

## **PLAN COMMISSION Minutes**

### **March 15, 2023 Regular Meeting**

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*The meeting was called to order by Chair Paine at 4:00 pm on March 15, 2023 in Government Center Room 201.*

#### **1 ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** *Jim Paine (chair), Dennis Dalbec (vice chair), Brent Fennessey, Lindsey Graskey, Brian Finstad, Anne Porter, Garner Moffat, Tylor Elm, Dave Strum*

**VIRTUAL:**

**ABSENT:**

**CITY STAFF PRESENT:** *Planning, Economic Development and Port Director Jason Serck, Planning Assistant Stephanie Becken*

**OTHERS PRESENT:** *Shelly Nelson, Jeramie Olson (online), Michael Magdzas, Jason Rhoads, Sarah Falwey*

#### **2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION to approve minutes by Commissioner Dalbec, seconded by Commissioner Elm, carried.**

#### **3 OLD BUSINESS**

##### **3.1 Review and approval of a special use permit allowing residential in M1 zones.**

*Director Serck explained the request as a continuation from December, 2022, creating a special use permit to allow for residential homes to be built in M1 zones using the same qualifiers as what is required in an R4 district.*

**MOTION to approve adding a special use permit allowing residential in M1 zones by Commissioner Dalbec, seconded by Fennessey, carried.**

#### **4 NEW BUSINESS**

##### **4.1 Small Business Grant Program Allocation**

- a. Mags Auto Service
- b. Superior Collision
- c. Off We Pop LLC
- d. Twin Ports Build

*The small business grant applications were introduced by Chair Paine.*

**MOTION to approve all four applications for the requested amounts by Commissioner Dalbec, seconded by Fennessey.**

*Commissioner Strum asked for more information about some applications that looked incomplete. Technician Becken shared the gross total for Mags Auto as \$228,918, omitted due to tax season being in the works when the application was completed. The other n/a lines from different applications were due to the business being new. Commissioner Strum also brought up*

*the business plan of one of the applicants, noting they were buying a large building. He wanted clarification on whether future tenants would be able to apply for small business grants. Director Serck said at this time, the Plan Commission does have that discretion and has used it in the past when tenants of buildings applied and were requesting money specifically for their build out and small business area, not for improvements to the building itself. Commissioner Finstad noted the Plan Commission has room in their discussion process to discern the difference.*

**Vote called on motion to approve, carried.**

4.2 Review and approval of Small Business Grant Program allocation schedule

*Technician Becken gave updates on the Small Business Grant Program since 2019.*

**MOTION to approve schedule as written by Commissioner Dalbec, seconded by Strum.**

*Commissioner Elm asked for a comparison of 2022 to previous years. Director Serck said before the schedule was made, the program usually ran out of money by June. Commissioner Fennessey asked how Q1 compared to previous years. Director Serck shared Q1 of 2023 was the highest a Q1 had been so far and attributed it to staff outreach and education for those who were applying. Commissioner Fennessey asked if the money left unspent after the allocation could be diverted or used for something else like support for historical buildings.*

**MOTION to amend the Small Business Grant Program allocation schedule to allow for unspent funds in any given quarter to be diverted to a separate fund by Commissioner Fennessey, seconded by Graskey.**

*Commissioner Moffat shared he would rather keep the funds that have been allocated to small businesses in the small business grant program. Commissioner Graskey thought the historical focus of the money might allow for a more open writing of a grant program to allow for more use in some underserved groups that might not be able to access the existing small business grant. Commissioner Strum shared he wasn't against the idea of a historical building focused grant but would want to see it created before funding it. Commissioner Elm asked for clarification on how funds would roll. The motion would allow for anything not spent in a quarter to be rolled to a different balance that the Plan Commission could then delegate and use as they saw fit. Commissioner Dalbec shared he wanted to keep any unspent money in the Small Business Grant program. Commissioner Porter asked if this separation would exclude it from future use in the program. Chair Paine said that, as written, the amendment only sets the money aside for future purpose and as written does not give any parameters or limits to that purpose.*

*Commissioner Porter shared how she anticipates needing to prioritize grant money in the future to be more aesthetic focused instead of granting on things like roofs. Commissioner Finstad said if design guidelines and more relief money was provided for the historical side, then diverting money might be a plan, but at the moment, preferred to keep it all as part of the small business grant program. Director Serck shared that Off We Pop—one of the applicants in a known historical property, had consulted with the Historical Preservation Committee and with the BID for design direction. Chair Paine said he supported the amendment, because it was flexible enough to continue to use the money however the Plan Commission saw fit, including a possible new program or just funding the existing one. He added the historical preservation front would likely*

require more money than would be available through quarterly remainders. Commissioner Dalbec added he supported using the Small Business Grant Program money on roofs as making sure the roof is sound is often the first step in making other cosmetic renovations, especially on older buildings.

**ROLL CALL VOTE on amendment to allow unspent funds in any given quarter to divert to a separate fund.**

**YES: Paine, Fennessey, Graskey, Porter (4)**

**NO: Finstad, Strum, Elm, Moffat, Dalbec (5)**

**AMENMENT FAILED**

**Vote called on original motion to adopt proposed schedule, carried.**

4.3 Review and approval of Small Business Grant Application updates

*Technician Becken introduced the changes of formatting to the Small Business Grant Application and the addition of a question about the historical nature of the business property. Commissioner Fennessey asked the purpose of the new question. Director Serck reminded the commission that it was a request they'd made during the last application period when multiple businesses were in older buildings. Commissioner Moffat said he liked the question and thought it was a way to offer resources like the Historical Preservation Committee without making any demands on the applicant. One day in the future, he hopes design guidance may be added. Commissioner Finstad shared he liked the question as long as it wasn't a requirement and was a venue for a friendly conversation. Commissioner Graskey noted the Historical Preservation Committee has knowledgeable and experienced members to make a positive conversation with business owners.*

**MOTION to approve Small Business Grant Application updates by Commissioner Moffat, second by Elm, carried.**

4.4 Review and recommendation of Certified Local Government Status from Historical Preservation Committee

**MOTION to recommend application for Certified Local Government Status to City Council by Commissioner Moffat, second by Dalbec.**

*Planning staff, Jeff Skrenes, explained the current state of the application and next steps for pursuing Certified Local Government status. Commissioner Strum asked how the change might impact building ability. Planner Skrenes shared it would not make much of an impact unless whole districts were named as historical and, in that case, regulations could be applied regardless of CLG status.*

**Vote called on motion and carried.**

## 5 ADJOURNMENT

*Meeting adjourned at 5:05 PM*

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*Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Becken.*