



**DRAFT**

**THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION HELD ON MAY 18, 2020 VIA ZOOM, AT 7:00 P.M., AT THE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

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The meeting was called to order at 7:17 P.M., by Victoria Hallin came to City Hall to run the meeting. Members present via zoon were Dan Erickson, Eldon Johnson, Jeff Reynolds, and Scott Moller. Staff present were Robert Barbian (City Administer), Stephanie Hillesheim (Comm. Dev. Specialist), and Mary Lou DeWitt (Comm. Dev. Zoning Specialist).

Absent: Eldon Johnson joined the meeting at came in at 7:45 P.M.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTUES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON APRIL 20, 2020**

REYNOLDS MOVED, SECOND BY ERICKSON, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 20, 2020. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 4 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

**AGENDA ADDITIONS / DELETIONS:**

REYNOLDS MOVED, SECOND BY ERICKSON, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 4 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

**A. Variance for Mini-storage Unit at 1800 15<sup>th</sup> Street North**

Mary Lou DeWitt, Comm. Dev. Zoning Specialist Memo:

**BACKGROUND**

KO Storage has submitted a Variance application to build the final mini-storage unit for the site at 1800 15<sup>th</sup> Street North. This property is located in the B-3 General Commercial District.

**ANALYSIS**

The subject parcel is located at the dead end of 15<sup>th</sup> Street North and adjoins a residential area to the east and Hwy. 169 to the west.

KO Storage has recently purchased this site and would like to build the fourth mini-storage unit that would exceed the 4,000 square feet. The Zoning Ordinance states no building to exceed 4,000 square feet with no more than four buildings per site. The applicant is seeking a variance to construct a mini-storage unit not to exceed 5,740 square feet.

The applicants are working on a Site Plan Review where they are defining what the setback will be from the third building to the proposed storage unit per Building Code. The site has three mini-storage units inside a fenced in area which are 30 feet apart. If Building Code allows the proposed mini-storage unit to be built with reduced setbacks the building will not exceed 5,740 square feet.

**Variance Review Standards:** According to Section 2 of Chapter IV of the Zoning Ordinance, requests may be made for a variance from the literal provisions of the Zoning Ordinance in instances when the applicant for the variance establishes that there are practical difficulties in complying with the Zoning Ordinance.

*A variance shall not be granted by the Planning Commission unless it conforms to the following standards:*

*1. Is the variance in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance?*

**Comment:** One of the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance is to establish regulations to promote the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the residents of Princeton, which is accomplished through regulating the location of structures. The proposed building would be over the requirement of 4,000 square feet as are the other three units on the site.

*2. Is the variance consistent with the Comprehensive Plan?*

**Comment:** This is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan for improvements and growth of a commercial site.

*3. Does the property owner propose to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the Zoning Ordinance?*

**Comment:** The focus of the review is whether the request of building an additional mini-storage unit over 4,000 square feet. Staff believes this is a reasonable request since the site has three mini-storage units built inside a fenced in area that are over 4,000 square feet allowed by a variance in 2015.

*4. Are there circumstances unique to this property not created by the landowner?*

**Comment:** This site has met all setbacks requirements and will accommodate another mini-storage unit without difficulty.

*5. Will the issuance of the variance maintain the essential character of the locality?*

**Comment:** The issuance of this variance will maintain the essential character of the locality. This is a commercial mini-storage site that has been in place since 2015.

*6. Does the alleged practical difficulty involve more than economic considerations?*

**Comment:** The proposed mini-storage unit would complete the final stage of the site and would add to accommodating the residents of Princeton.

## **CONCLUSION**

To approve the variance request, the City must find that the proposal uses the property in a reasonable manner, and that the applicant has demonstrated that there are practical difficulties, unique to the property not created by the property owner, that interfere in using the property in such a manner.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff would recommend approval of the variance for the fourth mini-storage unit to not exceed 5,740 square feet, based on the findings:

1. The variance is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. The variance is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.



3. The property owner propose to use the property in a reasonable manner permitted by the Zoning Ordinance.
4. There are circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner with the issuance of a variance approval for the three other units in 2015.
5. The issuance of the variance will maintain the essential character of the locality.
6. The alleged practical difficulty does not involve economic considerations.

**Variance to construct the fourth mini-storage unit over 4,000 square feet, but not exceeding 5,740 feet.**

Based on the findings that the variance meets the listed variance review standards in the Ordinance, staff would suggest approval of the variance, subject to the following conditions:

1. Site Plan approval which will determine the size of the building and setback from the current building.
2. A Building Permit shall be obtained prior to construction.

\*\*\*\*\*End of Staff Memo\*\*\*\*\*

Hallin opened the public hearing.

Elijah Ronning, applicant said this building will be smaller than the other three units, those are over 7,000 square feet. A fence is around the property and there is foliage between the residential site and storage facility.

REYNOLDS MOVED, SECOND BY REYNOLDS, TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 4 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

Hallin commented that this will be a nice addition to the site and give additional storage options to the residents in the area.

REYNOLDS MOVED, SECOND BY MOLLER, TO APPROVE THE VARIANCE AT 1800 15<sup>TH</sup> STREET NORTH FOR THE FINAL MINI-STORAGE UNIT TO BE BUILT NOT LARGER THAN 5,740 SQUARE FEET AND WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. SITE PLAN APPROVAL WHICH WILL DETERMINE THE SIZE OF THE BUILDING AND SETBACK FROM THE CURRENT BUILDING.
2. A BUILDING PERMIT SHALL BE OBTAINED PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION.

UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 4 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED.

The Planning Commission reviewed the Findings of Fact:

1. Is the variance in harmony with the purpose and intent of the Ordinance? Yes.
2. Is the variance consistent with the Comprehensive Plan? Yes.

3. Does the proposal put the property to use in a reasonable manner? Yes.
4. Are there unique circumstances to the property not created by the landowner? Yes.
5. Will the variance maintain the essential character of the locality? Yes.
6. Does the alleged practical difficulty involve more than economic considerations? Yes.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

Eldon Johnson joined the meeting at 7:45 P.M.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Monument Sign at 413 Rum River Drive South**

Mary Lou DeWitt, Comm. Dev. Zoning Specialist Memo:

Cartwright Realty located at 413 Rum River Drive South would like to replace their current freestanding signage with a new sign. The property is located in B-2 Neighborhood Business District and only one monument signage is allowed at the site. The sign will have external LED illumination from the inside of the roof area. The total sign area is approximately 8 square feet which falls under the maximum monument sign size of 60 square feet. The maximum sign height is 8 feet and the proposed sign will be 6 feet. The placement of the sign will be in front of the building off Rum River Drive and 5<sup>th</sup> Street South. Staff will ensure the setback does not inflict with the drivers view of entering or existing the site area or from the stop sign at 5<sup>th</sup> Street South.

**Monument Sign** – a sign where the extent of the sign surface is attached to the ground or a foundation in the ground; and where there are no poles, braces, or other visible means of support other than attachment to the ground.

**Freestanding Sign** – any sign supported by structures or supports that are placed on, or anchored in, the ground and that are independent from any building or other structure.

**Signs Requiring Planning Commission Approval:** The Planning Commission may, in its discretion, issue a permit authorizing construction of freestanding signage. The replacement of an existing sign shall require Zoning Administrator approval. The granting of a permit will be subject to the following conditions:

The signage request falls under the monument signs restrictions. If the Planning Commission is in approval of the signage, the following conditions should be considered:

1. The sign height cannot exceed 8 sq. ft. and the maximum sign area cannot exceed 60 sq. ft.
2. The placement of the sign should not be any closer to the road than what is recommended in the clear view of 20 feet.
3. The sign request is for non-illuminating signage.
4. Gopher One needs to be contacted prior to digging.
5. A Building Permit must be approved prior to installation of the sign.

\*\*\*\*\*End of Staff Memo\*\*\*\*\*

The Planning Commission liked the new signage.

JOHNSON MOVED, SECOND BY REYNOLDS, TO APPROVE MONUMENT/FREESTANDING SIGN FOR 413 RUM RIVER DRIVE SOUTH WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. THE SIGN HEIGHT CANNOT EXCEED 8 SQUARE FEET AND THE MAXIMUM SIGN AREA CANNOT EXCEED 60 SQUARE FEET.
2. THE PLACEMENT OF THE SIGN SHOULD NOT BE ANY CLOSER TO THE ROAD THAN WHAT IS RECOMMENDED IN THE CLEAR VIEW OF 20 FEET.
3. THE SIGN REQUEST IS FOR NON-ILLUMINATING SIGNAGE.
4. GOPHER ONE NEEDS TO BE CONTACTED PRIOR TO DIGGING.
5. A BUILDING PERMIT MUST BE APPROVED PRIOR TO INSTALLATION OF THE SIGN.

#### **B. Consideration of Meat Processing Ordinance Amendment**

Mary Lou DeWitt, Comm. Dev. Zoning Specialist

#### **BACKGROUND**

Iron Shoe Farm is requesting the Planning Commission consider allowing Meat Processing with an on-site slaughter house business inside the City limits. Currently the City Zoning Ordinance allows a Meat Market in B-1, B-2, and B-3 Districts.

#### **ANALYSIS**

Meat Processing with an on-site slaughter house is not allowed and staff would like the Planning Commission review on allowing it in certain districts such as; Business Districts or MN-1, MN-2 Districts with an Interim Use Permit. The reasoning for an Interim Use Permit is a Conditional Use Permit would allow the business to stay with the land as long as operation continues even through the sale of the business. An Interim Use Permit would have a condition

if the business sold the new owner would need to reapply for the permit. Both types of permits can have conditions recorded in the resolution.

**INTERIM USE DEFINITION**

An “interim use” is a temporary use of property until a particular date, until the occurrence of a particular event, or until zoning regulations no longer permit it.

Zoning regulations may permit the governing body to allow interim uses. The regulations may set conditions on interim uses. The governing body may grant permission for an interim use of property if:

- (1) The use conforms to the zoning regulations;
- (2) The date or event that will terminate the use can be identified with certainty;
- (3) Permission of the use will not impose additional costs on the public if it is necessary for the public to take the property in the future; and
- (4) The user agrees to any conditions that the governing body deems appropriate for permission of the use.

Any interim use may be terminated by a change in zoning regulations.

**CONDITIONAL USE DEFINITION**

A conditional use permit shall remain in effect as long as the conditions agreed upon are observed, but nothing in this section shall prevent the municipality from enacting or amending official controls to change the status of conditional uses.

**CONSIDERATION**

Items that should be considered are:

- 1. Zoning Districts; B-1, B-2, B-3, and/or MN-1, MN-2 Districts
- 2. Size of parcel
- 3. Duration
- 4. Water and Sewer regulations of waste going into the Sewer Plant
- 5. Control of animal manure
- 6. Access to the site for trucks and trailers
- 7. Noise of livestock and how many allowed at a time
- 8. Screening
- 9. Time of livestock deliveries
- 10. Feedlot regulations

Carla Mertz owner of Iron Shoe Farm’s will be attending the Planning Commission meeting via Zoom to present their vision.

**RECOMMENDATION**

If the Planning Commission believes this is a direction to amend the Zoning Ordinance, they can direct staff to review other cities that have Meat Processing with a Slaughterhouse Ordinance and bring it back to them.

\*\*\*\*\*End of Staff Memo\*\*\*\*\*

Carla Mertz, owner of Iron Shoe Farms has written this business plan below: They would not be building new, but adding on:

Applicant is requesting:

\* To house a meat processing plant to process beef, pork, poultry (chicken and turkey), goat and lamb. We want to construct this facility to not only support our needs, but those of the 100+ famers in Central MN who expressed a need for this facility back in 2018, and clearly now upon a pandemic due to COVID-19. In the past, we have used a processor in Brainerd, MN for poultry, but he now only carries a custom exemption license, which only would allow us to sell our product to friends and family. We do, and currently plan on expanding, sales to our online regional customers (over 500 households and growing), restaurants, famer's markets, groceries, etc.

Slaughter House Regulations:

1) Building Regulations

- a) All plans should be submitted to MN Dept of Ag Dairy and Meat Inspection Program.
- b) Engineered/architect plans.
- c) City / County will do onsite inspections.

2) Plumbing Regulations:

- a) This goes through the MN Dept of Labor and Industry
- b) City / County will do onsite inspections

3) SSTS Regulations:

- a) County will permit.
- b) All waste water will go into a holding tanks.
- c) Possible to do an advanced septic system.
- d) Or connect to the City at a future proposed date.
- e) Who can design the system?

4) Well:

- a) MN Dept of Health

5) Stormwater Regulations:

- a) Runoff from animal storage areas.
- b) Building and parking lots.

6) Zoning Regulations:

- a) Only permitted in Commercial, Industrial and Heavy Industrial.
- b) Requires an Interim Use Permit.
- c) Setback.
- d) Traffic Impact analysis.
- e) Main entrance must be located on a State Highway, County Road, or Township Road and shall not be permitted through a residential area.

- f) 40% of the lot can be used for keeping or slaughter animals.
- g) Screening required for trailers, animal storage areas.
- h) Live animals stored no more than 24 hours.
- i) Waste byproducts must be disposed within 48 hours. This would be contracted through central biproducts.
- j) Manure shall be removed from the site daily or stored in a manner approved by the City / County.

7) Federal and State Rules:

- a) Title 9, Chapter 3, Subchapter E, Part 416, [https://gov.ecfr.io/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=dc76c963ee6796cd0a4954ecbd16d440&mc=true&node=pt9.2.416&rgn=div5#se9.2.416\\_12](https://gov.ecfr.io/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=dc76c963ee6796cd0a4954ecbd16d440&mc=true&node=pt9.2.416&rgn=div5#se9.2.416_12)
- b) <http://www.recisor.mn.gov/rules/1545/>

8) Waste Disposal:

- a) Solid Waste byproducts go to a rendering plants.
- b) Manure management plan.
- c) This would be viewed as industrial waste water, disposal options waste water treatment plants or land application only if there are no alternatives and meets treatment plants or land application only if there are no alternatives and meets Solid Waste Ordinance requirements.

9) Feedlots regulations: Are feed lot regulations applied if they are under required animal units numbers.

NPDES Industrial permit requirements: Not for the scale proposed.

- \* Two phases of development 1<sup>st</sup> a slaughterhouse/processing 2<sup>nd</sup> retail sales.
- \* Need has come from upcoming closure of a slaughterhouse Iron Shoe Farms currently uses to slaughter the poultry.
- \* Employees 3 full time, 12 part-time.
- \* 20,000 birds plus a year, and 10 head of beef plus a month. Hogs per month (10 per week).
- \* Operate six days a week: Slaughter 3-4 days per week, retail 6/7 days per week.
- \* P & Z concern with water needs and disposal of waste water.
- \* Much of the commercial and Industrial lands near the City of Princeton are within the well head protection area. Will continue to evaluate this use related to Princeton's wellhead protection area.
- \* Would like a better understanding on the water consumption and waste water produces by a business like this.

\*\*\*\*\*End of Memo\*\*\*\*\*

Barbian said meat processing is prepared in quarters or sections of a dead animal. Carla spoke that they have a farm in Baldwin Township for the past seven years. They lost their poultry processor and have to make a long distant drive for and processor. You see the situation with the hog industry with the covic pandemic and there is a need for more slaughter,





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processing, and retail meat stores. They would like to have a business like Grand Champion Meats in Foley and McDonalds in Clear Lake. She can slaughter for herself, but not for the public. To slaughter for the public it would have to be done at a facility by State Code, Section 31.56. They are looking at the old A&W and Moose Lodge site of of Hwy. 95 and Hwy. 169. They believe this would be great revenue to Princeton and good support with the area. She is here tonight to see if there can be an Ordinance amendment to allow onsite slaughter house with a Interim Use Permit. They have looked at different ways of slaughter houses and a farmer can do it at his home or bring the animal to the site. The animal brought in would be processed in 12 hours and it would be a low capacity of animals at the site. It would not a feed lot area. No livestock feeding and the noise level would not be anymore volume than that of the traffic from the highways. They toured the site and it would be a great spot for what they are looking for. There are expansion opportunities for the site and the owner has an adjoining acre lot that would work well.

Reynolds asked what other communities are allowing.

Carla Mertz said they did look in Sherburne County and they have to be in industrial or commercial zoning. Foley is grandfathered in. They have been there over a 100 years.

Reynolds would like to see this happen.

Barbian asked if they would rent or purchase it.

Mertz said they would purchase the site.

Barbian said for retail what would it be.

Mertz said a store front area where they can purchase meat.

Barbian said the ability to see the water needs and sewer needs are being met per code. This area does not have a sewer or water line.

Mertz said she talked to the meat and dairy and holding tanks for water and storage tanks for outflow and septic system. Trucks would remove waste. At site plan and building plan the septic would be looked at.

Barbian said that place was commercial so it could handle some of the waste.

Mertz said there is a company that would come in and take the waste. Tanks would install if the well could not handle the size of what is needed.

Hallin said there are some residents that live down the road. Are they on the same aquafer where it might need to take from the water source for neighbors.

Mertz said most of the water is from wash downs and cleaning the space. They would only do slaughter four or five days a week. You have to completely sanitize the area for the next day. Otherwise, water would mostly be restrooms and washing of the hands. No more than a current restaurant place.

Hallin thinks the location is perfect. Easy access.

Mertz said the turnaround would be good and visibility would be excellent.

Hallin asked if they would be processing deer.

Mertz said right now poultry and hogs. They do not want to rule out deer processing. There is a lot of custom exempt processors and she would need to have it in the ordinance for deer processing.

Barbian said would you like to revise the ordinance to allow slaughtering as an Interim Use Permit. Language would need to come to the Planning Commission and what districts would be included. Carla Mertz would have to apply for an Interim Use Permit if allowed and may have restrictions on moving forward. This is a good location. Barbian wonders if it should be allowed in all districts.

Hallin said no, we would not allow it everywhere. She supports this business and the proposed location.

Barbian said DeWitt can look into drafting something and put it together for the June 15<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting.

Johnson wants us to move forward quickly on this. Is there room to expand at that location.

Erickson agrees with Johnson. Move as fast as possible on this.

Mertz said she is looking at capital investment funds and such. If they purchased this site it will be enough space for expansion in the future. It would be enough space there. She has been researching this for the past two years.

Moller asked state inspection or USDA.

Mertz said servicing MN only, she does not believe they need USDA. For employees they would have four full time and 15-20 part-time seasonal employees. Careful on covid restrictions and minimum of five people in a space for cutting.

Reynolds said she has done her research and hopefully can make this work.



Hallin asked if a holding house would need to be built.

Mertz said a site plan would need to be built. An addition on the north side would be helpful. The animals would not be visible.

Barbian asked if the holding pen is exposed.

Mertz said a three sided shed and animals would not be visible.

Barbian said what is the standard of animals allowed and such will need to be looked at. Is there a standard plan and the City would need to set guidelines and establish something.

Erickson supports this and there is a big need for this business.

Barbian commented that the City has agreed to purchase an industrial land west of town and working on grant application now for infrastructure. There could be a site there for this.

**COMMUNICATION AND REPORTS:**

**A. Verbal Report – None**

**B. City Council Minutes for April, 2020**

The Planning Commission Board had no comments.

JOHNSON MOVED, SECOND BY REYNOLDS, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UPON THE VOTE, THERE WERE 5 AYES, 0 NAYS. MOTION CARRIED. THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:14 P.M.

ATTEST:

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Victoria Hallin, Vice Chair

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Mary Lou DeWitt, Comm. Dev. Zoning Specialist