



ST. FRANCIS PLANNING COMMISSION

**ISD #15 DISTRICT OFFICE BUILDING
4115 AMBASSADOR BLVD.
JUNE 15, 2011**

7:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Adopt Agenda June 15, 2011
4. Approve Minutes March 16, 2011
5. Public Comment

Public Hearings

None

Discussion Items

6. Kennel Ordinance
7. Downtown Parking
8. Sign Ordinance Update
9. Discussion by Planning Commissioners
10. Adjournment

There may be a quorum of St. Francis Council Members present at this meeting.

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS, MN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
March 16, 2011**

1. **Call to Order:** The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Rich Skordahl.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were Chairman Rich Skordahl, Commission Members Ray Steinke, Greg Zutz, John Hanes, Todd Gardner, Roni Ronyak, City Planner Nate Sparks, NAC (Northwest Associated Consultants), Kathy Lind Planning Commission Secretary and City Council Member Steve Kane.
3. **Adopt Agenda:** Motion by Zutz second by Steinke to adopt the March 16, 2011 Planning Commission Agenda. Motion carried 6-0.
4. **Approve Minutes:** Motion by Steinke second by Zutz to approve the February 16, 2011 Planning Commission Minutes. Motion carried 6-0.
5. **Oath of Office – Roni Ronyak.**
6. **Public Comment - None**
Public Hearing – The Public hearing to discuss the Sign Ordinance amendment opened at 7:13pm. Closed at 7:14pm.
7. **Sign Ordinance Ammendment:**
Motion by Hane second by Gardner to make recommendation to the City Council on the below amendments to the Sign Ordinance. Motion carried 6-0.

Section 10-23-2: Exempt Signs

- Remove subsection A
- Change subsection B: Memorial plaques, building identification signs, and building cornerstones when cut or carved into a masonry surface or made an integral part of the building structure.
- Remove subsection C.
- Change subsection D: Directional, warning, or informational signs authorized by federal, state, or municipal governments with proper jurisdiction.
- Remove subsection E
- Change subsection F: Official notices authorized by a court, public body, or public safety official.

Section 10-23-3: Prohibited Signs

- Change subsection H: Banners, pennants, festoons, and search-lights except as a permitted temporary special event sign and as identified in 10-23-5-H
- Change subsection L: Signs which blink, flash, or are animated.

Section 10-23-4: Signs not requiring Permits

- Change subsection A: Construction signs.
A non-illuminated sign not exceeding thirty-two (32) square feet in the R-1 and R-2 Districts and sixty-four (64) square feet in area in all other districts may be placed on the site where an open building permit has been issued. The sign shall be removed within two (2) years of the date of issuance of the building permit or when the building permit has been completed or expired, whichever is sooner.
- Change subsection B: Directional signs, on-site.
On site-directional signs, not exceeding two (2) square feet in area, intended to facilitate the movement of pedestrians and vehicles within the site, identify restrooms, waste receptacles, addresses, door bells, mailboxes, or building entrances upon which signs are located. Such signs shall be limited to two (2) per site in R-1 and R-2 Districts and four (4) per site for all other districts.
- Remove subsection C.
- Change subsection D: Identification Signs.
Signs in all non-residential districts which identify the business, owner, manager, or resident providing the sign does not exceed four (4) square feet in area and is attached to a wall or placed in a window. Such a sign may be placed on a residential property with a permitted home occupation.
- Change subsection E: Non-Commercial Speech.
Not with standing any other provisions of this sign ordinance, all signs of any size contacting non-commercial speech may be posted from June 25 in any general election year until ten (10) days following the general election and thirteen (13) weeks prior to any special election until ten (10) days following the special election.
- Change subsection F: Private sale or event signs.
One sign not to exceed four (4) square feet in area may be placed on the site of a rummage sale or similar event. Any sign shall be removed at the termination of the sale or similar event.
- Change subsection G: Individual property sale, lease, or rental signs.
Any property that is currently for sale or rent may place one sign per street frontage. Such signs must be removed within ten (10) days after the sale or rental of the property. Such signs shall not exceed six (6) square feet in area in all residential districts and thirty-two (32) square feet in area in all other districts.
- Change subsection H: “No Trespassing” and “No Hunting” signs and similar warning or restrictive signs, not to exceed two (2) square feet in area, may be placed upon private property by the owner.

Section 10-23-5: Change from Construction Sign Specifications to “General Requirements”:

- Change subsection A: Compliance with Building and Electrical Codes. All signs shall be erected pursuant to the requirements of the State Building Code.
- Change subsection B: Anchorage Requirements.
Item 4: No sign shall be attached to hang from any building until all necessary wall attachments have been approved by the Building Official.
- Change subsection D: Additional Sign Construction and Placement Requirements.
 - Add item 6. Except as otherwise permitted by this ordinance, no signs other than governmental signs shall be erected or temporarily placed within any right-of-way or upon any public lands or easements
 - Add item 7. When a free standing sign or sign structure is constructed so that the sign faces are not back to back, the angle shall not exceed ten degrees. If the angle is greater than ten degrees, the total area of both sides added together shall not exceed the maximum allowable sign area for that district.
- Change subsection E: Temporary Signs.
 1. An on-site temporary, portable sign may be used for a period of time not to exceed 120 days per calendar year per parcel of record in the commercial and industrial zoning districts provide:
 - a. Such temporary, portable signs shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height and shall not be placed closer than ten (10) feet from any street right-of-way or property line.
 - b. Any Temporary, portable sign shall require a permit issued by the City to the property owner specifying the duration of time to be displayed.
 - c. No temporary, portable sign shall occupy required parking spaces.
 - d. In the case of multi-tenant structures, one sign may be placed every 150 feet of street frontage rather than one sign per parcel. Each 150 feet is granted 120 days for display.
 2. One sandwich board per business may be allowed in the business district without a permit and without using the time period allotted for temporary, portable signs provided:
 - a. The sign is placed within fifteen (15) feet of the entrance of the business.
 - b. The sign shall be placed on private property and may be placed on a private sidewalk provided there is five (5) feet of clearance for pedestrians.
 - c. The sign may not obstruct safety, visibility, or traffic.
 - d. The sign shall be freestanding, not attached to any other structure or device, not be illuminated, greater than 3 ½ feet in height, greater than 2 feet width, or greater than 2 feet depth.
 - e. The sign shall be only displayed during business hours.
- Change subsection F: Electronic Message Board Signs.

Signs displaying electronic, scrolling text-based messages may be permitted in commercial and industrial districts provided that the electronic message board component of any sign is no greater than forty (40) square feet in area.

- Change subsection G: Business and Industrial Window Signs.
Window signs are permitted in the industrial and business districts provided each sign does not occupy more than 75% of the window area.
- Change subsection H: Banner Signs.
Banner signs and similar products attached to a building shall be allowed without a permit as follows:
 1. Signage shall be well secured to prevent it from blowing in the wind.
 2. No more than two (2) signs shall be allowed at any one time.
 3. Each sign shall be less than 100 square feet in area.
 4. Such signage shall be only allowed in the industrial and business districts.
- Change subsection I: Ground Banner Signs.
Banner signs may be allowed on the ground up to forty-eight (48) square feet in area, but each ground banner sign shall count towards one of the two allowed building banner signs and shall conform to all standards set forth for portable temporary signs in 10-23-5:E-1 and shall require a permit.

Section 10-23-7: Non-Conforming Signs:

- Change this section to read: Any sign legally existing on the effective date of this Section which does not conform to the requirements set forth in the Section shall become a non-conforming sign. No non-conforming sign shall be enlarged or altered in such a fashion that increases its non-conformity. Non-conforming signs shall be subject to the requirements of Chapter 15 of the Zoning Ordinance.
 - a. Remove this subsection
 - b. Remove this subsection

Section 10-23-8: District Regulations:

The following signs are permitted in their respective Zoning Districts:

- Change subsection A: A-1, A-2, and A-3
Item 3. For legally established non-residential uses, one (1) freestanding sign not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet and six (6) feet in height, shall be permitted. One (1) wall business sign, not to exceed twenty (20) square feet, shall also be permitted. The freestanding sign and wall business signage shall be placed on the same premises as the business in which it identifies.
- Change subsection B: RR and ML-PUD
Item 3 For legally established non-residential uses, one (1) freestanding sign not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet and six (6) feet in height, shall be permitted. One (1) wall business sign, not to exceed twenty (20) square feet, shall also be permitted. The freestanding sign and wall business signage shall be placed on the same premises as the business in which it identifies.

- Change subsection C: R-1 and R-2
Item 3 For legally established non-residential uses, one business wall sign, not to exceed four (4) square feet, shall be permitted.
Item 4 For legally established institutional uses, such as religious institutions, nursing homes, medical establishments and schools, one (1) freestanding sign per street frontage identifying said institution or institutional complex shall be permitted. The freestanding sign shall not exceed sixty (60) square feet in sign area and ten (10) feet in height. One business wall sign, not to exceed twenty (20) square feet in sign area shall be permitted for each structure.
- Change subsection D: R-3 and R-4
Item 2 One (1) permanent area identification sign per frontage with access to a neighborhood, subdivision, development or multi-family complex, not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in the sign area and six (6) feet in height, shall be permitted. The area identification sign shall be placed on the same premises as the development which it identifies.
Item 3 For legally established non-residential uses, one business wall sign, not to exceed four (4) square feet in sign area, shall be permitted.
Item 4 For legally established institutional uses, such as religious institutions, nursing homes, medical establishments and schools, one (1) freestanding sign per street frontage identifying said institution or institutional complex shall be permitted. The freestanding sign shall not exceed sixty (60) square feet in sign area and ten (10) feet in height. One business wall sign, not to exceed twenty (20) square feet in sign area shall be permitted for each structure.
- Change subsection F: B-2 and B-3
Item 4 For legally established institutional uses, one (1) freestanding sign per street frontage identifying said institution or institutional complex shall be permitted. The freestanding sign shall not exceed sixty (60) square feet in sign area and ten (10) feet in height.
- Change subsection I: Conservancy
Item 2 One (1) permanent identification sign, not to exceed fifty (50) square feet in sign area and six (6) feet in height shall be permitted per frontage with access to the site. The identification sign shall be placed on the same premises as the use in which it identifies.
- Change subsection J: B-1
Item 2 One (1) permanent identification sign per neighborhood, subdivision, or development, not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in sign area and six (6) feet in height shall be permitted. The area identification sign shall be placed on the same premises as the development which it identifies.
Item 4 For legally established institutional uses, one (1) freestanding sign per street frontage identifying said institution or institutional complex shall be permitted. The freestanding sign shall not exceed sixty (60) feet square feet in sign area and ten (10) feet in height.

10-23-9: Administration:

- Change subsection A: Application Process
Item 4 A sketch plan showing the sign size, manner of construction, type of sign, construction materials, other signs on the site, and any other information as requested by the City.

10-23-10: Severability:

If any section, subsection, clause, or phrase of this sign ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Chapter. The City Council hereby declares that it would have adopted the sign ordinance in each section, subsection, sentence, or phrase thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, or phrases to be declared invalid.

8. Sign Ordinance Performance Standards Review.

After reviewing St. Francis's current Sign Performance standards against nearby communities, it was a general consensus of the commission to leave the current requirements the way they currently are.

9. Goal Setting.

After some discussion, the commission members came up with several suggestions for the upcoming year.

- a. Incorporate a building performance standard for the downtown area.
- b. Attract new businesses to town. Since it has been a downtime for the new housing/building market the commission feels this would be a good time to prepare for when the market changes for economic growth.

Councilmember Kane did explain that current budget constraints are preventing the city on funding economic developments projects at this time. However, there has been upgrades to the water/sewer system extending north on Hwy 47 in anticipation of an Industrial Park. He also mentioned the Revolving Loan Fund that the Council is in the process of reviewing. The Revolving Loan Fund will provide small low interest loans to assist in the startup of new businesses or expanding existing businesses in the City of St. Francis.

Another suggestion was to have the Zoning Commission and City Council get together to share ideas and concerns.

10. Discussion by Planning Commissioners: There was a brief discussion regarding the sign permit fee. Current sign permit fee is \$75.00. The commission feels that if we are going to require permits for temporary signs then would like the council to consider lowering the fee.

11. Adjournment. Motion by Steinke second by Hane to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 7:45pm. Motion carried 6-0.



PLANNING REPORT

TO: St. Francis Planning Commission
Matt Hylan, City Administrator

FROM: Nate Sparks

MEETING DATE: June 15, 2011

DATE: June 8, 2011

RE: Animal Ordinance – Dog Kennels

BACKGROUND

The City has recently received citizen complaints regarding illegal dog kennels. While handling the complaints it was noticed that there may be a gap between the private kennel and commercial kennel standards. Since the commercial kennel standards are found in the zoning ordinance, it is being brought to the Planning Commission for preliminary discussion.

KENNEL LICENSES

Chapter 6, Section 7 of the City Code states that a kennel is “any place, building, tract of land, abode or vehicle, wherein or whereon two or more dogs, over six months of age are kept, kept for sale, or boarded.” It further states that a kennel license is required to maintain a kennel and that a property owner must have 5 acres of land to qualify for a kennel license. Animal hospitals and veterinarian clinics are exempt from this requirement.

ANIMAL ORDINANCE

Section 8-3-1:C of the City Code states that no dwelling unit may house more than three dogs over the age of three months unless the property owner has a kennel license. It does not state a maximum number of dogs for those who hold kennel licenses.

COMMERCIAL KENNELS

The Zoning Ordinance defines a “commercial kennel” as “any structure or premise on which four (4) dogs up to fifteen (15) dogs over six years of age are commercially kept for sale, breeding, boarding, or exhibited, except hospitals, clinics, and other premises operated by a licensed veterinarian exclusively for the care and treatment of animals.”

In the Zoning Ordinance “commercial kennels” are allowed as a conditional use in the A-1 and A-2 Districts and an interim use in the A-3 District provided all the standards

found in Chapters 6 and 8 are met, the use is accessory to a residence, and the site is on a collector or arterial road. The "A" Districts are the City's agricultural districts which have a minimum lot size of 10 acres.

NON-COMMERCIAL KENNELS

In this situation, a non-commercial kennel licensee could argue they have the right to an undetermined number of dogs on site. It is doubtful that this is the intent of the animal ordinance. The zoning provision was intended to regulate business activity and defer to the animal ordinances regarding the keeping of animals.

ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

To be consistent with the likely intent of the ordinance, it may make sense to have some sort of concrete limit on the number of dogs non-commercial kennel licenses allow. The commercial kennels were capped at 15 dogs due to concerns of the likely impact that 15 dogs would have, as well as up to 15 dog owners coming and going from the property. It could be argued that housing 15 dogs is not likely to be a legitimate residential activity as there is most likely some sort of potentially non-profit breeding or boarding being conducted. Rather than attempting to determine the motives behind such activity, it may be appropriate to set a maximum number of dogs allowed on a private kennel license and then state any number beyond that is a commercial kennel. If the cap on the private kennel license is four, then that number is already set in the definition.

REQUESTED ACTION

City Staff would like the Planning Commission to discuss this topic and provide insight for possible future ordinance amendments.



PLANNING REPORT

TO: St. Francis Planning Commission
Matt Hylan, City Administrator

FROM: Nate Sparks

MEETING DATE: June 15, 2011

DATE: June 8, 2011

RE: Comprehensive Plan Implementation – Downtown Parking

BACKGROUND

As part of the Comprehensive Plan several implementation activities were identified. One such activity identified was regarding the downtown area. The City's goal was to find ways of improving and potentially expanding the downtown area. The planning for this activity was intended to be in the near term in order to be prepared in case property became available for expansion or redevelopment in or adjacent to the current downtown. Previous discussions with the Planning Commission identified reviewing downtown architectural standards and parking requirements as possible early steps in this implementation process. Since the City has recently been reviewing parking standards, it seems an appropriate topic for discussion.

PARKING STANDARDS GENERALLY

In the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 19 sets forth the requirements for providing parking. Each type of business is required to provide a certain amount of parking that is based on the amount of parking demand generated by the use. These numbers are based on engineering studies.

DOWNTOWN PARKING

Downtown Districts are usually intended to be higher density business areas centrally located and accessible by multiple types of transportation. The aggregation of the businesses creates a compounding effect whereby more activity is produced. The space occupied by large parking lots cuts into the usable space and limits this activity. Many cities prefer to utilize shared public parking lots and street parking rather than independent on-site parking areas.

DOWNTOWN PARKING POLICIES

There are three general methods by which cities manage downtown parking:

Parking Reductions

If the City feels that it has ample opportunities for parking within the downtown (on street, public lots, etc) it may just simply reduce the number of stalls necessary. For example a City may calculate the required number of stalls and then reduce it by 25% or 30%. The City of Monticello reduces the required parking to 60%, when the applicant opens their lot for shared public parking.

Shared Parking

Many cities allow property owners to share parking areas, sometimes with a CUP, to require less parking on one site if ample parking is available on another or if the uses are compatible. The City of St. Francis currently has a joint parking ordinance, although it appears to be seldom used. This method is also used in Isanti and Big Lake.

Cash-in-lieu of Parking

Another method is to establish a community parking fund and allow for businesses to either provide parking or contribute to the fund. Then fund then pays for the acquisition of land, construction, and maintenance of parking lots. This is the method utilized within the City of Cambridge.

REQUESTED ACTION

City Staff would like to know which method(s) are of interest to the Planning Commission. Then research can be done into how to best develop a strategy. It would appear that St. Francis is more compatible with allowing for parking reductions and encouraging shared parking. However, if there is interest in establishing a community fund, that option may be explored, as well.



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PLANNING MEMO

TO: St. Francis Planning Commission
Matt Hylan, City Administrator

FROM: Nate Sparks

MEETING DATE: June 15, 2011

DATE: June 8, 2011

RE: Sign Ordinance Update

The sign ordinance is still pending Council action. At a staff level discussions have been held regarding the enforcement policies and procedures, fees, and timing of the implementation of the new policy. There also has been exploration of possible web based tools to assist in administering the program. It is the goal to have all of these matters resolved prior to the Council taking action on the ordinance. The ordinance will most likely be up for Council action within the next few weeks.