

MINUTES
MOUNT VERNON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
July 8, 2015

The Mount Vernon Planning and Zoning Commission met July 8, 2015 at Mount Vernon City Hall Council Chambers with the following members present: Truman Jordan, Joan Burge, Jenna Wischmeyer, Rich Hileman, Richard Peterson and Matthew Nelson. Also in attendance, Zoning Administrator, Matt Siders. Absent: Trude Elliott. Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Truman Jordan at 6:30 p.m.

1. Approval of Agenda and April 8, 2015 minutes. These documents stand approved unless otherwise indicated by Commission members.
2. Open Forum: each citizen limited to 5 minutes per discussion item.
3. Discussion regarding definition of “family” within the zoning regulations in Mount Vernon Code of Ordinances. The commission had a discussion on the meaning of “family” and how it relates to properties in Mount Vernon, more specifically rental homes and the number of non-family members allowed to live in a home. Siders said that he had been contacted by residents who have concerns about rental regulations for properties. Hileman felt that the first step would be to decide if Mount Vernon wanted to have rental regulations with regard to single family zones and what those regulations should be. Hileman felt that this was more of a rental problem than what the meaning of “family” is. Burge said she know several people that rent to students and asked how restrictive the City needed to be. Wischmeyer said the issue is not about whether or not to allow rental properties but having more clear guidelines in place that govern the use of properties. The consensus of the commission was that there was not an immediate answer but there is a need to start conversations about the issues. Nelson felt that rental properties that do not have regulations have more of a potential of nuisances (loud parties). Peterson felt the problem was with college students renting out entire properties, not renting in general and that the definition of “family” is what needed to be changed and how those people lived. Wischmeyer said she was not opposed to revisiting the parameters of the “family” definition but thought that it would be helpful to find out how other communities handle this situation before proceeding further. Peterson felt that the first thing that should happen is there should be a conversation involving the college, police department, maybe Planning

& Zoning and maybe City Council about how City Ordinances are enforced. Hileman did not think the problem was with the City Ordinance itself but how they are enforced by the City. Siders also thought that some type of rental application or inspection program would be something to think about. Jordan and Siders will start by having a discussion with Cornell and determine how to proceed from there.

4. Zoning Administrator Report. Siders reported that in the last 6 months there have been six building permits.
5. Old Business. Nelson noticed that the sign at Ain't Life Grand is still up and asked about the status of the removal of the sign. Siders said they are closing the business as of August 1st so the sign will be taken down at that time.
6. New Business.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marsha Dewell
Deputy Clerk