

# PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

## CITY OF GRANT

July 16, 2012

**Present:** Terry Derosier, Loren Sederstrom, Becky Siekmeier, Larry Lanoux, Bill David, Bob Tufty and Mark Wojcik

**Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** City Clerk, Kim Points

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Derosier called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Lanoux added a slide show prior to public comment.

Commissioner Wojcik revised item 7A, Minutes, May 21, 2012 and item 7B, Grading Permits.

**MOTION by Commissioner Sederstrom to approve the agenda as amended. Commissioner Tufty seconded the motion. MOTION carried unanimously.**

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES, JUNE 25, 2012**

Spelling and typographical errors were corrected.

**MOTION by Commissioner Sederstrom to approve the June 25, 2012 Minutes, as amended. Commissioner Lanoux seconded the motion. MOTION carried unanimously with Commissioner David abstaining.**

4A. **SLIDE SHOW**

Commissioner Wojcik referred to the slide presentation pointing out some of the great things that happen within Grant such as the tractor parade that is held annually. Commissioner Lanoux put together a float that is a replica of Town Hall for Manitou Days.

Commissioner Lanoux continued stating they have had a lot of fun and a lot of citizens helped with the float. They have participated in several parades and are meant to promote the Tractor Parade that will be held within Grant in September. He thanked the Gausthause as well as all the sponsors that contribute to the parade. He challenged

neighborhoods within the City to build their own float for the parade and also encouraged everyone to participate.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Commissioner Sederstrom came forward and read a letter from Mr. Warren Johnson, 7688 Jamaca, stating it is a formal written complaint at the School District site. Mr. Johnson is requesting a meeting with the City and expects immediate response.

Mr. Wally Anderson, 80<sup>th</sup> Street, came forward and recommended participation in the parade noting it is a lot of fun. He referred to the grading permit discussion stating the average citizen of Grant should be allowed some leeway for redoing driveways. He stated he does not believe that would be an infringement on wetlands and the City should not have fees for everything.

Mr. John Smith, 67<sup>th</sup> Lane, came forward and referred to the complaint protocol that is on the agenda this evening. He stated another aspect of that is being able to express concerns to the City Council. Public comment is totally not effective and is now down to two minutes. The City needs a formalized platform to voice concerns to the City body and get a response. The idea of living out in Grant to be left alone is old fashioned. The City needs a better way for citizens to communicate.

Mr. Bob Englehart, Joliet Avenue, came forward and asked about the siren. It was placed on state property and wondered when it will be moved. He stated he heard it has not even been paid for yet.

Chair Derosier advised some comments made during public comment the Planning Commission cannot do anything about but they can listen and forward concerns to the City Council.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

**7. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Minutes, May 21, 2012**

Commissioner Wojcik advised he did not get a packet so he did not see the revisions to the minutes. He did go to the City office and make some revisions that included a statement that all watershed districts were willing to participate in the grading permit process. The original draft minutes did not clearly capture that.

Chair Derosier referred to page 2 and corrected the spelling of Mr. Kyle Axtell.

**MOTION by Commissioner Siekmeier to approve the May 21, 2012 Minutes, as amended. Commissioner Tufty seconded the motion.**

Commissioner Lanoux stated a lot of people should have been at that meeting and they were not. He stated they should not go by memory and does not think the minutes should be approved. A better job needs to be done with getting staff to the meetings.

Commissioner Wojcik stated that after revisions, he believes things important to the meeting were captured.

**MOTION failed with Commissioners Lanoux, David, Wojcik and Sederstrom voting nay.**

The May 21, 2012 Planning Commission meeting minutes were not approved.

**B. Grading Permits** – Chair Derosier advised the grading permit process has been discussed previously and he does hope the Planning Commission can get through this tonight.

Mr. Kyle Axtell, Rice Creek Watershed District, came forward and advised he cannot speak for other watershed districts. He provided the background of the Rice Creek Watershed District noting it is 186 square miles and is one of the largest. He advised the district does have a permitting process that includes storm water management erosion control and floodplain encroachments. They are also the LGU within the City of Grant. Any grading impacts of one acre or more that that does create impervious surface triggers a storm water erosion control permit. The City of Hugo implements their rules within a portion of the District's area and they did take over as LGU. The District is open to doing that with any City provided they have the staff and ordinances are adopted to enable that process. Permit applications are available at the office and there is a different level of fees which is dependent upon the type of project. The City of Hugo completely took over for the District so they do not see or review the actual permits but conduct an annual audit.

Mr. Axtell continued advising he could envision the District and the City working together with erosion control issues but that would have to go to the Board for discussion. He noted there is an escrow required when projects require storm water management and/or wetlands. The minimum is \$1500. The District does not work with any cities that they had to take over the permitting process for.

Commissioner Lanoux asked if the District has any liability as the City of Grant is within their district and they provided a permit to the school.

Mr. Axtell stated the review process is not prescriptive. The School District approached them with a plan and that plan was approved. He deferred to the PCA and State regarding any violations. He advised his understanding is that the site and been approved and is safe. He noted the District has no rules relating to ground water.

City Engineer Olson reviewed the current permit process, fees and escrow requirements as well as other community's fees. He advised that historically, staff has not required a

grading permit for paving/graveling a driveway. He reviewed the staff report providing three options for the City 1) keep permit process the same; 2) allow for a minor/major permit; and 3) a joint City/Watershed District permit. He stated the City could look into the potential of bonding in lieu of escrows for projects.

City Planner Hornby advised the permit process varies widely from City to City and Watershed Districts tend to look at larger issues. The City looks are local smaller projects and has to look at the current ordinances for compliance. It is common for a City to be the LGU for some Districts. Other agencies will be the LGU but here will be a fee for that service. There is the potential to have just one erosion control fee but it will be at a higher cost.

Mr. Jack Kramer, Building Inspector, came forward and stated he does not get involved with grading permits unless there is a zoning complaint. His duties within the City relate to building permits and zoning compliance. If he sees something that may trigger a grading permit he refers the resident to the City Engineer and/or Watershed District.

City Engineer Olson advised site grading would require a grading permit but a rebuilt would not because they are not site grading. Fifty cubic yards is typically the standard for grading permits because of drainage patters. THE PCA is concerned with disturbed areas. The City of Grant is unique as it is within four Districts. Getting all the Districts on board with one permit process would be a long detailed process but could be possible. He advised moving forward with a major and minor permit process has potential within the City of Grant.

Building Inspector Kramer added it may be beneficial to send contractors and residents to the Watershed District for a permit prior to coming to the City.

City Engineer Olson noted escrow dollars are put into a separate account for restoration. Average permit costs for staff time is approximately \$300. What staff looks at is how drainage is affected. The amount of time to review a project or permit is the same whether it is 50 cubic yards being moved or 1,000 cubic yards.

Chair Derosier reviewed a handout relating to a breakdown of a basic grading permit, minor grading permit and major grading permit.

City Engineer Olson explained how the minor/major permitting process would work. He noted a fee in the amount of \$100 could work but the Engineer would not get involved or review permits unless the Building Inspector makes that request.

Building Inspector Kramer advised he could take care of the minor grading permits with the City Engineer as a resource depending upon the project. He stated he could do take care of it for the \$100 fee. Depending on the project, there may be a pre-inspection, final inspection and an inspection during the project.

Commissioner Siekmeier stated the current building inspector may have the expertise to take care of minor grading permits relating to wetland issues but a future building inspector may not have that expertise.

City Engineer Olson advised if the City does move forward with a minor and major permit process, the escrow amount would just be dependent upon how much risk the City is willing to take.

The Planning Commission went through the chart provided by Chair Derosier and made revisions with the intent of making a recommendation to the City Council. The revisions included 1) minor grading: permit fee \$150; no escrow and a staff level review; 2) major grading: standard farming/tilling practices are excluded and escrow could be cash or letter of credit from a bank.

**MOTION by Chair Derosier to recommend approval of the revised grading permit process to the City Council. Commissioner Sederstrom seconded the motion.**

**Commissioner Siekmeier made a friendly amendment to include the tracking of expenses to make sure City costs are covered. Chair Derosier agreed to the friendly amendment. MOTION carried unanimously.**

Chair Derosier requested the updated draft for City Council be submitted to him for review prior to going to the City Council.

**C. Complaint Protocol** – Chair Derosier reviewed the draft that was sent to the City Council as well as the proposed changes from the Planning Commission. He advised he draft another document that incorporated the revisions and would like to go through it for discussion.

City Engineer Olson noted there are many times that other agencies contact staff directly regarding complaints. Those complaints can be forwarded to the City.

Building Inspector Kramer added that public entities do contact staff directly quiet often.

The Planning Commission reviewed the draft document and made revisions noting the final draft document would be presented to the Council at the next meeting.

Chair Derosier clarified that the draft document is a policy. It is called the City of Grant Complaint Policy.

**MOTION by Commissioner Siekmeier to recommend approval of the Complaint Policy as amended. Commissioner Sederstrom seconded the motion.**

Commissioner Lanoux requested the entire document be laid out on one sheet noting that did not happen at the Council meeting.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**8. COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

There were no reports from Commissioner's.

**9. SET AGENDA, AUGUST 20, 2012 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

The next Planning Commission Meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 20, 2012, 7:00 p.m.

Agenda items will include LMC Duties of the Planning Commission and Charter Commission Benefits, per Mr. John Smith.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by Commissioner Sederstrom to adjourn the meeting at 9:43 p.m. Commissioner Siekmeier seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Points  
City Clerk

APPROVED