

CRYSTAL PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Monday, December 8, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, Crystal City Hall

A. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Crystal Planning Commission convened at 7 p.m. with the following members present:

X Commissioner (Ward 1) Sears [Vice Chair]	X Commissioner (Ward 2) Kolb	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner (Ward 4) [vacant]
X Commissioner (Ward 1) Heigel	X Commissioner (Ward 3) VonRueden [Chair]	X Commissioner (Ward 4) Johnson
X Commissioner (Ward 2) Erickson	X Commissioner (Ward 3) Buck [Secretary]	X Commissioner (At- Large) Strand

Also attending were staff members John Sutter and Gail Van Krevelen and Council member Laura Libby.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Commissioner Heigel and seconded by Commissioner Buck to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2014 regular meeting with no exceptions.

Motion carried.

C. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Consider Application 2014-11 to shift the rear lot line between 4939 Vera Cruz Avenue North and 4938 Welcome Avenue North 45 feet east of its present location.

Staff presented the following:

Planner Sutter said that the property owner of both lots wishes to shift the lot line 45' to the east to expand the lot that they occupy. Mr. Sutter indicated that the concrete slab behind the 4939 Vera Cruz garage needs to be removed, but otherwise there are no structures involved. He also stated that the city has two conditions to approval, the removal of the concrete slab and the granting of a 10' drainage and utility easement along the current lot line.

Commissioner Buck asked whether it was allowable to move lot lines with the garage encroachment onto the property to the north. Planner Sutter said that was an agreement between the prior owners and moving the rear lot line would not affect the encroachment along the north side lot line.

The following were heard:

Dan Mruz Sr. spoke before the commission and questioned what is planned for the space being added. He also stated that he was making \$70,000 worth of improvements to his property and was concerned that the owner might move the garage to the back of the property and because of its poor condition, the effect it may have on the value of his property.

Mr. Sutter said the owner has not expressed any plans to build on the property or move the garage but has the right to do so. He again stated that the garage encroachment is a civil matter between the two owners and there were no grounds to deny the application. It doesn't create any non-conformance and doesn't preclude removal or relocation of the garage.

Kelly Mruz, 4944 Vera Cruz Ave N, was concerned that if this is approved there wouldn't be enough of the lot left when it is put up for sale. She also said the garage is very deteriorated and the property is an eyesore. She questioned why vehicles are being parked on the property when there is nobody living in the house.

Commissioner Buck asked about the agreement regarding the garage encroachment, Mr. Sutter said that neither party to the original agreement is a current property owner and again reiterated that this is a civil matter between the two owners.

Moved by Commissioner Sears and seconded by Commissioner Heigel to recommend approval of Application 2014-11 to shift the rear lot line between 4939 Vera Cruz Avenue North and 4938 Welcome Avenue North 45 feet east of its present location.

Motion carried.

2. Consider Application 2014-12 for a variance to reduce the rear setback requirement to allow an addition to a nonconforming house at 4717 Florida Avenue North.

Staff presented the following:

Planner Sutter stated this is an unusually shallow lot, only 95' deep after 30' for the street easement. The house is less than 30' from the rear lot line, and based on aerial photos the neighborhood developed around the house which was part of a farmstead with multiple buildings. The property owners would like to do significant renovation to double the size of the house and to do that, the rear setback needs to be reduced. The owners are requesting a minimum rear setback of 25' for the house and also a 14' setback for a deck that they wish to build onto the back of the house.

The following were heard:

Patty Croal spoke to the commission, stating that they want to rehab the house and make it look better and that they plan to sell the property.

Commissioner Sears said that the 25' setback was not uncommon.

Commissioner Kolb asked if this would then make what's there conforming. Mr. Sutter said that it would, the variance would be permanent and run with the land forever.

Commissioner Heigel questioned if the retaining wall would extend to the street. James Croal stated that there is an existing wall there, and they plan to excavate it further back to add on to the garage.

Commissioner Kolb asked if city staff had heard from any neighbors.

Jim Peterson of JC Peterson Homes spoke to the commission, stating that he owns 4720 Georgia Ave N. He said he demolished the existing home on his property and built a new one, and has no objections to the proposal.

Moved by Commissioner Kolb and seconded by Commissioner Buck to recommend approval of Application 2014-12 for a variance to reduce the rear setback requirement to allow an addition to a nonconforming house at 4717 Florida Avenue North.

Motion carried.

D. GENERAL INFORMATION

Commission VonRueden asked what happened with the U-Haul that was approved on the south end of Crystal. Mr. Sutter stated he wasn't sure, but that the owner doesn't appear to have opened yet. The CUP is still valid so he has some time.

Commissioner Kolb will be a council member beginning in January so there will be 2 openings on the commission. Commissioner VonRueden questioned whether existing commission members have to go through the interview process. Mr. Sutter said his understanding is that if there are no complaints, and the members want to continue on the commission, then no interviews are required.

1. City Council actions on November 18 regarding previous Planning Commission items:
 - Approved a conditional use permit for custom manufacturing at 5249 Douglas Drive North (Borja Dental)

- Approved a roof height variance to allow expansion of a nonconforming garage at 6602 59th Avenue North

2. Staff preview of likely agenda items for Monday, January 12, 2015 meeting

Nothing at this time.

E. OPEN FORUM

No one spoke before the commission.

F. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Commissioner Buck and seconded by Commissioner Heigel to adjourn.

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.