porch without a roof could go as close as 15 feet to the line. A covered porch is limited to 19' feet. Also the area of the porch within the front yard can be no more than 60 sq. ft. if the porch is covered. These limits do not meet with the Stewarts' planned addition. The Commission has had time to consider the request and to conduct research.

Behrns said that he had mailed an agenda and draft of the minutes of the previous meeting to the Stewarts. He did not know why they were not present.

Bormann said that he had a long conversation with one of the Boone County planners, discussing the history and reasons for the standards which now apply to the Stewarts' request. The 60 square foot porch allowance was originally based principally on esthetics. Now it is an historic standard. Any enlargement now would be situational, rather than reflecting a general need. Therefore, it would be more arbitrary and less legally defensible.

Both Hughes and Olsen had also conducted research on the internet. They found that Centralia's standards were the same or similar to those of many comparable communities of its population size or larger. Both Commissioners favored leaving the current standard as is. Olsen said that absent Commissioner LeeAllen Smith has told her that he remained opposed to any change.

Bormann then moved that it is the decision of the Planning and Zoning Commission to not make any changes to the present front yard setback standards. Hughes seconded the motion.

On roll call vote, the following members voted aye: all members present.

The following members voted nay: none.

The following members abstained: none.

The motion passed.

Behrns reminded the Commission members that at the last meeting Alderman Bormann forwarded a citizen's suggestion that Centralia change the normal 10% side yard setback requirement in most zone districts to be a fixed six-foot side yard setback (except where no setback is required). This would standardize Centralia with Boone County and the City of Columbia. The Commission directed no action at present. Behrns will note the request when the Commission next takes up any amendments to the Zoning Code.

Responding to a concern of Hughes, Behrns promised to further study the possibility that a property owner could build a porch over an entire front yard. Behrns thought that was a misinterpretation by Mrs. Stewart, but he will examine the zoning requirements carefully.

Bormann moved that the meeting adjourn. Bagley seconded the motion. The question was called. Voting

aye: all members present. Voting nay: no member. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at about 7:32 p.m.

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