

# City of Empire Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

**March 21, 2023**

The City of Empire Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Jared Sachs at 8:00 PM.

Present were: Jared Sachs, Doug Clark, Gina Maunu, Julie Stulz, Elizabeth Haas, Jenni Faulkner, Brad Fisher, Charles Seipel-Teng, and City Councilmember Marla Vagts.

The meeting was opened to a public hearing to consider amendments to Ordinance No. 240-B, an ordinance regulating seasonal parking.

Charles Seipel-Teng read the hearing notice and reported that the city has not received prior comment on the hearing. He also presented a memo that noted the proposed amendments to the ordinance. The proposed ordinance includes definitions for vehicle and street. In addition to no parking permitted between the hours of 2 and 6 AM, the proposed ordinance adds language that states "or until the streets are plowed curb to curb". The ordinance references snow accumulation in excess of 3 inches, which is consistent with the City's snow removal policy and includes language about the ability to tow vehicles, if left in the street more than 24 hours after a snow event.

Christine Smith, a resident on Upper 204th Street, indicated that she has several drivers in her household and wondered if there was space in Empire for public parking in the event of a snowfall. She does not have room on her property for all the vehicles.

Wendy Wustenberg commented that some cities issue paid parking permits for street parking to residents in certain areas.

Doug Clark made a motion to close the public hearing. Elizabeth Haas seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

The Planning Commission discussed options for parking for those that don't have space on private property and recommended that staff check into the possibility of adding an option for paid parking permits that would be issued on a temporary basis to residents that find themselves in a situation that prevents the parking of vehicles on their private property.

Doug Clark made a motion to proceed with developing additional language in the draft ordinance that allows for the issuance of paid, temporary parking permits. Elizabeth Haas seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

The owners of Skyview Ranch LLC and a potential buyer for the property were present to discuss the permitting requirements to operate a kennel under a new owner on the property. With a new owner, a new IUP will need to be applied for and a public hearing will be held as part of that process. The prospective buyer indicated that there are concerns with the term of

the IUP. To secure financing, an IUP that is issued for a short term may become an issue. The existing IUP is for a term of 15 years. Seipel-Teng indicated that some IUP's that have been issued for mining operations are for a term longer than a few years but have conditions regarding probationary periods that are evaluated after a specified time period from the date of the permit, and this may be an option for the Commission to consider. The Planning Commission recommended checking to verify if the IUP can still be in effect if the current owners still own the property and is leased to the prospective buyer.

Jenni Faulkner indicated that there were some non-conforming uses on the property that would need to be addressed with the new IUP, including outdoor storage and a dilapidated green house on the property. The applicant may also want to put up a new poll shed on the property. For timing, the applicant may apply for an IUP with the site in its current capacity and apply for an IUP amendment if the shed is to be constructed at a later date.

The applicant is proposing the boarding of up to 50 dogs on the property. The current IUP permits up to 60 but was grandfathered in as the zoning ordinance permits up to 30. A variance to permit the boarding of up to 50 dogs would need to be submitted along with an IUP application.

It was reported that the City Council has requested that the Planning Commission review the Long-Term Financial Plan and discuss the policy considerations in the plan. The Council would like to hear the Planning Commission's recommendations on the policy considerations. Seipel-Teng provided an overview of the plans considerations and recommended discussing the considerations at future meetings, with a different category of considerations discussed at each meeting.

The Planning Commission reviewed a letter from Dakota County Transportation that indicated the studies for the Highways 52 and 66 interchange have been completed and will be shelved for possible review in the future.

It was reported that the City has received concerns about a trucking business operating in the AG District on 210th Street. There were also concerns that trucks being driven from the property were in violation of spring weight restrictions. Staff will send a letter to the property owner, inviting them to the next Planning Commission meeting to discuss activities taking place on the property.

It was reported that an attorney with the League of Minnesota Cities will plan on attending the April 18th Planning Commission Meeting to give an overview of planning and zoning law. The League is recommending that commission members take the online training as well.

It was reported that Kwik Trip has sent a letter to the Planning Commission requesting zoning information for the parcel that Kwik Trip owns on Highway 3. Staff will prepare the requested information for Kwik Trip to review.

Gina Maunu made a motion to adjourn. Julie Stulz seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.