

**City of Mayer**  
**Planning Commission**  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, January 7, 2025

**Commission Members Present:** Chairperson Tom Stifter, Vice-Chairperson Michael Sommerfeld, Commissioner Ryan Kusske, Commissioner Daniel Levitz, Commissioner Sarah Strand and City Council Liaison Nikki McNeilly.

**Commission Members Absent:** Commissioner Les Hahn

**Staff Present:** City Administrator Nicholas Johnson and Consulting Planner John Anderson of Municipal Development Group.

**Others Present:** Paul Abdo, Mayor Mike Dodge, Council Member Heldt, Don Wachholz, Dan O'Brien, Peggy Wegner, Olivia Brunner, Wally & Peggy Moonen

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**CALL MEETING TO ORDER.**

Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM by Chairperson Tom Stifter.

**ADOPT AGENDA.**

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Council Liaison McNeilly and seconded by Commissioner Strand. Motion carried 6/0.

**ELECTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON FOR 2025.**

A motion to elect Chairperson Stifter to remain as Chairperson for 2025 was made by Commissioner Kusske and seconded by Council Liaison McNeilly. No vote was taken on this motion due to Chairperson Stifter withdrawing his name to be elected Chairperson. A motion to elect Commissioner Sommerfeld as Chairperson for 2025 was made by Chairperson Stifter and seconded by Commissioner Strand. Motion carried 5/0 with Commissioner Sommerfeld abstaining. A motion to elect former Chairperson Stifter as Vice-Chairperson for 2025 was made by Commissioner Strand and seconded by Council Liaison McNeilly. Motion carried 6/0.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

A motion to approve the October 29, 2024 Planning Commission meeting minutes was made by Council Liaison McNeilly and seconded by Commissioner Kusske. Motion carried 6/0.

**PUBLIC HEARING - VARIANCE TO REDUCE THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF OFF-STREET PARKING STALLS TWENTY-NINE SPACES FROM THE REQUIRED SIXTY-FOUR OFF-STREET PARKING SPACES FOR A TOTAL OF THIRTY-FIVE OFF-STREET PARKING SPACES FOR A NEW COMMERCIAL BUILDING TO BE LOCATED AT 704 ASH AVENUE SOUTH.**

At 6:35 PM Planning Consultant Anderson presented the information for the off-street parking variance request as well as the information regarding the site plan review for a new commercial building that is related to the variance request. He stated all zoning ordinance items are being meet except the off-street parking requirements and therefore the need for this variance. He also stated there are a few items that need to be finalized on the site plan review such as receiving the final Mn/DOT comments, finalizing the application for the wetland impact and verifying any engineering comments from the City Engineer.

At 6:50 PM Chairperson Sommerfeld opened the public hearing.

Paul Abdo, the applicant, stated that Planning Consultant Anderson did a good job with the presentation and that he did not have much to add other than the fact that the main issue to resolve is the off-street parking variance. He did state there will be a fifteen-year lease with options for five extensions of five years each.

City Administrator Johnson stated that it would make the building more aesthetically pleasing if brick was added to the south side of the building that matches the brick being proposed on the north and west side of the building.

Paul Abdo said they are open to adding brick to the south side of the building and did say there will be trees along that side of the building that will be added as part of the landscaping plan.

Mayor Mike Dodge asked why the off-street parking variance is needed.

Paul Abdo stated that the lot is not big enough to accommodate all the required parking and that the requirement of sixty-four off-street parking stalls is excessive. He stated that a typical store has around 25-30 parking spaces and that construction on the building would start sometime in 2025. He also said they have not made a determination if this will be a DG Market store or a standard store but that that would be determined prior to construction starting.

A resident asked if they are getting any money from the City of Mayer to help with construction or utilities.

Paul Abdo said they are not asking for any money from the City of Mayer and that everything will be privately funded for the construction of the building. He also stated this building will generate property taxes, sales tax with the county and create jobs within Mayer.

Chairperson Sommerfeld said that comments should be focused on the off-street parking variance since that is what the public hearing is for.

At 7:05 PM Chairperson Sommerfeld closed the public hearing.

Chairperson Sommerfeld stated the idea of sixty-four stalls seems excessive and that the City has granted off-street parking reduction variances in the past, although they were in the downtown district for existing structures and not in the C/I Commercial/Industrial District and for new structures. He did state that he thinks this variance request is reasonable.

A motion was made by Vice-Chairperson Stifter and seconded by Council Liaison McNeilly to approve the variance request. Motion carried 6/0.

**SITE PLAN REVIEW FOR A NEW COMMERCIAL BUILDING AND OFF-STREET PARKING TO BE LOCATED AT 704 ASH AVENUE SOUTH IN THE (C/I) COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT.**

At 7:08 PM, Planning Consultant Anderson stated the only additional items he wanted to bring up after going over the site plan during the off-street parking reduction variance agenda item, was the fact that the building materials condition should be amended to include the subsection numbers from the zoning ordinance. He stated these sections are Title XV: Land Usage, Chapter 152: Zoning Section 152.060 (C/I) Commercial/Industrial District (F) Special Requirements and

Section 152.101 Building Design Standards, of the City of Mayer municipal code. He also stated that any new construction building would have to meet state building code requirements.

Council Liaison McNeilly stated she would like to require brick be added to the south side of the building.

Planning Consultant Anderson said that if brick was to be added to the south side of the building, the motion should include that as a requirement and that it makes sense to add that to the building materials condition.

City Administrator Johnson asked the applicant if any consideration to change the exterior material to something other than the metal siding to get rid of the pole building look. An example such as the Family Dollar in Norwood Young America may be something that could work.

Paul Abdo stated that they want to stay with the standard look and anything beyond that would not be normal.

Vice-Chairperson Stifter asked if the DG Market style stores have better front facades.

Paul Abdo stated that typically the DG Market style stores do have a better facade but at this time they have not decided on what type of store this will be yet.

Chairperson Sommerfeld said that Watertown had a Dollar General store proposed and that Watertown did not approve that store due to the exterior of the structure not meeting Watertown's exterior building requirements. He also stated that Watertown has a grocery store and that the Dollar General would be in direct competition with that grocery store and that Mayer does not have an existing grocery store to compete with the proposed Dollar General store.

Commissioner Kusske asked about using a LP Smartside siding for the upper level of the exterior of the building.

Paul Abdo stated that the siding is a metal panel system and that they would want to stay with their standard material and that he had not seen a Dollar General store use LP Smartside siding anywhere else.

A motion was made by Council Liaison McNeilly and seconded by Commissioner Levitz to approve the site plan review request with a change to condition #8 Building Materials, by adding the requirement to add brick to the south side of the building and to add the subsection numbers within the zoning ordinance that reference the building materials requirements. Motion carried 6/0.

**NEXT MEETING.**

Next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, February 4, 2025.

**COMMISSIONERS REPORT.**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT.**

A motion was made by Vice-Chairperson Stifter and seconded by Commissioner Strand to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 PM. Motion carried 6/0.