

CITY OF SAINT HEDWIG

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

APPROVED MINUTES

P&Z Meeting February 2, 2021:

Meeting called to order @ 7:07pm

Roll Call:

Commissioner Jones – Absent
Commissioner Polasek – Present via teleconference
Commissioner Robinette – Present via teleconference
Commissioner Maddox – Present via teleconference
Code Compliance Officer Fornof – Present via teleconference
Secretary Schaefer – Present via teleconference
Quorum established

Reading and approval of minutes:

Commissioner Polasek motioned to accept the January 5, 2021 minutes as written. Commissioner Robinette second the motion. January 5, 2021 minutes approved, all in favor.

Update of Code Compliance Old/New Business:

Code Compliance Officer Fornof stated she has received a request for 2 variances, in regards to item #1 under New Business, The Rock Methodist Church. Code Compliance Officer Fornof said she has a fair number of violations that she is either drafting “stop work” orders on or administrative letters to be sent out. There are some issues on the rise that we need to get a handle on across the city.

Citizens to be Heard:

1. Karen Germa, 4435 Stapper Rd, Unit #16 (St. Hedwig Estates) – bring attention to the violation of set back on the home of 4435 Stapper Rd., right on the corner of Stapper Rd. and the Private Rd. Karen stated she sent an email regarding this issue in both October and November – she knows this area does not meet the setback regulations and the very large trailer that is currently there doesn't fit where the smaller trailer that has currently been demolished used to sit when they bought this place. She also has issues with multiple people living in “fold in” travel trailers in this area and they are bringing junk in trailers with old tires and making the area into a junk yard. Just wanted to make her concerns heard and see if something could be done about this issue.
2. Dina Schievelbein, 4435 Stapper Rd, Unit #2 (St. Hedwig Estates) – great concerns regarding the corner house with new property owners mentioned by Karen Germa, sits on 5 acres. Dina shares the same fence line with this property, concerns with the amount of traffic coming and going from this property and the number of travel trailers that are appearing on the property. Appears to be “squatters” on this property, not really sure. This property now has a van, a moving truck, 3 trailers, trailer full of old tires and another trailer full of junk and trash, a pile of metal, and this is what she is seeing every day. Purchased their piece of property when there was only one dwelling on the neighboring property, this is what they saw and expected when they purchased their piece of property. Dina stated she is seeing/witnessing this on a daily basis and is concerned since she has a young daughter, age 12, with the number of people walking in and around this property. Dina wanted to know if this issue is being addressed with the property owners? Dina stated the situation is getting worse with each day.
3. William Schievelbein, 4435 Stapper Rd., Unit #2 (St. Hedwig Estates) – has the same concerns that were previously mentioned but also has concerns about the sanitary conditions on this property. Due to the number of travel trailers on the property there appears to be no sewage connected, wonders if electricity for all trailers are being supplied by extension cords? Stated the property that is being mentioned/of concern is Unit #1. He knows

the P&Z isn't able to comment on anything but did want to make sure his concerns were mentioned and brought up so that they could be passed on and addressed.

4. Bob Bridget, 4515 Stapper Rd., microphone not connected but addressed his concerns via chat on teleconference – personally witnessed individuals living in travel trailers and has witnessed the amount of junk that is surrounding the trailers. Has personally witnessed, along with his granddaughter, a man urinating in the street.

Old Business:

1. **Zoning Ordinance – Result of City Council Workshop. Discuss and take action.** Mayor Grimm has put this item on hold, will need to provide new dates to City Council. Commissioner Mais stated that based upon his conversation with Mayor Grimm, the GoToMeeting option is not a realistic option due to the number of people involved, would be better to do in person. Commissioner Mais suggested waiting until Spring/March to possibly do outdoors, possibly even at the city park, to allow social distancing. Commissioner Polasek suggested March 2nd as a first option, March 9th as a second option and March 16th as a third option. Commissioner Polasek also suggested having the workshop at City Hall and/or Legion Hall, both areas are large enough to accommodate everyone while allowing social distancing versus doing outdoors. Commissioner Polasek stated she would hate to have to cancel the workshop at the last minute due to weather conditions if that should come up and also the possibility of having outdoor not allowing enough light for everyone since it is getting dark earlier right now. Commissioner Maddox inquired if P&Z meeting should be before the City Council Workshop or if we should wait until after we have had the workshop? Code Compliance Officer confirmed she has everything that was requested by City Council ready for the workshop. Commissioner Maddox agreed with Commissioner Polasek and suggested P&Z offer March 2nd as first option, March 9th as second option. Commissioner Maddox also suggested that based upon the date City Council chooses P&Z could move their meeting further out in the month if need be and agreed to suggest having the workshop at City Hall and/or Legion Hall. Commissioner Polasek made motion to present March 2nd as first option, March 9th as second option and March 16th as third option for P&Z and City Council Workshop at either City Hall or Legion Hall. Commissioner Maddox second the motion, all in favor.

New Business:

1. **The Rock Methodist Church sign to be located near the new church and approximately 150 feet off of Loop 1604 (1784 E. Loop 1604 S.) – Request for variance from the maximum height grade to allow a 14 foot height. Discuss and take action.** Rock Methodist Church has requested a variance to increase height (current ordinance only allows 8 feet) of sign and a second variance request for extending hours for illumination of their sign. Code Compliance Officer stated the request for the increase in sign height is because of where the sign will be sitting, if it is an 8 foot sign it will not be visible from Loop 1604. The sign would be mounted 10 foot below the grade of Loop 1604 if variance is not granted, which again would make the sign not visible. Code Compliance Officer Fornof stated that right now there is only one residence, which is or will be the parsonage, on/near the church property, this residence is a home that the church rents out. Code Compliance Officer Fornof stated that our ordinance we would have to grant a variance. Our sign ordinance specifies that P&Z would review it, make a recommendation to City Council, then City Council would review it and either follow P&Z recommendation or decide to do something else. Commissioner Mais confirmed with Code Compliance Officer Fornof that this area is a undeveloped commercial land along Loop 1604. Commissioner Polasek stated that our current sign ordinance states signs can be illuminated from 6:00am-8:00pm, wanted to know what hours Rock Methodist Church would like to request. Code Compliance Officer Fornof stated she didn't actually get an actual time frame but is pretty sure based upon the type of sign that they are requesting the sign be able to be illuminated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, pretty sure these types of signs are constantly on and they would like to be able to advertise once they do get the sign up. Commissioner Maddox understood their request to increase the sign height because that is a low area there but his main concern is the lighting issue. The type of sign Rock Methodist Church is wanting to place uses LED lights, which means a really bright sign. Commissioner Maddox thinks this would be a cause of concern due to the brightness and also for setting a precedent for others to follow suit for any other businesses that come forward in the future. Commissioner Maddox is suggesting that it would be best to keep the illumination hours set as per our existing sign ordinance and did confirm Code Compliance Officer Fornof's comment about these types of signs being on/illuminated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Commissioner Maddox stated maybe we grant the variance request for sign height but keep with our current ordinance on the hours of

illumination/lighting. Commissioner Polasek stated she is actually not in favor of the height variance request nor the variance request for light. Commissioner Polasek stated she was sorry that they chose that site for their facility, however, Rock Methodist Church was aware of the height and area of the property when they purchased and built on it. Commissioner Polasek also stated that she recalled from previous council meetings citizens had mentioned about protecting the night skies and they were complaining about the lights that went in at the city park and how everything was now lit up now and no longer having a dark sky so this might cause some push back in this area. Commissioner Mais asked if P&Z would like to table this for now and do a little more research into this and drive by this area and check it out and then get all the Commissioners feedback on this issue. Commissioner Robinette stated he was in favor of doing this but also inquired if the church had another part of their parcel that is not below grade of Loop 1604 that they could put their sign. Code Compliance Officer reviewed the area and stated that there is a pond there and most of that area is in a flood plain and below grade, the only area not in flood plain is where they are building the church itself. Commissioner Polasek also mentioned that she was wondering that at some point Loop 1604 will be widened all the way along that area and wasn't sure if that would affect the church signage in the future but Code Compliance Officer stated that it is 138 feet from the edge of the road and that is another thing that the church did was push it in so that it wouldn't be a problem further down the road, which is something to think about per Code Compliance Officer Fornof. Commissioner Polasek wondered if they redo that stretch of Loop 1604 if that would change the landscape also. Code Compliance Officer Fornof said technically they can't reshape the contours when Loop 1604 is widened, that is just the grade they are at, but they might raise the shoulders but doesn't think they will reshape all the parcels that are there. Commissioner Mais asked Code Compliance Officer if/when Loop 1604 is widened if that would affect/throw off the setback of 138 feet, per Code Compliance Officer Fornof there isn't a setback, the dimension the church is putting the sign is 138 feet in from the road, the setback is only 8 feet in that area. Commissioner Robinette made motion to table this until all of P&Z is able to review the documents and give everyone time to drive by that area and make an informed decision. Commissioner Maddox second that motion, all in favor. Commissioner Mais will get the document of the signage from the church sent out to all P&Z Commissioners for their review tonight at the close of the meeting.

Agenda for next meeting:

Old Business:

1. Zoning Ordinance – Result of City Council and P&Z Workshop, discuss and take action.
2. Rock Methodist Church sign – discuss and take action.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 2, 2021 @ 7:00pm

Announcements: Commissioner Polasek complimented Secretary Schaefer for getting the monthly minutes to everyone in timely fashion, which allows everyone adequate time to review the minutes ahead of time and keeps the meetings flowing smoothly. Commissioner Mais and Commissioner Maddox agreed and extended their appreciation as well.

Adjourn Meeting: Commissioner Mais adjourned meeting @ 7:48pm