

CITY OF CLARKSTON
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
March 3, 2014

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 P.M., Clarkston City Hall, John Murray

ROLL CALL: Bob Gilbertson, John Murray (Chair), Margo McCroskey, Jim Merrill
Excused: Larry Moser
Staff: Jim Martin, Vickie Storey

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of the February 18, 2014 meeting were approved on a motion by MCCROSKEY/MERRILL. Motion carried.

Chair Murray asked the commission to move communications to the beginning of the agenda. Motion by McCroskey/Gilbertson to move the public comment forward.

COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Communications from the Public

Chair Murray explained that the Planning Commission is an advisory body whose purpose is to make recommendations to the city council for potential action. He said a public hearing will be held at a later date, prior to any recommendation to the city council.

Melissa Welter, 1036 Burrell, is speaking on behalf of EPIC. EPIC stands for empowering people and impacting choices. She said their mission is to reduce underage drinking, drug use and other destructive choices. . As such, EPIC urged the commission to ban the production, processing and sales of marijuana in the City of Clarkston. Welter said Washington's attorney general has put forth his opinion that it is within the rights of local governments to regulate within their jurisdictions. Welter provided copies of that opinion.

Murray asked more about EPIC. Welter said they are a coalition and received some funding from the state because a youth survey show that Asotin County is a high risk community for drugs and alcohol. They have formulated a strategic plan and are now in the implementation phase. She said the board consists of members from all sectors of the community.

David Domolecny, 1430 Chestnut, said he has addressed the County Commissioners regarding marijuana. He said he once believed drugs should be legalized because it would eliminate the black market and would produce revenue. His opinion has since changed and he feels that marijuana should be banned in Clarkston and Asotin County.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

A. Discussion of proposed updates to Zoning Matrix, including Marijuana Regulations

Murray commented that prior discussion has included some minor changes in other areas of the zoning matrix. Those changes included eliminating some redundancy, some new uses and elimination of some uses that do not apply.

PWD Martin commented that retail sales of marijuana are currently being considered in DC, SC and PC.

Design standards, which had been requested by the Port of Clarkston, are not something that the Commission is ready to address at this time.

McCroskey said the changes to the matrix that have been discussed in prior meetings are good. She said she is comfortable with moving on to the public hearing.

MOTION BY GILBERTSON/MERRILL to schedule a public hearing to present the matrix as it has been revised.

McCroskey explained that the marijuana portion of the matrix is not set in stone and can be revised as a result of the public hearing. She commented that much of the city falls within the exclusions set by the state so there are limited locations that would allow retail sales.

Sidney Grubb, 2330 Valleyview Court, asked if the map is available on line. Martin said it is not yet, but he hopes to be able to put it on the website.

Welter asked if the Commission has considered increasing the 1,000 foot exclusion area to 1,500 or 2,000 feet. Murray said they did not and he feels it is near impossible to zone out a use that is allowed by law within the state. He explained that the Commission spent some time discussing how to classify certain uses, such as production. Should it be agricultural or industrial. They finally settled on industrial and as such restricted it to the Industrial Zone. He said part of the mission of the Commission is to keep the City out of lawsuits and zoning a use out entirely would subject the city to potential legal action. He commented that state regulations will make it quite expensive to obtain a license. McCroskey said areas have been identified within the restrictions of the current law where marijuana business would be allowed. She said if the public hearing indicates that the public does not want to allow marijuana businesses, then the Commission and Council would have to consider that testimony.

Welter said about five communities have placed an outright ban and Pullman has increased the barrier area to 1,500 feet. She offered to provide copies of ordinances from some of those communities.

Motion to move forward with the public hearing carried.

The hearing was set for April 21.

COMMUNICATIONS:

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

John Murray, Chair