

## **Meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission for Thursday, August 23, 2012.**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Patt Olsen at 7:00 p.m. Present were Dale Hughes, Farris Sanders, LeeAllen Smith, and Tim Grenke. Also attending were Lynn Behrns, Merritt Beck, and James Smith.

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Sanders moved approval of the minutes of May 10, 2012. Hughes seconded the motion. The question was called. All members present voted "aye". There were no "nay" votes, and the motion carried.

Alderman Sanders had previously requested the Commission to look at the possibility of allowing "urban chickens" Behrns said that the Commission's agenda packet had included the text of the how the mater was addressed in the zoning code of the City of Columbia.

Smith noted that some livestock is already allowed in the City--if the parcel is large enough. Sanders said he liked the Columbia provisions. Smith said he did not, that it had the possibility of allowing chickens on all sides of a particular parcel. Sanders said that expanding the types of uses granted greater rights to responsible people. Hughes worried about odor and ground contamination. He mentioned an instance where turkey manure was used on a field south of Hallsville. The odor carried for miles. Behrns noted that control would primarily be by citizen complaint and not usually observation by the Code Enforcement Officer. Grenke thought that some people moved to a city to stay away from livestock. Sanders said that Centralia is a community with agricultural history. Grenke reported that Guy Lee (who was unable to attend) also had told him that odor was a concern.

Smith then moved that the Planning and Zoning Commission not recommend any changes to the Zoning Code concerning the keeping of "urban chickens".

Hughes seconded the motion.

On roll call vote, the following members voted aye: Smith, Hughes, Olsen, and Grenke.

The following members voted nay: Sanders.

The following members abstained: none.

The motion passed.

Behrns told the Commission that the Board of Aldermen had ask it to look at possible amendments to the Zoning Code on matters of signs. In particular, Kevin Prenger is asking that he be allowed to erect a free-standing sign at his new convenience store on Singleton Street. The sign would show a gas company logo and electronically show the price of gasoline. Such a sign is not now allowed because the property is zoned B-1 for downtown business. New signs in that zone district are to be mounted flush with the face of the building and not extend perpendicular to the sidewalk. This is a provision which dates back to the original adoption of the Centralia Zoning regulations. There are a few non-conforming signs which are grandfathered and allowed to remain. In most of downtown, business buildings are constructed up to the street right-of-way line, with no setbacks. The new convenience store will be far back from the front line. A large parking lot and the canopied pump islands will be between it and the street and sidewalk. The appearance is more that of a strip mall. Behrns suggested that free-standing signs might be less obtrusive when they are set farther back on private property. He compared this to the signs along Highway 22, where all recent signs are at least 10 feet back from the right-of-way line at their closest point.

Sanders thought that changes should be available to all properties in the district and not focused for just one person. He suggested that it would not be a problem to have more perpendicular signs hanging out over the sidewalks. Behrns said the changes he suggested were general and not site-specific. He acknowledged, however, there would be no way for businesses that have zero front yard setbacks to actually use the amendment. Also, free-standing signs would be of little use unless a lot had long sight distance, with no other buildings or signs blocking the way.

Discussion of the matter continued briefly.

Smith then moved that the Commission instruct the City Administrator to prepare a draft amendment to the Zoning Code which would allow for free-standing signs in the B-1 zone district in situations where the sign can retain a front yard setback of at least ten feet and not project higher than the top of the roof of the principal business.

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 had also distributed a draft ordinance which he prepared in 2002. It would be a complete overhaul of various zoning and other code provisions dealing with signs. The provisions are modeled after ordinances from other cities—particularly the City of Lebanon, which is on an interstate highway and has a generally favorable business climate—and from Boone County. All regulations are collected in a new chapter, which is then referenced in the zoning chapter. Behrns asked the Commission to look at the draft over the next few months. If and when the economy starts to improve, the topic may have renewed urgency.

Aldermen Bormann had previously asked the Commission to consider simplifying the requirement for side-yard setbacks. Both Boone County and the City of Columbia now have zoning codes which set a fixed distance for the minimum side yard of a flat six feet in most instances. Centralia's Code is more complex. Setbacks in residential zones are calculated based on the width of the lot at the building line.

They must be at least six feet, but need not be more than 15 feet. Calculations are difficult in the case of odd-shaped parcels. For comparison, Behrns had distributed the relevant sections from both the County and Columbia codes.

After a short discussion, the Commissioners concluded that it would be proper to simplify the standard, and the proposed six feet standard would make Centralia's standard closer to the neighboring jurisdictions.

Hughes then moved that the Commission instruct the City Administrator to prepare a draft ordinance amending the Zoning Code to set the minimum side-yard setback for buildings in residential zones to be six feet except when the yard is adjacent to a side street.

Angell 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 said that both amendments would require public hearings before the Commission and the Board of Aldermen. Olsen suggested that the Commission meet again on September 13 to consider the proposals. The Board could then take up the ordinances at its regular meeting on September 17.

Behrns said that the next meeting would be the first Commission meeting after September 1, and therefore the Commission agenda would include election or reelection of Commission officers.

The meeting adjourned at about 7:50 p.m.

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