

City of Oregon Planning Commission Meeting

The Planning Commission met Tuesday July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 5:30 pm.

**Members Present:** Rachel Brunner, Roger Cain, Randy Cropp, Jeff Hallock, Mark Herman, Rick Ryland, Karly Spell, and Kurt Wilson.

**Also, Present:** City Manager Darin DeHaan, City Clerk Cheryl Hilton, and Mayor Ken Williams.

Chairman Mark Herman called the meeting to order.

Karly Spell moved to approve the June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, minutes, Seconded by Kurt Wilson.

Motion carried. No Nays. Abstain: Brunner.

Jeff Hallock moved to approve Ordinance 2023-010 Public Art Murals-Establish and Regulate the Public Art Mural Program, Seconded by Roger Cain.

**Discussion:** Mark Herman asked if the mural on 4<sup>th</sup> Street for Bad Ash Cigars has been completed. Karly Spell said yes. Roger Cain said the mural is beautiful. Rachel Brunner expressed concern of the mural being an advertisement for smoking. Mark Herman asked if a drawing had been submitted prior to the mural being painted. City Manager Darin DeHaan said he and Mayor Williams collaborated extensively with them on the project. They explained to the property owner that advertising elements, the cigar, could not be included in the mural. Mayor Ken Williams said they could remove the cigar and it would just be a mural. Once the cigar is added to the mural it becomes advertising and a sign under the city code shall not exceed fifty square feet. He said because the cigar is on the mural, the entire mural becomes a sign and is larger than fifty square feet. The mural is agenda item number three, a variance request, if it will be allowed or not. City Manager Darin DeHaan said there must be consideration of first amendment rights. He also stated the mural ordinance is to establish an art commission of about seven people, to review, regulate applications, and maintenance agreements. This ordinance gives the art commission guidance over what is good for the community and encourages art in the community. The city has a rich history of art. The city is also offering five, five-thousand-dollar grants towards murals with the use of ARPA funds. He said there are at least four potential mural projects that he is aware of in the community. Mark Herman said the ordinance is simple and easy to read. Jeff Hallock asked if the grants would be discontinued when the funds were spent. City Manager Darin DeHaan said it depends on how successful the program is. Roger Cain said it may be time for the city to look at what the vision of the downtown architecture is. City Manager Darin DeHaan said the younger generation would like to see more color and vibrancy downtown, while the older generation would like to see a historical downtown. Mayor Ken Williams reminded everyone there are two sign standards within the city, an ordinance specific to the national historic district and one that covers businesses outside of the downtown.

Motion carried. No Nays.

Rachel Brunner moved to approve a Public Hearing date of August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023 for a Variance of

the Sign Ordinance 28.08.020 submitted by Ogle County Brewery for the property located at 110 N 4<sup>th</sup> Street Parcel #16-03-159-009, Seconded by Randy Cropp.

**Discussion:** Mark Herman asked if the owners had submitted any plans. City Manager Darin DeHaan stated city hall staff completed the application for the variance on their behalf. He also invited them to the meeting. Roger Cain asked if they had plans of installing another sign. Mayor Ken Williams stated they would need to bring plans to the Planning Commission public hearing to see how many square feet the sign would be beyond the fifty square feet. City Manager Darin DeHaan said he will meet with the owners of the property to get finalized plans for the variance. Mayor Ken Williams said once the variance is approved, they are locked into that. They could not add anything other than what is approved. Roger Cain said there will be more response from the public. Mayor Ken Williams said they have invested in the building and deserve a public hearing to be heard and present their case to the Planning Commission and the public.

Motion carried. No Nays.

**Other business:**

Roger Cain asked about the tax benefits to the city for local Air B&Bs. City Manager Darin DeHaan said tax dollars collected by the county for Air B&Bs would go to the local tourism bureau, which is Blackhawk Waterways. Rick Ryland asked if there were plans for development of the property on the East side of River Road. Mayor Ken Williams stated there have been no plans for development submitted to the city for the property. Rachel Brunner stated she would like to have a conversation in the future regarding the limit of Air B&Bs. She said many homes being turned into Air B&Bs could be homes for first time home buyers or lower income families. City Manager Darin DeHaan stated Council Member Terry Schuster was also interested in the occupancy of local Air B&Bs. Mayor Ken Williams said the movie producers that were here not long ago have opened a studio in Grand Detour, it is called Rock River Studios.

Karly Spell moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:12 pm, Seconded by Mark Herman.

Motion carried. No Nays.

Cheryl Hilton, City Clerk