

**CITY OF ORONOCO
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MAY 11, 2023**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wendy Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:42 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Wendy Phillips, Chair; Kathy Brandt-Rucker, Vice Chair; Jim Richards;
Jim Phillips; Paul Pendergrass

Commissioners Absent: Colleen Fried, Secretary; Scott Sorenson

Staff Present: City Administrator Sunny Bjorklund Schultz

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Motion by J. Phillips, seconded by Brandt-Rucker, to approve the agenda as presented.
Voice vote followed; motion carried (5-0).**

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion by Pendergrass, seconded by Richards, to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2023,
meeting as presented.
Voice vote followed; Motion carried (5-0).**

V. BUDGET REPORT

City Administrator Bjorklund Schultz reviewed the Budget Comparison Report for P&Z through the month of April, along with the Revenue/Expenditure Report for the month of April. Bjorklund Schultz noted that the inherited Chart of Accounts does not allow for easily reporting the revenues; all revenues are coded as general rather than by department. Similarly, there are some expenditures that are skewed because of the engineering costs associated with other projects outside the purview of P&Z. Specifically, 42304-Reimbursable Engineering Fees pertain to the WWTF project and 42307-SEH pertain to the regional trail project. These larger numbers skew the report by showing a negative balance remaining in the P&Z budget. However, apart from these two accounts, the P&Z actuals are under budget and one of the city administrator's goals for 2023 was to get financial reporting to the committees, admittedly with necessary explanations.

VI. STAFF REPORT OF ACTIVITY

1. Update: Kuehn Application for Variance to City Code Section 151.054

Applicants Andrew & Jenna Kuehn had applied for a variance to City Code Section 151.054 to allow for a garage addition that exceeded Code allowance. Planning & Zoning recognized that the existing Code showed a significant jump in the allowances for parcels less than an acre in size and those over an acre and desired to explore alternative sizing/allowances.

The City chose to exercise its right to a 60-day extension. In the meantime, the applicants stopped payment on their application fee of \$250.00, incurring an additional cost of \$30 for the stopped payment fee.

The applicants were in attendance to share their views with the commission and staff, who shared their views, as well.

It was further noted that consulting planner costs through March were \$686.25 and excluded subsequent planning costs associated with the consultant’s attendance the April 11 P&Z meeting and April 18 Council meeting. Accordingly, the taxpayers of the city are bearing the cost not only of the difference between consulting costs and application fee, but in this case the entirety of the Kuehn variance process and stop payment fee. This is particularly true if the amended Ordinance does not require the applicants to seek another variance.

- 2. Application: Wangsness Application for Variance to City Code Section 94.20**
City Administrator Bjorklund Schultz reminded Commissioners that in 2022 the applicants were granted a Variance to construct a new detached garage, subject to conditions, one of which was teardown of the old, detached garage.

Applicants are now applying for a variance to allow for a second driveway to the new garage. By consensus, the application is tabled until the June meeting to allow Commissioners to revisit the conditions of the prior approval and staff to provide clarification on the existing driveway situation. The City will exercise its right to a 60-day extension.

- 3. Application: Johnson Application for Variance to City Code Section 94.20**
Applicant Kent Johnson seeks a Variance to City Code Section 94.20 to allow for a second driveway. Mr. Johnson was present and allowed to speak about his proposal and answer questions posed by the commissioners and staff. Johnson’s application notes that the proposed second driveway will necessitate relocating a sign.

The City Administrator noted that in 2022 the applicant had cited safety concerns coming out of the property’s existing driveway and questioned the safety posed by yet another driveway. Mr. Johnson noted the new driveway would be largely inactive as it was intended only for storing a trailer behind an existing detached garage. Staff recommendation at this time was to schedule a Public Hearing at the next meeting.

Motion by Brandt-Rucker, seconded by Richards, to schedule a Public Hearing for 6:35 p.m. (or shortly thereafter) on June 8, 2023.
Voice vote followed; Motion carried (5-0).

VII. NEW BUSINESS

INSERTION AT MEETING (allowed by Commissioners):

Brandon Radke has applied for a Building/Zoning Permit and was present at the meeting. Although not on the agenda, Mr. Radke noted that he had spoken to the mayor and was informed that he could speak to the Commission. Commissioners allowed him to do so.

Mr. Radke would like to build a new 24 x 56 building on his property at 600 Vintage Road NW that would replace a smaller existing building. The proposed building would be half garage for storing equipment (plow and lawn mower) and half office with a toilet. The site has neither water nor sewer. Radke is trying to negotiate water access from the neighbor (BUY RV/SELL RV).

City Administrator Bjorklund Schultz noted that the application was received on April 24, but has been deemed incomplete. The applicant stated the building sketch provided is similar but not actual and the application lacks a survey showing placement of the proposed building on the parcel sufficient to discern appropriate setbacks and no fee has been paid. Commissioners encouraged Radke to provide the needed materials for review.

1. ACTION: Ordinance Amendment – City Code Section 151.054

Commissioners reviewed a memorandum prepared by the city’s consulting Planner Phil Carlson dated April 28, 2023, regarding the Accessory Building & Lot Size Standards existing in City Code Section 151.054. Carlson’s memo included two attachments: (a) an illustration of the existing standard for size of accessory buildings based on lot size compared to proposed amendment language and (b) a graph showing the current code standard for various lot sizes, an “ideal” without the dramatic jumps, and a simpler formula proposed showing various lots sizes and allowable buildings that is more fair and yet easy to administer. The maximum allowable square footage for accessory buildings remains at 7,500 square feet and the maximum number of accessory buildings allowed remains unchanged at four buildings for larger parcels.

Commissioners discussed the materials presented and agreed that the proposed amendment language seemed appropriate for the city moving forward.

Accordingly, with specific language now agreed upon, staff recommended scheduling a Public Hearing on the proposed Ordinance Amendment.

Motion by Brandt-Rucker, seconded by J. Phillips, to schedule a Public Hearing on the proposed Ordinance Amendment for 6:40 p.m. (or shortly thereafter) at the June 8 P&Z meeting.

Voice vote followed; Motion carried (5-0).

2. FYI: Oronoco Organization Chart

City Administrator Bjorklund Schultz reviewed the organization chart unanimously adopted by the City Council on April 18, 2023. Bjorklund Schultz noted that historically, departments and committees had operated largely independently, with several people feeling at will to engage consultants and, therefore, costs to the city. One of the aims of the chart is to rein in costs by making the City Administrator the contact for approving engagement of consultants. The engineer, planner, and attorney will not engage with any resident, committee member, or others on business without first getting approval from the Administrator (obviously the WWTF project is an exception). The chart also clarifies the City Administrator’s role in a city, most notably:

- Primary liaison to Council
- Primary liaison to the various Commissions and Committees
- Primary Lead to department heads
- Human Resources Director for all staff
- Along with the mayor, Primary signer on official city documents

Tasks may be delegated as appropriate, but the responsibility remains with the Administrator.

3. ACTION: Schedule Workshop #3 (training)

Given the hour, the workshop will be rescheduled. Workshop #2 was cancelled and workshop #3 hasn’t been scheduled yet.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. RFP for Planning Services

City Administrator Bjorklund Schultz reviewed a rough draft of the proposed RFP for planning services inclusive of updating the city’s planning and land use regulations. The RFP anticipates that the outcome of the new regulations will be a “hybrid” zoning ordinance incorporating for-based

standards for established neighborhoods and more conventional zoning standards for largely built-out districts along major roads. The final product desired must be an innovative, adaptive, user-friendly and highly illustrative code that will implement the vision of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

The draft is extensive in scope and speaks to Plan Review; Current Zoning Ordinance Diagnosis; Public Outreach; Evaluation of Existing Neighborhoods, Corridors and Districts; Drafting the Document; Integration of the New Code into User-Friendly Formats; and Staff Training.

The intent is to have the RFP out as soon as possible as it has been all along. The document still needs tweaking, but the goal is to have P&Z making a decision in July. With summer upon us that may be an aggressive goal.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Richards, seconded by Pendergrass to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 p.m.

Voice vote followed. Motion carried unanimously.