

Mount Vernon Planning and Zoning Commission
Minutes
September 11, 2013
City Hall Council Chambers

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Truman Jordan at 6:35 p.m.
Members present: Truman Jordan, Rich Hileman, Jenna Wischmeyer and Treva Heiser. Absent: Trude Elliott and Bill Micheel. Also in attendance: Zoning Administrator Matt Siders, David Osterberg and Kay Johansen.

1. Approval of Agenda and August 14, 2013 minutes. These documents stand approved unless otherwise indicated by Commission members.
2. Open Forum: each citizen limited to 5 minutes per discussion item.
3. Public Hearing on request for conditional use permit for Alternative Energy Production Devices (solar panels) at 318 2nd Avenue NW. Discussion and possible action. Zoning Administrator Matt Siders explained that the applicants submitted a building permit for installation of solar panels at their residence. Solar panels are identified as an Alternative Energy Production Device in the Mount Vernon Code. In the TR zone, Alternative Energy Production Devices require a Conditional Use Permit in order to be permitted. Siders said this is a formality and the process to go through in order to allow this. Hileman asked if there was anywhere else in the code that they should be aware of besides the usage table on page 4-12 of the Zoning Ordinance. Siders referred to page 3-15 of the code under Miscellaneous Type Uses where it states, "The use of a site for the production of energy utilizing methods that do not involve the oxidation, combustion, or fission of primary materials. Typical uses include solar collector fields, geothermal energy installations, or water-powered mills or generating facilities". Siders said the key words would be "solar collector fields". Jordan felt that "solar collector fields" would be the same as solar panels. The City Attorney agreed with this after consulting with Siders. Jordan opened the public hearing at 6:40 p.m. Resident David Osterberg stated that these particular panels would sit on top of his garage. They will produce the most power during the day in the summer. It is a simple system and are becoming more typical around the US. He will receive a rebate from Alliant and a tax credit for installing the panels. The panels will be fairly flat and his neighbors have been notified. Heiser asked what prompted them to go with this system. Osterberg stated that he teaches this type of thing at the University of Iowa and the costs have gone way down. They have two hybrid cars and said it was time to do solar panels. Jordan asked if there would be any glare for the units. Osterberg did not know the

answer to that question. Siders asked what the maximum height would be. Osterberg thought around 20 feet at a maximum. They will not be installed on the peak of the garage. Jordan closed the public hearing. Hileman made a motion to recommend the approval of the Conditional Use Permit for the solar panels. Seconded by Heiser. Carried all. This will be forwarded on to Board of Adjustment for further review.

4. Discussion and possible action on proposed lighting ordinance. The Lighting Subcommittee of Trude Elliott, Bill Micheel and Truman Jordan met earlier this week and made some proposed changes to the lighting ordinance. Commission members were provided with an updated draft ordinance with these changes made. Jordan briefly went over the changes which consisted of after-hours lighting, mounting heights, removal of items from Table 1 on page 6, lighting of exterior display sales areas and a change to the grandfathering area. The commission felt it was a good idea to have another public hearing on the proposed ordinance. This will be done at the next meeting in October.
5. Zoning Administrator Report. Siders reported that there were 2 sign permits and one deck permit approved this last month.
6. Old Business.
7. New Business.

Meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marsha Dewell
Administrative Assistant