NORMAN PLANNING COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION MINUTES

NOVEMBER 14, 2013

The Planning Commission of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Study Session in the City Council Chambers of the Norman Municipal Building, 201 West Gray Street, on the 14th day of November 2013 immediately following their Regular Session. Notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Norman Municipal Building twenty-four hours prior to the beginning of the meeting and at http://www.normanok.gov/content/board-agendas.

Item No. 1, being:
CALL TO ORDER
Chairman Chris Lewis called the Study Session to order at 7:37 p.m.

Item No. 2, being:
ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT	Curtis McCarty Jim Gasaway Roberta Pailes Andy Sherrer Cindy Gordon Dave Boeck Sandy Bahan Tom Knotts Chris Lewis
MEMBERS ABSENT	None

A quorum was present.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT	Susan Connors, Director, Planning & Community Development Jane Hudson, Principal Planner Janay Greenlee, Planner II Roné Tromble, Recording Secretary Leah Messner, Assistant City Attorney Terry Floyd, Development Coordinator

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Item No. 3, being:
DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 22, ZONING ORDINANCE

1. Ms. Connors reviewed proposed amendments to Chapter 22, Zoning Ordinance: Section 431.7 – Development and Maintenance of Off Street Parking Facilities; Sections 421.1 through 422.7, dealing with carports in residential zones; and Section 419 and 441, dealing with variances and the Board of Adjustment.

The amendments to Section 431.7 are to make sure that off-street parking spaces are on an approved pavement surface. This also adds a new requirement for paved or approved parking surfaces in commercial districts. Completely enclosed storage yards are not required to park on pavement. This amendment would allow us to give notice to the owner of the property if a vehicle is illegally parked, rather than just the owner of the vehicle.

2. Mr. McCarty asked for an example of where this would apply to a commercial development. Ms. Connors indicated car dealerships would be an example, where they might be parking on an unimproved vacant lot next to their paved lot. This would not address car dealers pulling their cars out onto the grass in the bar ditches.

3. Mr. Lewis asked if parking on unimproved surfaces is allowed on game days near the University. Ms. Connors indicated there is a special provision that allows that parking regulations are not in effect on game days and that will not be affected.

4. Mr. Gasaway asked whether the zoning code addresses how much of residential properties can be paved. Ms. Connors indicated 65% impervious surface is allowed on single-family properties.

5. Mr. McCarty asked what happens with parking violations on rental properties. Ms. Messner indicated they will be mailed to the registered property owner. After three unpaid tickets, the vehicle is towed.

6. Mr. Boeck commented that paving creates a storm water runoff issue.

7. Mr. McCarty raised the issue of insufficient parking on rental properties, such as a 3-bedroom rental house that doesn't have room for 3 parking spots.

8. Ms. Connors outlined the second ordinance amendment which deals with carports. There are currently two sections of code which address carports. Chapter 5, which the Planning Commission does not have authority over, is very convoluted. The intent of this amendment is to simplify the carport issue. This would amend all the residential districts to require that carports be set back 25' from the property line; if the property has a one-car garage or no garage the carport can be no closer than 7' from the property line. The Central Core Plan indicates that all carports must be located in the back and accessed from the alley, if there is an alley. More people will be able to have carports, because they won't have to prove the history of the area.

9. Mr. Gasaway asked if carports are excluded in the historic districts. Ms. Connors replied that they have not been excluded; she will look into that.

10. Ms. Pailes asked if there are standards for carport construction. A lot of them are kind of erector set carports. Ms. Connors responded that language could be added to require some kind of stability. Ms. Messner added that they have to have a building permit because they are structures.

11. Ms. Pailes asked whether carports would be allowed in front of 2-car garages. Ms. Messner said they would be allowed if they met the setbacks.

12. Ms. Connors reviewed the third proposed ordinance amendment which addresses non-conforming uses and structures and the Board of Adjustment. Hibdon Tires burned down; it was a non-conforming use because they don't have enough parking or meet the setbacks. There is a specific Special Exception that can be granted by the Board of Adjustment, but only if the Board finds "a compelling public necessity" to rebuild. Most codes have a provision where a structure can be rebuilt to its pre-disaster condition and they have to prove what the pre-disaster condition was. We are suggesting that the special exception paragraph be deleted as it is written and replaced to allow a structure to be built back to a pre-disaster condition without requiring a public necessity.

We have also recently had requests to allow a mobile home to be placed on an A-2 lot as a medical emergency for elderly parents or caretakers. We don't allow more than one unit on a lot. Both Edmond and Oklahoma City have a provision for a medical emergency to allow a second living unit. The conditions include providing a doctor's statement; up to three years; on 5 acres or greater; and renewal by filing a new application; and removal of the mobile home when the need no longer exists.

13. Mr. Lewis asked what happens when the mobile home can't be moved or the owners can't afford to have it moved. Ms. Connors responded that there would be an enforcement action taken.

14. Ms. Connors reviewed a change to Section 441, which currently allows variances only for height, area, size of yards and opens spaces, and to the frontage requirement for A-2. There are other regulations in the zoning code, such as the exterior appearance of buildings, for which people sometimes want to request variances. Most zoning ordinances allow you to request a variance for any regulation. The criteria for evaluation would not change.

15. Mr. Lewis expressed some reservations about the amendment to allow mobile homes for medical emergencies.

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Item No. 4, being:
MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION
None

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Item No. 5, being:
ADJOURNMENT
There being no further business, the study session adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Norman Planning Commission