



**CITY OF ZEELAND
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
CITY HALL – 21 SOUTH ELM STREET
August 3, 2023
5:45PM**

-5:45PM – Vice Chairman Klompmaker called the meeting to order and requested a roll call.

Present: Commissioners Doug Barense, Glenn Kass, Dan Klompmaker, Kevin Klynstra, Tim Klunder and Rebecca Perkins

Absent: Commissioner Bob Blanton, Amanda Cooper, and Bill Elhart

Also Present: City Planning Consultant Paul LeBlanc, City Attorney Jim Donkersloot, Zoning Administrator Timothy Maday, and Recording Secretary Amy LeVesque

-Moved by Barense to excuse absent members, since they had given prior notice that they would be unable to attend this meeting. Supported by Kass. All voted aye.

-Moved by Barense to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2023 Planning Commission meeting. Supported by Kass. All voted aye.

Public Comments

Vice Chairman Klompmaker opened the floor to public comments.

Stacey Nagelkirk of Haven Missionary Homes explained the organization wishes to buy a home to house missionaries for 6 week periods while they are here on furlough. She stated since the zoning ordinance considers a 6 week stay a short term rental, she is requesting an exemption.

Klynstra asked if they have a house in mind to purchase. Nagelkirk stated no, plans are to fundraise to pay cash for the home and sustain the ministry for 4 years before purchasing the home. She explained missionaries would stay for free with medical care, counseling, food and one vehicle provided. She explained technology allows missionaries to be away for longer periods, resulting in short furloughs.

Barense asked about residential rentals owned by churches. Maday stated there are a few long term rentals owned by churches, such as 143 E Lincoln Ave owned by First Reformed Church.

Barense stated he doesn't have an issue allowing this use since it is not commercial. Donkersloot expressed concern about setting a precedent, and asked why purchase a house in the City.

Nagelkirk explained she lives in the area, which would make maintaining the home simpler. She stated just one vehicle would be provided, and walkability to downtown, parks, library, etc is important.

Maday explained a short term rental is less than 90 days. He stated long term rentals require 3 months minimum stay, must be registered and are inspected every 3 years, must have smoke alarms and meet other requirements.

LeBlanc suggested looking at the zoning ordinance and considering options. Maday agreed and stated an ordinance amendment might be needed. He noted State law considers a guest to be a tenant after 30 days.

Commissioners requested Staff review options and report back.

Draft Zoning Ordinance Amendment Addition of Article X Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) – Public Hearing

-6:02PM Vice Chairman Klompmaker opened the public hearing.

Maday noted the Commission's study of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) began in September 2022 with a suggestion from a resident, and continued with guidance and drafts of amendment language from LeBlanc. He explained a newspaper notice, City Facebook page posting with link to draft text and information on the City website were intended to encourage public comment.

Maday read the following email:

Diana and Gerin Woodbury - "My husband and I are residents of Zeeland and live on 1/3 of an acre on North Ottawa Street. We think having an ADU for our kids as they grow up is an amazing idea! Our oldest is looking at getting married next year and there is absolutely no affordable housing or apartments anywhere! He is a supervisor at Ventura Manufacturing on Roosevelt Ave. here in Zeeland, and living close to work is ideal! If we could put an ADU on our property, that would be extremely helpful! I know one of the concerns listed was additional traffic, cars, and parking. Nothing would change for our neighborhood, as he lives with us already and has his own car that is parked in our garage. My concern, and I'm not 100% sure I understand it, but if we live in a small home ourselves (primary residence), would our son only be able to have a 350sq ft house? That is incredibly small! I would like to see the minimum be quite a bit larger, if that is the case. Again, this would be an amazing opportunity and I would love to see this put into action!"

LeBlanc noted ADU's are an accessory use to the main dwelling unit with long term residents and may be within, attached, or detached from the main dwelling, or above an attached garage with size 350 to 850 square feet or 50% of the floor area of the main dwelling. He stated owner must reside in the main dwelling or ADU. He stated Commissioners need to decide whether Special Land Use is required or permitted use.

Steve Albert of 36 W Central Ave stated he moved to the City 20 years ago from Holland, and at that time, people told him Zeeland hasn't figured out what it wants to be when it grows up, which he has seen over and over again. He stated it is a nice bedroom community, but allowing ADU's would tear up the bedroom community. He stated some houses with little houses behind them or over the garage have been done nicely, but conversions to 2-family homes are generally the worst looking houses in the community. He stated he would like to see the downtown built up, but would like the values of homes to stay where they are.

Ken DeBruyn of 142 S Maple St stated he didn't have a lot of information on ADU's, but from the information he has, he wonders why shoot yourself in the foot. He stated ADU's would create extra work for Maday's department and City staff. He questioned how many homes would qualify, and noted homeowners could go to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) if they did not. He stated he agrees with Mr. Albert. He stated he would like to keep single family residences as is.

Cecilia Roberts of 21 E Central Ave stated she would love to build an ADU over a new garage. She explained her husband is a pastor, and the ADU could host missionaries, older children who are transitioning to college students, and aging parents. She stated she emphatically approves of ADU's. She stated she would like to see plans submitted to a board to be approved for aesthetics and to keep the historical integrity look of downtown. She noted her friends in Holland have an ADU and it has been a good experience for them.

Jacob Bonnema of 131 S Maple St stated he is an Ottawa County Commissioner and housing is an important issue since the cost of living has gone up, and high rent costs are an issue across the county. He stated he asked neighboring communities about ADU's and found if ADU's are well-regulated, registered annually and well-maintained, there were almost no negative issues and a positive experience across the board. He stated homeowners want to determine how to use their own property, but we don't want to damage property values. He noted ADU's could be helpful to families, an example would be an adult child with special needs.

Klynstra asked if Bonnema was interested in having an ADU. Bonnema stated yes, staying there would help his children save money, would provide some separation while keeping families close. He explained when his children who are missionaries come home there is no place to rent.

Kass asked how an ADU would affect property taxes. Maday explained homeowners receive an exemption from school operating millage for their primary residence, but would not for the ADU. He noted the City has some nonconforming parcels with 2 dwellings where the owner lives in one and rents the other.

LeBlanc explained communities are surprised how few ADU's are constructed. He noted Grand Rapids has allowed ADU's since 2012 and the number is low, but the track record is good. He stated most people will not choose to have an ADU.

Klynstra noted Elhart has expressed concern on the high building cost. LeBlanc commented the median sale of a starter home in Michigan is \$270,000, and ADU's provide housing options and flexibility for empty nesters and people with aging parents.

Klompaker asked if a Special Land Use should be required or if ADU's should be a permitted use. Klynstra stated a permitted use approved by staff.

Maday explained a Special Land Use would require a public hearing, notices published and mailed to neighbors, and Commissioners could consider each and impose conditions, but if the application meets requirements it must be approved. He explained a permitted use would be approved by Staff if it meets requirements.

LeBlanc noted that neighbors may oppose the Special Land Use, but the Commission must approve if all requirements are met. He noted standards must be specific and objective and require appearance be harmonious.

-6:29PM Moved by Barensse to close the public hearing. Supported by Kass. All voted aye.

Other Business

Maday stated a notice to distribute a proposed master plan refresh had been received from City of Holland. He stated Staff does not intend to comment.

Maday noted developers of 3 E Main Ave are requesting a variance to construct a column in the clear vision area and Compassionate Heart Ministries are requesting a variance for a garage in the secondary front yard at 404 Centerstone Ct at the ZBA meeting on August 8, 2023. He stated if approved, both projects will come before the Commission for Site Plan Review at the September 7, 2023 meeting. He noted there is also an application for a residential covered front porch with a reduced front setback, and the ZBA may request a Commission review for this recurrent request.

Kass commented he was pleased to see residents able to walk on sidewalks on W McKinley Ave instead of in the street due to connecting areas of sidewalk recently completed. He noted requiring business owners to put in sidewalks pays off.

-6:17PM moved by Klompaker to adjourn. Supported by Cooper. All voted aye.

Submitted by,



Amy LeVesque
Recording Secretary