

**City of Cottage Grove  
Planning Commission  
July 24, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission was held at Cottage Grove City Hall, 12800 Ravine Parkway South, Cottage Grove, Minnesota, on Monday, July 24, 2023, in the Council Chamber and telecast on Local Government Cable Channel 16.

**Call to Order**

Chair Frazier called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Roll Call**

Members Present: Ken Brittain, Jessica Fisher, Evan Frazier, Eric Knable, Derek Rasmussen, Emily Stephens

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Emily Schmitz, Community Development Director; Mike Mroska, Senior Planner; Conner Jakes, Associate Planner; Amanda Meyer, City Engineer; Riley Rooney, Associate Planner; Tony Khambata, City Council Liaison

**Approval of Agenda**

*Fisher made a motion to approve the agenda. Rasmussen seconded. The motion was approved unanimously (6-to-0 vote).*

**Open Forum**

Frazier opened the Open Forum and asked if anyone wished to address the Planning Commission on any non-agenda item. No one spoke. Frazier closed the Open Forum.

**Chair's Explanation of the Public Hearing Process**

Frazier explained the purpose of the Planning Commission, which serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council, and that the City Council makes all final decisions. In addition, he explained the process of conducting a public hearing and requested that any person wishing to speak should go to the microphone and state their full name and address for the public record.

**Public Hearings and Applications**

**6.1 Zoning Definition Text Amendment – Case TA2023-014**

**The City of Cottage Grove has applied for a text amendment to remove bees, honey, chickens, ducks, and eggs from the Agricultural Use definition in City Code Title 11-1-3.**

Jakes summarized the staff report and recommended approval.

Brittain asked if staff felt there was any need to maintain a certain something in Agricultural with respect to chickens and eggs regarding if they exceed a certain number; so, if somebody wanted to do agriculture, is the new ordinance going to handle agricultural and residential uses. Jakes replied the previously adopted chicken ordinance addresses both residential and agricultural. Also, note we have a section in the Zoning Code for Farming Operations in both Agricultural and Residential Districts that would also cover both of those areas. Brittain asked if there wouldn't be a conflict in that, that you needed to change the other ones. Jakes replied that's correct. It's just the cleanup here to remove chickens, ducks, and eggs.

Fisher asked if there is an ordinance already written to talk about bees. Jakes replied yes, there is an ordinance currently being written by the City Attorney that will be before the Council at the August 16 Council Meeting.

Knable asked if this grandfathered in any current beekeepers in the City, or how does that work if you already have bees on your property. Jakes replied to our knowledge, there is currently no beekeeping within the City; however, that would be addressed as we move forward and enact this. He would imagine that we would work through that process at that point and look into whether it is legal nonconforming, etc. and work through that with the City Attorney as well.

Stephens asked if this is going to be more restrictive or more allowing of bees and beekeeping. Jakes replied the current intent is to allow them in in Residential and Agricultural Districts. There is proposed to be constraints on the number of colonies, which dictates the number of bees you can have. There are also limits on certain residential Zoning Districts; so, it would just be single-family lots, R-1 through R-4, and then there would be limits on where they are allowed. There would be additional setbacks on the colony location as well. Stephens asked if the Commission is only approving it to be removed because of where it is going. Jakes replied yes, the proposed ordinance in full would be placed in Title 5, which is under the authority of the City Council, so they would be the acting body on that. The Planning Commission's purview is within Title 11, which is where the current definition is, so the Text Amendment before you tonight deletes bees from that, since the Planning Commission has recommendation authority within Title 9, so we would be removing the definition from there and moving that to Title 5.

Fisher asked what the catalyst was for the bee editing here. It seems kind of like a random thing to be looking at. Jakes replied that maybe a month or so ago, there was interest expressed from the public at one of the Council meetings, so Council directed staff to conduct further research on whether it is plausible for bees to be within residential areas, agricultural, etc. Staff has been conducting research on that and working with the City Attorney on a proposed ordinance that will be before Council.

Frazier clarified with Jakes, so everyone here and those watching at home will understand, that right now, the Zoning ordinance prevents anybody from keeping bees in residential areas. Jakes replied that's partially correct; it would be any property over five acres in a residential area. Frazier asked by removing this, City Council will then be able to pass an ordinance that they can regulate who can keep them, but will kind of give greater access to people in the City to keep bees if they have less than five acres. Jakes replied that is correct. He also noted there would a permit/licensing process that would be issued through the City Clerk's office, similar to the chicken and duck process.

***Frazier opened the public hearing. No one spoke. Frazier closed the public hearing.***

Frazier commented he will be interested to see what the ordinance looks like because he knows his wife is one of these people who would like to keep bees, and she was always very upset that we could not do that. So, we will see how it pans out.

***Stephens made a motion to approve the zoning definition Text Amendment. Knable seconded. Motion passed unanimously (6-to-0 vote).***

## **6.2 Water Resource Chapter Comp Plan Amendment – CP2023-015**

The City of Cottage Grove has applied for a text and map amendment to the Wastewater Management section of Chapter 7 in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The amendment includes the most recent calculations of future wastewater flow into the Metropolitan Council's South Washington County Interceptor and a map update showing additional sewer connections to the interceptor within the city.

Mroska summarized the staff report and recommended approval.

Rasmussen asked looking at the two maps, he sees the new connection points that they were asking for and if what is in green is the future sanitary sewer. Mroska replied that is correct; those are the future sanitary pipelines.

***Frazier opened the public hearing. No one spoke. Frazier closed the public hearing.***

***Fisher made a motion to approve the Comprehensive Plan amendment to the Water Resource Chapter. Rasmussen seconded. Motion passed unanimously (6-to-0 vote).***

## **Approval of Planning Commission Minutes of June 26, 2023**

***Knable made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2023, Planning Commission meeting. Rasmussen seconded. Motion passed unanimously (6-to-0 vote).***

## **Reports**

### **8.1 Recap of July 2023 City Council Meetings**

Schmitz welcomed Riley Rooney to our Community Development team; she was here with us last summer as our Planning Intern. There was some adjustment in staffing to open an Associate Planner position, and Rooney was interested in coming back to be a part of our team.

Schmitz provided a summary of actions taken at the July 19, 2023 City Council meeting.

Khambata thanked the Planning Commission for all of their hard work. It is always nice to have an easy meeting, especially after some of the longer meetings we have recently had. The Council appreciates all of your hard work; we know that this is time and effort out of your day.

### **8.2 Response to Planning Commission Inquiries**

None.

### **8.3 Planning Commission Requests**

None.

### **Adjournment**

***Rasmussen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Brittain seconded. Motion passed unanimously (6-to-0 vote). The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.***