

CITY OF MARINE ON ST. CROIX
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday May 28 2019- 7:30pm
121 Judd Street – Village Hall

1. Call to Order
2. Discussion— Short-Term Rentals
3. Old/New Business
4. Approval of April Minutes
5. Adjournment

The City of Marine on St. Croix Planning Commission regular meeting of May 28, 2019 was called to order by Acting Chairman Brenner at 7:32 pm. Hagstrom, Henry, Sanderson, Smitten, and Spisak present. Mrosła absent.

Citizens Present: Gwen Roden, Larry Roden, Glen Mills, Larry Whitaker, Mary Whitaker, Sharon Looney, Peter Foster, Leslie Mackenzie, Kitsi Vadheim, John Goodfellow, Karen Kramer, Andy Kramer, Jim Maher

Discussion—Short-Term Rentals

Smitten summarized the work that has been done by the Commission since being assigned the topic of short-term rentals (STRs). The committee of Smitten, Hagstrom, Henry, and Council Member Gwen Roden has generated six topics to organize the discussions (definition, types—owner v non-owner occupied, STR concerns, performance standards, concentration, and lodging tax/application process), looked at how other communities were addressing those issues, and then provided recommendations for what might work best in Marine. Within the last two meetings, all of those topics have been discussed, templates have been drafted, and comments have been received from residents.

Since the April meeting, the committee revisited the potential concentration of STRs because many in attendance thought the number should be significantly reduced. The recommendation at this point is 16 total STRs, with four being allowed per district. The committee also revisited a homesteading requirement, but rather are leaning towards the requirement that an owner occupy the property as much as (or more than) it is rented. The committee also reviewed whether events should be allowed, and have concluded that they should not. Rather, the STR would be limited to the occupancy numbers outlined by the City of St. Paul. Henry clarified an error at the last meeting about signs. Signs would be allowed, but signs with advertising would not.

Smitten said that the next step would be to hold a community workshop in June. The recommendations would be put into a summary and memo prior to the meeting and provided to the public in advance. Smitten noted that this would not be the formal Commission recommendation, but a way to receive more feedback from residents. Brenner said he would consult with Chair Mrosła about the scheduling of this workshop.

Brenner then opened up the meeting to public comment. Resident Larry Whitaker from Pine Cone Trail stated that a needs assessment or questionnaire needs to be completed, with a lot of publicity to get input

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from as many residents as possible. Questions would include whether the resident saw a need for STRs, and whether they would be viewed as a positive or negative in their neighborhood. Smitten suggested this be included as part of the workshop, along with a story board or other display measure for residents to easily share their opinions. Resident Andy Kramer from Walnut Street added that the question be asked about how much rental opportunity Marine can absorb, and when it becomes excessive. Resident Mary Whitaker said she would like to see a statement from the Commission regarding their assignment of STRs and how they are working to serve the community by exploring the topic. Resident Kitzie Vadheim from Pine Cone Trail said she understands that there are residents on both sides of this issue, but believes the Commission should be able to rationalize whatever the final recommendation is for both parties.

Resident John Goodfellow said he believes existing STRs should be used as case studies. He then provided two instances where the STR in his neighborhood allowed for large issues with parking. He emphasized that private roads are different than public roads when it comes to enforcement, and that the owner of the STR in his neighborhood is not in compliance with the City Code. Larry Whitaker added that the owner of the property has direct access to a City road, but because of GPS devices, guests are driving across private yards which is both a safety hazard and an invasion of privacy.

Mary Whitaker said that the neighborhood monitors each other and their visitors, but they do not desire to monitor STR customers coming in. Andy Kramer said that an STR is different from other home businesses because customers can come and go at any time during the day. There was discussion about having the contact information of the designated representative and a complaint process, but the residents in attendance still believed this would feel like neighborhood policing. The Kramers suggested that any STR owner be a tenured resident. Resident Jim Maher said STRs might be a great opportunity but there is no way to enforce them with the City's resources. There was further discussion about homesteading and Spisak recommended the City find out how many residential properties there are in Marine and how many of those are homesteaded. Smitten noted not wanting to leave out properties that are not homesteaded but have a long history with Marine. Sanderson suggested a possible grandfathering in of these properties.

There was discussion about what is required of guests of an STR, and Henry said that could be addressed in the ordinance. Gwen Roden commented on how the goal of the committee has always been maintaining the character of the community and will continue to be so. Andy Kramer commented that this issue might need to be turned over to the residents for an official vote. Brenner closed the public comment portion of the discussion and told residents to stay tuned for the date of the community workshop.

Old/New Business

Resident Sharon Looney of Third Street believed two items under new business should be naming the gazebo park after Jack Warren, and temporarily using the newly purchased school building as a community center. Looney was informed to address the City Council with both of these requests.

Approval of April Minutes

Spisak moved and Hagstrom seconded to approve the April 30th Planning Commission minutes as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Spisak moved and Smitten seconded to adjourn at 8:59 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes by Kiersten Northcraft, Assistant City Clerk

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