

PLANNING COMMISSION CITY OF WABASHA

Minutes of the November 30, 2010 meeting:

COMMISSION MEMBERS: John Friedmeyer, Chair Claire Abbott
 Jim Niemantsverdriet Charles Bricher
 Rollin Hall Ron Benson
 Brian Wodele

STAFF PRESENT: Molly Patterson-Lundgren, City Planner
 Patty Heraty, Administrative Assistant

A Special Meeting of the Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, November 30 2010 for the sole purpose to discuss a request to extend the conditional use permit for the Grand Eagle Hotel.

Commissioner Friedmeyer called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Roll found members Friedmeyer, Bricher, Hall, Wodele, Benson and Abbott were present. Member Niemantsverdriet was absent.

Blaine Marcou was present for Grand Eagles Hotel. Mr. Marcou is requesting an extension to the current CUP for the Grand Eagles Hotel that is set to expire in December. The original CUP was granted on December 8, 2009. Commissioners were provided with a copy of the original CUP and minutes from the December 8, 2009 Planning Commission minutes.

The item was discussed at the November 08, 2010 regular Planning Commission meeting, however the commission took no action as Mr. Marcou was not present at that meeting.

City Planner Molly Patterson Lundgren stated that she had researched what other cities have done with CUP extension requests and that she found that other cities have granted the extensions and they have a process for doing this within their zoning ordinance.

Mr. Marcou addressed the commission and stated that there are no changes in the working drawings. The reason that no work has been done on the project in the last year is because of financing issues. He had secured preliminary financing prior to getting the CUP in December of 2009. After the issuance of the CUP, he found that financing was not available due to the changes in the economy. He stated that he has been working with three different financial institutions and that he is confident that the financial institution he has chosen now will work out and they will be moving forward.

Commission discussion included the following:

- Setting precedence for granting an extension. The commission has not previously granted an extension for a CUP and commissioners were concerned with providing solid findings for granting an extension.
- Consequences if an extension was not granted. If an extension were not granted, Mr. Marcou would have to re-apply for a new CUP because the current CUP would expire.
- Putting a timeline on the extension/allowing only one extension.
 - Mr. Marcou requested a 12 month extension, however he stated that he would need at least a 6 month extension because it takes 3 months for the financial part; 1 month for bids to go out then another month to award bids
- Current/past economic/financial considerations that have contributed to the project not moving forward were discussed. Mr. Marcou stated that not having the CUP extension approval could affect his discussion with the bank for financial considerations.

At 6:40 the commission took a 10 min recess.

At 6:50 the meeting was re-convened.

Commissioners Hall and Abbott offered the following motion and moved for its approval. Adopted unanimously.

A motion to grant the extension of the CUP for Big Jo Limited Grand Eagles Hotel issued December 8th of 2009 through October 31st 2011 based on the following findings:

1. Lending timeline
 - a. If current CUP lapses, the current application for funding is put on hold, therefore the project cannot move forward and the applicant would have to re-apply for a new CUP.
2. Construction Schedule
3. Global Economic Downturn and tightening of credit as substantiated locally by:
 - a. Anderson House and Bridgewater, and Dry Cleaners foreclosures
 - b. Decrease in local building permit applications

Having no other business, by unanimous consent the meeting was adjourned at 6:55pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Patty Heraty, Administrative Assistant