

**VILLAGE OF SPARTA
PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
May 2, 2022 @ 7:00 PM
75 N. Union St. (Sparta Civic Center)**

Present: Chairman Bob Liscombe, Commission members Jon Braybrook, Robert Carlstrom, Rose Frederick, Emilie Henry, Betty VanPatten, Robert Whalen, and Ryan Wolford.

Also Present: Village Manager Shay Gallagher and Village Clerk Katy Shelton.

- 1) **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited at that time.
- 2) **ROLL CALL:** Formal Roll call was taken. Those in attendance/absent are noted above.
- 3) **MINUTES:**
 - a. Approve Regular Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of April 4, 2022. Two changes: the date of the meeting was April 4th, not the 8th as stated on the minutes. Also, the public hearing was opened at 7:08pm, not 7:0pm, as stated on the minutes. Subject to those two corrections, a motion was made by Moody with a second by Wolford to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.
- 4) **ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA – APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** None. Motion by Carlstrom with a second by Wolford to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.
- 5) **PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:** None
- 6) **COMMUNICATIONS:**
 - a. Code Enforcement Report – April 2022: Deferred until the Village Manager’s report later in this meeting.
- 7) **PUBLIC HEARING:**
 - a. None.
- 8) **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - a. Site Plan Review – Storage Control Systems, Inc. 100 Applewood Dr: Mike Lockard and Jim Shaefer were in attendance representing NW Storage Control Systems. Per the Village Manager, the only issue with this expansion concerns the greenbelt. There are no other issues with the site plan itself. Motion made by Moody with a second by Frederick to approve the site plan with the amendments as detailed in the action memo 8.A dated May 2, 2022. Motion passed unanimously.
 - b. Driveway Ordinance Amendment: Consensus from the Council that this amendment can go forward. Commissioner Moody had an issue with the section that covers vehicles that are for sale which are parked in residential driveways. The Council said that this should be allowed subject to a time limit and that those vehicles must be properly registered. The Village Manager will check to see how other nearby communities deal with this issue. There will be a public hearing on this Amendment on June 6th 2022. (Note: later on during

this meeting, the Planning Commission decided to move the public hearing on this issue back one month.)

- c. Parking of Trailers Ordinance Amendment: In reviewing other West Michigan communities, it appears as if Sparta has taken the toughest stance regarding utility trailer parking. This amendment would remove the requirement that all such trailers and/or semi-trailers be completely enclosed within a building if parked in a residential area. Consensus from the Council that this Amendment go forward. There will be a public hearing on this Amendment on June 6th 2022.
- d. Snow Removal Ordinance Amendment: This Amendment would remove the requirement that a certified letter be sent to the owner of any property which does not remove snow or ice as required by Village Ordinance. The Village Manager has the discretion to determine how owners of such properties will be notified as well as who will notify them. Notification may be made by the DPW, Police Dept, Code Enforcement Officer, or anyone else so designated by the Village Manager. There was a consensus from the Council that this Amendment move forward. There will be a public hearing on this Amendment on June 6th, 2022.

9) UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a. None.

10) PUBLIC COMMENT: Scott Silberzahn of 517 TenTree Dr, Ian Armstrong of 539 Hill Valley Lane, and Adam Bond of 318 Hill Valley Lane all attended the meeting to discuss the issue of the driveway ordinance amendment. This Amendment would increase the maximum allowable driveway size for residential driveways from 25% of the front yard space to a maximum of 35% of the front yard space. All three individuals stated that because of the way their lots are constructed, that they do not have adequate room to park their personal vehicles. They said that there is not adequate street parking in their neighborhood. Because the Village of Sparta does not allow vehicles to be parked on the grass, they need to increase their driveway size in order to safely park their vehicles. Council members discussed the issue of driveway size vis a vis lot size as well as the issue of what percentage of a lot can be an impervious surface. The Planning Commission decided to move the public hearing on this issue back one month in order for the Village Manager to do some more research on this issue as it pertains to this particular neighborhood.

11) VILLAGE MANAGER REPORT: Village Manager Gallagher said that the North Union Street Bridge is scheduled to be repaired the week of May 9th, though that is weather dependent. He said that the new Code Enforcement Officer Deb DeGroot toured the property at 220/228 E Division along with Fire Officer Price. He reported that the property is extremely cluttered and derelict. Village Manager Gallagher also said that he anticipates a sale of the north side of the Alt Property in the near future. He said it lacks only a Phase II Environmental report. The developer who is potentially buying the property is also possibly interested in the south parcel as well. If either or both of those properties ARE NOT SOLD, then the Village will give the current owner ten days to bring the properties into code compliance. If the owner fails to do so, then the Village will proceed to have the recent court order enforced, which possibly will entail condemnation proceedings. Village Manager Gallagher also reported on some improvements of the Arches parking lot which involve obtaining some grants. He also said that Code Enforcement officer Deb DeGroot is currently involved in doing an inventory of all rental units in the Village so that the Village can ensure that those properties are in compliance with all code and zoning ordinances.

12) COMMISSION COMMENT: Commissioner Frederick reported on a couple of properties on Martindale which have non running vehicles parked on the properties. Commissioner Moody mentioned a vehicle parked by the side of the Post Office which is on the grass as well as a house on Division west of NAPA which appears to have a number of vehicles illegally parked. The issue of a section of State Street which needs repair was mentioned. The county is responsible for this, but has not yet repaired it. Commission members asked about having the Village fix it. The Village Manager was asked about the house on State Street which is up on stilts. He said that Code Enforcement Officer DeGroot is closely monitoring this property,

13) ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned by President Liscombe at 7:55pm.

Submitted by Katy Shelton, Village Clerk.