

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION OF THE THATCHER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

July 6, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Griffin, Ray Tuttle, Machael Layton, Brandon Homer

MEMBERS ABSENT: Wayne Layton, Billy Orr, Jerry Hoopes

VISITORS: None

Welcome and Call meeting to order

Chairman Griffin called the meeting to order, establishing that there was a quorum.

Approval of Minutes

The Commission unanimously approved the minutes from the June 15th P&Z meeting.

Citizen Review Session – Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments

Mr. Griffin opened a public hearing to discuss proposed amendments to the zoning ordinance which would allow mini-storage as an accepted use in the C-2 zone. He asked Mr. Palmer to give some background on the issue.

Mr. Palmer said that the commercial zoning in the Town used to allow “mini-storage” facilities. All of the facilities he’s aware of in town are in C-2 zones. The zoning ordinance changed in 2013 and now does not allow mini-storage in a C-2 zone. A potential developer of a “u-haul store” approached the Town about constructing a multi-story U-haul store (including sales of moving supplies, rental of moving vehicles and indoor storage) that would also include a component of traditional “mini-storage” in the back of the property. The property they were inquiring about is just west of Comfort Inn on the highway. He feels it is a good use for the property, but it brought attention to the fact that the current code does not allow mini-storage facilities in C-2. He feels they are appropriate in many places zoned C-2, but that a traditional mini-storage facility may not be appropriate right along the highway corridor. He suggested that maybe mini-storage be allowed in C-2 as an Administrative use, or a Conditional use.. either of which would give the ability for additional scrutiny if one were proposed along the highway.

Mr. Homer said that he wanted to disclose that he is related to the Goodmans, who own a house immediately adjacent to the parcel near Comfort Inn, but that since this is a general code discussion, he didn’t see a conflict in participating. He said that the price of highway frontage property would probably eliminate much of the possibility of someone wanting to put cheap mini-storage units right along the highway. He was not opposed to either a conditional or administrative use permit being required also.

Mr. Palmer shared the difference between an “administrative use” and a “conditional use”. The primary difference is that Council has to approve a conditional use, while staff can approve an administrative use. Staff has specific criteria to use when approving an administrative use, including adherence to a document approved by Council (the General Plan or other). The wording of the proposed General Plan would be such to allow staff to require things along the highway to look nice and maintain a high level of aesthetics.

There was some discussion about whether or not Connex boxes should be allowed as storage units. Mr. Palmer stated that the current code allows a single Connex to be allowed as a storage unit in a C-2 zone, but that multiples would not be. However, the code does allow Connex boxes to be used as part of the “principle commercial building” in accordance with 13.8.C.5. There was general consensus that we should not allow Connex boxes to be used as mini-storage, unless altered to appear “more permanent”, be affixed to the lot, be more uniform and have to go through an increased review process.

Ms. Layton stated that she thought that the code should allow mini-storage as an Administrative Use in the C-2 zone. She expressed that it should be consistent throughout the C-2 zone, not different if the property is along the highway. There was a general consensus that this was the direction the commission would like to go with the wording of the change. Mr. Palmer said that he would bring proposed text amendments to the next meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned