

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES - CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Tuesday, June 3, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.
City Hall Chambers - 8150 Barbara Avenue

Chair Hark called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Paul Hark
Pat Simon
Tony Scales
Armando Lissarrague
Annette Maggi
Bill Klein
Dennis Wippermann
Harold Gooch
Joan Robertson

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present: Allan Hunting, City Planner

Chair Hark welcomed new Commissioner Joan Robertson to the Planning Commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Simon noted an omission in the May 6, 2014 minutes.

The minutes from the May 6, 2014 Planning Commission meeting were approved as corrected.

The minutes from the May 20, 2014 Planning Commission meeting were approved as submitted.

NORTHWEST AREA STORMWATER UPDATE PRESENTATION

Tom Kaldunski, City Engineer, provided an overview of the City's Northwest Area, a unique part of the City which is expected to develop in the coming years. He discussed some of the rules and regulations that apply to that area, the City's desire for low impact development, and its encouragement of cluster development practices in order to preserve open space, green corridors, and other natural features. He explained the best management practices the City was using for treating and managing stormwater and mitigating the impact of development on the water cycle.

THOMAS MILLAN – CASE NO. 14-18V

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Simon read the public hearing notice to consider the request for a variance to allow two detached accessory buildings on a property whereas one is allowed in the R-1C zoning district, for the property located at 3183 – 70th Street East. 6 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Allan Hunting, City Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. He advised that the applicant has a detached, two-car garage on his property and is requesting to replace an older 8' x 10' shed with an 18' x 18' structure. The zoning code permits a maximum of one detached accessory structure in the R-1C zoning district so the applicant is requesting a variance to allow a second. While the circumstances are not completely unique to the parcel, staff feels the intent of

the ordinance was not meant to penalize properties that do not have an attached garage. The combined square footage of the two garages would be less than 1,000 square feet, complying with the maximum size allowed. The proposed building would not be directly visible from the street. Staff feels the proposed request meets the variance criteria and recommends approval of the request.

Chair Hark asked if staff would likely recommend approval if other homeowners with detached garages requested to build a second accessory structure.

Mr. Hunting replied in the affirmative, stating to his knowledge the City had not received any similar variance requests since the ordinance was amended in 2006.

Commissioner Lissarrague asked if staff heard from any of the neighbors.

Mr. Hunting replied they had not.

Commissioner Simon asked who did the impervious surface measurements.

Mr. Hunting replied that the applicant worked with Heather Botten, and staff is comfortable that the measurements are accurate and are below the allowed impervious surface maximum.

Commissioner Scales asked what maximum square footage would be allowed for a detached structure on a City lot.

Mr. Hunting replied that all residential lots were limited to 1,000 square feet. The threshold changed on lots 2 ½ acres or larger in the Estate or Agricultural zoning districts.

Commissioner Simon asked if the ordinance standards were based at all on the age of the home.

Mr. Hunting replied they were not.

Commissioner Scales stated there were many ramblers in the City without attached garages, including his own. He had no issue with the request but would like to see a standard set moving forward for houses with detached garages to be allowed a second structure for lots of all sizes throughout the City.

Mr. Hunting stated it was unlikely there would be many homes on large lots without an attached garage.

Commissioner Maggi asked Commissioner Scales to clarify his question.

Commissioner Scales stated he lived on a two acre parcel and had a detached garage. In that scenario, he questioned whether he would be allowed to build a second accessory structure as long as the combined square footage was less than 1,000 square feet.

Mr. Hunting replied that it was possible, but he would have to apply for a variance.

Commissioner Scales stated the question of this being a valid practical difficulty should be looked at as in the past applicants have been told they could attach the garage to their house to get the additional space. He questioned whether they should change the ordinance instead.

Commissioner Lissarrague stated he would like to see the ordinance addressed so the regulations would be consistent for all properties, noting that the Planning Commission recommended denial of

an accessory structure at its last meeting.

Commissioner Maggi stated the difference from her perspective was that in the era in which Mr. Millan's home was built detached garages were very common, and the ordinance was not built to manage that.

Commissioner Scales noted there were many homes in the City with detached garages.

Commissioner Robertson noted that the proposed structure would be eight feet from both the rear and side lot lines, and asked if they should take into consideration how this may impact the neighbor.

Chair Hark stated he would not consider that in his analysis because the applicant would be complying with the setback criteria.

Opening of Public Hearing

Thomas Millan, 3183 – 70th Street East, advised he was available to answer any questions.

Chair Hark asked the applicant if he read and understood the staff report.

Mr. Millan replied in the affirmative. He advised that the neighbor's garage would be directly behind the proposed structure and there was also a border of arborvitaes planted along the property line; therefore, it was unlikely the neighbor would see the proposed building.

Commissioner Simon asked if the patio on the east side of the existing garage was included in the impervious surface measurements.

Mr. Millan replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Simon asked if the applicant had considered attaching a garage with a drive-through to the existing garage.

Mr. Millan replied he had considered that option, but decided against it because of moisture issues.

Chair Hark closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Scales, second by Commissioner Klein, to approve the request for a variance to allow two detached accessory buildings on a property whereas one is allowed in the R-1C zoning district, for the property located at 3183 – 70th Street East.

Motion carried (9/0). This item goes to the City Council on June 23, 2014.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Fox
Recording Secretary