

MINUTES OF MEETING
SOUTH ST. PAUL PLANNING COMMISSION
April 3, 2024

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY CHAIR FELTON AT 7:00 P.M.

Present: Tim Felton, Chair
 Geoff Fournier
 Tyler Fehrman
 James Hart
 Andrew Hoffman
 Brienne Miller
 Ruth Krueger
 Michael Healy, Planning Manager

Absent: None

- 1) APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Commissioner Fehrman noted that that his last name was spelled incorrectly on the agenda - Motion to approve the agenda as corrected– Krueger/Fournier (7-0).
- 2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES –March 6, 2024 – Commissioners Fehrman and Hoffman noted their names were spelled incorrectly in the March 6th minutes- Motion to approve as corrected – Hart/Fournier (7-0).

3) NEW BUSINESS

None.

4) PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Ordinance Adding Craft Production and Funeral Homes as Allowed Uses in Commercial Zoning Districts.

Mr. Healy presented the staff report. South St. Paul has 4 commercial zoning districts with a list of uses that are allowed in commercial buildings. There are some “permitted” uses that are automatically allowed as well as some “conditional” uses that require review by the Planning Commission and City Council. Craft production is a new use that was added to the code when the MMM district was created in 2021. Craft production is where a commercial manufacturing facility offers a retail space within their manufacturing facility for sale of their product to the public. Examples of this include a brewery with a taproom, an art studio with a production area, and a production bakery with a storefront. The proposed ordinance would create rules for craft production in the zoning districts that do not already allow it. The ordinance would also add funeral homes, which are an existing use, to the list of allowed uses in the C-1 district. The ordinance would also clean up some of the existing commercial use lists. At the previous meeting, the Planning Commission had asked staff to review if there were any additional uses that should be added to the code to make the City more business friendly. Mr. Healy provided feedback on potential areas of the code that could be updated. Staff recommended approval of the draft ordinance.

Planning Commission Minutes

April 3, 2024

Page 2 of 3

Chair Felton asked staff to confirm that the ordinance before the commission was effectively the same as the ordinance that was reviewed for a discussion at the previous meeting, minus a few changes. Mr. Healy confirmed that was correct.

Commissioner Krueger asked about the proposal to allow the “Zoning Administrator” to approve certain accessory uses in the C-1 district instead of the City Engineer or the Code Enforcement Officer. Mr. Healy explained that the City Code was written in 1992 at a time when the city did not have a City Planner or Zoning Administrator and so the City Engineer filled that role. The City Engineer at the time wrote the code to give him, and sometimes the code enforcement officer, the authority to oversee zoning regulations. Today, the City Planner is in charge of zoning regulations, so the code is being updated to reflect that the Planner/ Zoning Administrator has authority over planning decisions. Commissioner Krueger asked who the Zoning Administrator is. Mr. Healy explained that he was unless he designated someone else as the zoning administrator.

Chair Felton opened the public hearing.

No one was present to comment on the application and no one was in attendance of the meeting.

Chair Felton closed the public hearing.

Motion to approve as presented an ordinance to add craft production and funeral homes as allowed uses in the commercial zoning districts- Fehrman/Fournier (7-0).

5) OTHER BUSINESS

None.

6) STAFF UPDATES

A. Update on Zoning Preemption Bills.

Mr. Healy provided staff background. At the previous meeting, Mr. Healy had informed the commissioners of the proposed legislation at the State level that would heavily impact local government’s ability to make local zoning decisions for housing development. Mr. Healy explained that the bills that had been presented at the previous meeting were still in draft form and had been revised several time. Some of the “poison pills” in the original legislation had been removed, such as the proposed 500-foot setback for housing from railroad tracks, which would have prevented any multi-family housing from being constructed along Concord Street. It is generally unclear how much support there is for the drafted legislation. The League of Minnesota Cities asked City Councils to pass resolutions supporting the retention of local zoning authority. South St. Paul’s resolution, which was passed on Monday, April 1st contained some of the language from the League’s model resolution as well as some provisions that tells South St. Paul’s unique story and shares the City’s ongoing efforts to make it easier to build housing through zoning updates. The legislature is in session until May 20th and will consider and vote on bills until then. If the Commissioners have feedback, they should reach out directly to their state representative.

7) ADJOURNMENT

Planning Commission Minutes

April 3, 2024

Page 3 of 3

Motion to adjourn- Hoffman/ Fehrman (7-0).