

STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
January 19, 2016

Vice Chair, John Mikulenas called to Order at 7:30 in the Wiesloch Raum of City Hall.

Members present: John Mikulenas; Eric Jones; Garry Allen; Peter Stage; Don Eaton; Michael Brothers

Members Absent: Chairman, Keith Waltke; Michael Caywood

Staff present: Director of Community Development, George E. Musolff; Inspector, Will Prichard; Recording Secretary, Kara Falkenstein

Also present: Kathy Jessup, Sturgis Journal; Daniel Rose, 219 Virginia; Rita Allen, 219 Virginia

Minutes of the October 20, 2015 Regular Meeting approved as presented.

Vice Chairman presented the agenda item - Class "A" non-conforming Structure – 219 Virginia Street – Daniel Rose & Rita Allen

The property owner of 219 Virginia Street is requesting a Class "A" non-conforming status. Vice Chairman, Mikulenas asked if there was a representative for the property and that they approach the podium. Daniel Rose, property owner at 219 Virginia Street approached the podium and stated that he would like to build a garage on the front of his house and attach it to the house. He would like to build it for more storage space. Mr. Mikulenas asked what the homeowner's project timeline was. Mr. Rose answered that the contractor has been paid and they are ready to go. Mr. Jones asked how the homeowners access their home. Mr. Rose stated that there is a driveway to the west side of the house. It acts as a driveway but it is just a slab where an old garage previously stood. To him it's nothing more than a slab of concrete in their backyard that they park on. The homeowners either come in on the side of the house via the slab driveway or through their front door which faces the east. Mr. Mikulenas stated that the proposed driveway would be off of Cornelia. Mr. Mikulenas asked if there was any public comment. There was none. Mr. Mikulenas stated that he drove by the site on 1/19/16 and that it looked good. He stated he was wondering where the garage would sit and that it will sit further west from the home at 217 Virginia than he had envisioned. Don Eaton asked about fire clearance. Mr. Musolff stated that the current setbacks meet all NFPA minimums as far as approach, ingress, and egress. Mr. Mikulenas ended discussion and moved for a motion.

Motion: Made by Eric Jones and seconded by Peter Stage to approve the Class "A" non-conforming structure request for 219 Virginia Street.

Voting yes: Six

Votng no: none

Absent: Waltke, Caywood

Motion Carried

New Business – Updating Zoning/Planning Master Plans and Upcoming Codifications

Mr. Musolff is looking to the Commission for a count of how many members are in need of a new copy of the Master Plan for Planning and/or Zoning. Currently the members have been receiving any addendums made to the Master Plan in the form of handouts. He stated that if any members have been on the Commission for more than 6 months that they will most likely have everything. The codifications will be amendments that will be added instead of handouts. Members are to contact Kara Falkenstein, Assistant at the Community Development Department if they are in need of new copies of any materials.

Adjourned 7:35 pm



Kara Falkenstein, Recording Secretary

STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
February 16, 2016

Vice Chair, John Mikulas, called to Order at 7:30 pm. In the Wiesloch Raum of City Hall.

Members Present: Chairman, Keith Waltke; Vice Chairman, John Mikulas; Michael Caywood; Garry Allen; Michael Brothers

Members Absent: Peter Stage; Eric Jones; Don Eaton

Staff Present: Director of Community Development, George E. Musloff; Inspector, Will Prichard; Recording Secretary, Kara Falkenstein; City Manager, Michael Hughes

Also Present: Kathy Jessup, Sturgis Journal; Mikel Currier, Jones Petrie Rafinski

Minutes of the January 19, 2016 Regular Meeting approved as presented.

Vice Chairman presented the agenda item – Site Plan Review – Auto Park Ford – 1820 S. Centerville Road – Demolition/Redevelopment

The property owner at 1820 S. Centerville Road, Auto Park Ford, is requesting a Site Plan Review.

Vice Chairman, Mikulas, asked if there was a representative for the property and that they would approach the podium. Mikel Currier of Jones Petrie Rafinski (JPR) approached the podium and stated that JPR is a sub-consultant for site work. JPR was hired by Ancon and Ancon was hired by Auto Park Ford to complete the work. Mr. Currier stated that there were some other things going on with architectural and electrical components but JPR was hired to do the site work. Mr. Currier explained that the project will be done in 2 phases. Auto Park Ford will move all their operations into the southerly building, the northerly building will then be demolished and a new structure will be built. Auto Park Ford will be able to keep their business going in the southerly building until the new structure is not able to be occupied. The, southerly building will then be demolished, and, the site will be incorporated into the parking lot.

Mr. Currier explained that Mr. Musloff and Barry Cox, City Engineer, had provided him site plan review comments and deficiencies. Mr. Currier responded to this information with revisions to the site plan. He explained that a several items are pending at this point and he will be asking for approval contingent upon these items being brought into compliance.

Motion: Made by Garry Allen, seconded by Michael Brothers: Approve site plan as submitted contingent upon the (5) corrections listed below.

1. Final storm water/calculation approval: Percolation test to be performed and must pass the city's standards for a 25 year/24 hour storm. Mr. Currier is confident that they will meet the standards, if not surpass them.
2. Sewer easement: Proposed 20 foot wide sanitary sewer easement over the 18" sanitary sewer that runs across the property.
3. Acquisition of Morgon Olson property which is located southeast of the Auto Park Ford's property.
4. Reassign triangular or pie shaped parcel to the City of Sturgis: Currently the parcel is assigned to Sturgis Township.
5. Lot combinations: Combine all lots owned by Auto Park Ford and create a single legal description.

Voting yes: Five

Voting no: none

Absent: Jones, Stage, Eaton

Motion: Carried

Adjourned 8:01 pm

Kara Falkenstein

STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

April 19, 2016

Vice Chair, John Mikulenas, called the meeting to Order at 7:30 PM in the Wiesloch Raum of City Hall.

Members Present: Chairman, Keith Waltke; Vice Chairman, John Mikulenas; Michael Brothers; Garry Allen; Eric Jones; Peter Stage; Don Eaton * (Not present for first agenda item)

Members Absent: Michael Caywood

Staff Present: Director of Community Development, George E. Musolff; Recording Secretary, Will Prichard;

Also Present: Eric Hull, First Merit Bank-17 Vinewood Ave.; Eric Holdorf, First Merit Bank-17 Vinewood Ave.; Joe Pierce, Farmers State Bank; Roger Bird, Matt Boland, Boland Tire Inc.; Scott Boland, Boland Tire, Inc.; Marty Hart, 915-1000 W. Chicago Road; Steven Craig, SHS; Andrew Craig, SHS; Zach Handyside, MOSO Village; Kathy Jessup, Sturgis Journal

Minutes of the February 16, 2016 Regular Meeting approved as presented.

Vice Chairman presented the agenda item – Class “A” Non-Conforming Use/Structure – 17 Vinewood Avenue

The property owner at 17 Vinewood Avenue is requesting a Class “A” Non-Conforming Use.

Vice Chairman, Mikulenas, asked if there was a representative for the property and that they would approach the podium. Eric Hull, a representative of First Merit Bank, approached the podium and stated that First Merit Bank is requesting a Class “A” Non-Conforming Use for use and financing purposes. Mr. Hull was asked if First Merit Bank would like the status to insure that a Doctor’s Office type business would be able to remain at the property. Mr. Hull affirmed that was the reason for the request.

Motion: Made by Garry Allen, seconded by Eric Jones.

Voting yes: Six Voting no: none Absent: Caywood, Eaton* Motion: Carried

Vice Chairman presented the agenda item – Class “A” Non-Conforming Structure – Farmers State Bank – 809 W. Chicago Road

The property owner at 809 W. Chicago Road is requesting a Class “A” Non-Conforming Structure.

Vice Chairman, Mikulenas, asked if there was a representative for the property and that they would approach the podium. Joe Pierce, a representative of Farmers State Bank, approached the podium and stated that Farmers State Bank is requesting a Class “A” Non-Conforming Structure in order to add an 832 square foot addition onto their existing building. The front setback is the current non-conformity. The proposed addition will not increase the setback non-conformity.

Motion: Made by Eric Jones, seconded by Peter Stage.

Voting yes: Six Voting no: none Absent: Caywood Motion: Carried

Vice Chairman presented the agenda item – Special Land Use – Boland Tire Inc. – 909, 911, 913 W. Chicago Road

Vice Chairman, Mikulenas, asked if there was a representative for the property and that they would approach the podium. Matt Boland, a representative of Boland Tire, Inc., approached the podium and stated that Boland Tire Inc. is requesting a Special Land Use status for this property. Mr. Boland would like to maintain their minor automobile repair shop at this

location. Mr. Boland plans to address the other buildings on the property also as he plans to demolish one of the buildings on the property and lease the other, at least for the immediate future.

Motion: Made by Don Eaton, seconded by Peter Stage.

Voting yes: Six

Voting no: none

Absent: Caywood

Motion: Carried

Vice Chairman presented agenda item – MOSO Village – Exterior Update

On Tuesday April 19, 2016 the Planning Commission, under new business, heard a proposal from Jeremy Gump, representing the Moso Village Planned District Development project. When the PDD was approved by the Planning Commission on April 21, 2015, the exterior facade was presented with a masonry/faux masonry finish on all four sides. The proposed building design was considered harmonious and complimentary to the existing building stock in the surrounding Central Business District.

Recently the owners have chosen a new exterior treatment for the building. Instead of the proposed masonry exterior, they would like to use corrugated, architectural, steel panels to finish all four sides of the two story structure. According to Mr. Gump these panels are a superior product. They will be pre-finished in similar colors to the original design proposal, more durable, weather resistant, less time consuming installation process, all and all, a better fit for the project.

Since the original design approval was a masonry finished structure, the decision to approve a new facade, or determine whether the new exterior treatment altered the project enough to warrant amending the PDD language was a decision, staff felt, best determined by the Planning Commission.

After a brief discussion with Mr. Gump, the Planning Commission agreed unanimously, by consensus that the change of exterior building materials was too minor to trigger any necessary legal amendment, or, change in the approved PDD language.

The Chair then directed the Zoning Administrator to inform the City Commission of their decision for the City Commissions approval. If the City Commission does not agree with the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission will start proceedings to officially amend the PDD for the MOSO project.

Adjourned 7:48 PM



Will Prichard, Acting Recording Secretary

STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION

Special Meeting

May 24, 2016

Vice Chair, John Mikulenas, called the meeting to Order at 7:30 PM in the Wiesloch Raum of City Hall.

Members Present: Chairman, Keith Waltke; Vice Chairman, John Mikulenas; Michael Brother; Garry Allen; Eric Jones; Peter Stage; Michael Caywood

Members Absent: Don Eaton

Staff Present: Director of Community Development, George E. Musolff; Building Inspector, Will Prichard; Recording Secretary, Kara Falkenstein

Also Present: Elizabeth Whitehead, Sturgis Council of the Arts representative; Don Lampe, President of Downtown Development Authority; Kim Musolff, Director of Downtown Development Authority; David Watson, Owner of Sturgis Automobile Clinic; Larry Welborn, Sr., Co-Owner of 501 W. Lafayette; Larry Welborn, Jr., Co-Owner of 501 W. Lafayette; Jennifer Schwartz, Owner of 436 W. Lafayette

Minutes of the April 19, 2016 Regular Meeting approved as presented.

Vice Chairman presented the agenda item – Special Land Use – 100 W. Chicago Road

The property owner at 100 W. Chicago Road is requesting a Special Land Use.

Vice Chairman, Mikulenas, asked if there was a representative for the property and that they would approach the podium. Elizabeth Whitehead, 69683 Rose Road, approached the podium as a representative of Sturgis Council of the Arts. Ms. Whitehead stated that the Sturgis Council of the Arts would like to repaint the mural that is currently on the side of the building located at 100 W. Chicago Road. The original mural was completed in 1996 by artist Conrad Kaufman from Galesburg, Michigan. Mr. Kaufman is willing to paint a mural based on the sketch that was presented to the Planning Commission. Mr. Kaufman would complete the project but also provide community involvement with a Paint-By-Numbers session during Sturgis Fest. Ms. Whitehead stated that the sketch depicts a progression of time, going from left to right; the left side being of the late 1800's-early 1900's, middle to depict circa 1950's, right side of current times. Ms. Whitehead explained that the mural will feature buildings, to name a few, the Sturges-Young Auditorium, City Hall, and old schools located in Sturgis. The Depot is placed in the center of the mural as it has been present throughout Sturgis's history, and will serve as a centerpiece. The mural will be colored from left to right also; right side being black and white or sepia progressing to full color on the right side. The estimated cost of the project is \$7,000 and would be paid in full by the Sturgis Area Community Foundation-Patricia A. Franks Fund.

Don Lampe, a representative of the Downtown Development Authority, then took the podium to explain that he had noticed the deterioration of the mural. Mr. Lampe requested the Planning Commission approve the proposal for a new mural.

Motion: Made by Michael Caywood and seconded by Peter Stage to approve the Special Land Use at 100 W. Chicago Rd.

Voting yes: Seven

Voting no: None

Absent: Eaton

Motion: Carried

Vice Chairman presented the agenda item – Class “A” Non-Conforming Use/Structure – 501 W. Lafayette

The property owner at 501 W. Lafayette is requesting a Class “A” Non-conforming Use/Structure.

Vice Chairman, Mikulenas, asked if there was a representative for the property and that they would approach the podium. Larry Welborn, Sr., 718 Nottingham, approached the podium as owner of 501 W. Lafayette. Mr. Welborn presented that he would like to sell the property, and has a potential buyer, but for financing and insurance purposes must obtain a Class “A” Non-Conforming Use/Structure status. Jennifer Schwartz, owner of a rental property located at 436 W. Lafayette, was

present at the meeting to inquire as to what the letter that she received was about. Mr. Mikulenas provided brief information regarding the need for a Class “A” Non-Conforming Use/Structure. Mr. Mikulenas inquired whether there is adequate terrace for proposed Non-Conforming status. Mr. Musolff confirmed that there is. Mr. Caywood asked what the building is being used for. Mr. Welborn replied that currently it is being used for a plumbing business.

Motion: Made by Eric Jones and seconded by Garry Allen to approve the Class “A” Non-Conforming Use/Structure.

Voting yes: Seven

Voting no: None

Absent: Eaton

Motion: Carried

Vice Chairman presented the agenda item – Special Land Use – 501 W. Lafayette

The property owner at 501 W. Lafayette is requesting a Special Land Use.

Vice Chairman, Mikulenas, asked if there was a representative for the property and that they would approach the podium. Dave Watson, prospective buyer of 501 W. Lafayette, approached the podium. Mr. Watson explained that he had dissolved a business with a previous partner and would like to move his business to 501 W. Lafayette. Mr. Watson is conducting business under the name Sturgis Automotive Clinic. Mr. Brothers asked whether the automotive business would be conducted in conjunction with the current plumbing business. Mr. Watson explained that the plumbing business would no longer exist on the property; the automotive business would be replacing it. Mr. Watson outlined that he planned to fence in the property for the safety and security of his customer’s vehicles. Mr. Musolff explained that there will be a Site Plan Review done for zoning purposes to insure that the requirements of the property are met.

Motion: Made by Keith Waltke, Chairman, and seconded by Michael Brothers to approve Special Land Use for 501 W. Lafayette.

Voting yes: Seven

Voting no: None

Absent: Eaton

Motion: Carried

Adjourned 7:46 PM



Kara Falkenstein, Recording Secretary

REGULAR MEETING – STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JULY 19, 2016
WIESLOCH RAUM – CITY HALL

Acting Chairman Jones called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Commissioners present: Waltke, Jones, Stage, Allen, Brothers
Commissioners absent: Mikulenas, Caywood, Eaton

Staff Present: Director of Community Development, Will Prichard; Recording Secretary, Kara Falkenstein

Also present: Mikel Currier, Jones Petrie Rafinski (JPR); Tom Ward, Bloom General Contracting, Inc.; Kathy Jessup, Sturgis Journal

Action of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVAL of the minutes from the May 24, 2016 Special Meeting as presented.

Voting yea: Five Voting nay: None Absent: Mikulenas, Caywood, Eaton MOTION CARRIED

**Acting Chairman Jones presented the agenda item – Site Plan Review of Revisions –
Auto Park Ford – 1820 S. Centerville Road – Demolition/Redevelopment**

The property owner at 1820 S. Centerville Road, Auto Park Ford, is requesting a Site Plan Review of the revisions that have been made.

Acting Chairman Jones asked if there was a representative for the property and that they would approach the podium. Mikel Currier of Jones Petrie Rafinski (JPR) approached the podium. Mr. Currier reviewed the revisions that were made to the original plans for the Auto Park project. The layout is to be similar to the original plans, but the building will be more squared. An additional 100 ft. located at the back of the property will be included in the parcel. Auto Park will be closing the land acquisition with Morgan Olson in the near future. The acquisition will make a lot combination of all three parcels possible. Mr. Currier discussed that items requested by the City Engineer have been met. Mr. Currier reviewed that the new plans also include a car wash.

Acting Chairman Jones opened the Public Hearing related to the revisions of the Auto Park site plan.

There were no questions from the public.

Acting Chairman Jones closed the Public Hearing.

Moved by Commissioner Waltke and seconded by Commissioner Stage to approve the revisions made to the Auto Park site plan.

Voting yea: Five Voting nay: None Absent: Mikulenas, Caywood, Eaton MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.



Kara Falkenstein

Kara Falkenstein, Recording Secretary

**SPECIAL MEETING – STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2016
WIESLOCH RAUM – CITY HALL**

Acting Chairman Mikulenas called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Commissioners present: Waltke, Mikulenas, Caywood, Brothers, Jones, Eaton

Commissioners absent: Allen, Stage

Staff Present: Director of Community Development, Will Prichard; Recording Secretary, Kara Falkenstein; City Manager, Michael Hughes; City Engineer, Barry Cox

Also present: Toni Swope, Berkshire Hathaway; Jeanne Howard, Owner of 308 E. Chicago Rd.; Dave Hochstetler, Remax Elite Group; Kelly Bogen, Prospective buyer of 308 E. Chicago Rd.; Thomas Scheetz, Property owner of 306 E. Chicago Rd.; Thomas McLaughlin, Owner of McLaughlin & Co., located at 305 E. Chicago Rd.; Mary McLaughlin, 305 E. Chicago Rd.; Kathy Jessup, Sturgis Journal

Action of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVAL of the minutes from the July 19, 2016, Regular Meeting as presented.

Voting yea: Six Voting nay: None Absent: Allen, Stage MOTION CARRIED

Acting Chairman Mikulenas presented the first agenda item – Class “A” Non-Conforming Structure – 308 E. Chicago Road

The property owner at 308 E. Chicago Road, currently vacant, is requesting a Class “A” Non-Conforming Structure status.

Acting Chairman Mikulenas asked if there was a representative for the property and that they would approach the podium. Jeanne Howard, owner of the currently vacant property located at 308 E. Chicago Road, approached the podium. Ms. Howard explained that she had an interested party that would like to purchase the property at 308 E. Chicago Road from her. Ms. Howard was advised by her realtor, Toni Swope, to request a Class “A” Non-Conforming status for financing and insurance purposes. This status would allow the building to be rebuilt if something catastrophic were to happen to the building.

Acting Chairman Mikulenas opened the Public Hearing related to the request for a Class “A” Non-Conforming status.

Thomas McLaughlin, owner of McLaughlin & Co. located at 305 E. Chicago Road, urged the Planning Commission to do everything they can to help Ms. Bogen because it would be great to have her store in our downtown. Kelly Bogen, prospective buyer of 308 E. Chicago Rd., stated that she was advised to have the Class “A” Non-Conforming in place prior to purchasing the property from Ms. Howard. Mr. Mikulenas stated his assumption is that the Class “A” Non-Conforming status will stay with the building, even in the event that the building is sold. Mr. Prichard confirmed that Mr. Mikulenas’s assumption was correct.

Acting Chairman Mikulenas closed the Public Hearing.

Acting Chairman Mikulenas asked if there were any questions from the board.

Mr. Eaton asked if the status would stay with the building if the building becomes vacant for a period of time. Mr. Prichard explained that if the building were to be vacant for 12 months the status would be voided and the process would start all over again.

Motion: Made by Mr. Caywood, seconded by Mr. Eaton to approve the Class “A” Non-Conforming Structure status to 308 E. Chicago Road.

Voting yea: Six Voting nay: None Absent: Allen, Stage MOTION CARRIED

Acting Chairman Mikulenas presented the second agenda item – Site Plan Review of the City of Sturgis Softball complex

Acting Chairman Mikulenas asked if there was a representative for the property and that they would approach the podium. City Manager, Michael Hughes, approached the podium. Mr. Hughes explained that the prospective City of Sturgis Softball Complex will have a traditional four leaf clover setup. The complex will have portable fencing which will accommodate other types of fields if needed. A concession stand with bathrooms will be located in the middle of the complex. There will be lighting and irrigation for the fields also. Mr. Hughes stated that there are around 56 teams that are using the existing softball fields in Sturgis. The City’s primary goal for the prospective softball complex is for adult use.

Mr. Eaton inquired about the City’s sign budget. Mr. Hughes explained that it will not be electronic. Mr. Eaton stated he thought he might have a way to raise money for a sign. He would reach out to local merchants that may be willing to donate, in return for advertising. Mr. Hughes said the City could research more regarding the sign.

Mr. Hughes explained that the parking lot will be tight based on the original site plan. There has been public feedback regarding the site plan and there have been requests from many for wider parking spaces. The spectator space may be limited also. However, there will be bleachers and a grassy area for people to throw down blankets and watch the games.

Mr. Jones conveyed his concerns of only having one exit out. He fears that it could become a bottlenecked parking lot if everyone tries to leave at the same time. Mr. Hughes said that the City may look into an additional exit.

In summary, Mr. Mikulenas stated the boards concerns would be the parking lot, even though well thought out, may need revised, and the lack of spectator space.

Motion: Made by Mr. Caywood, seconded by Mr. Eaton: Approve site plan as submitted contingent upon Building Department and City Staff approval on the items listed below.

1. Final detail on new street
2. Storm water calculation approval
3. Sidewalk: Special assessment payment agreement
4. On-site parking requirements

Voting yea: Six Voting nay: None Absent: Allen, Stage MOTION CARRIED

Adjourned 8:14 PM

Kara Falkenstein

Kara Falkenstein, Recording Secretary

REGULAR MEETING – STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2016
WIESLOCH RAUM – CITY HALL

Acting Chairman Caywood called the meeting to order at 7:37 pm.

Commissioners present: Caywood, Stage, Eaton, Allen, Jones

Commissioners absent: Waltke, Mikulenas, Brothers

Staff present: Director of Community Development, Will Prichard; Recording Secretary, Kara Falkenstein; City Manager, Michael Hughes; City Engineer, Barry Cox

Also present: Kristian Foondle, MDOT Rail Project Manager; Tom Pawlowski, Michigan Southern Railroad; Chip Underwood, Michigan Southern Railroad; Jon Good, City of Sturgis Commissioner (At Large); Lori McClish, Property owner on Main Street; Roger Krontz, Owner of The Tool Shed; Terry Gump, 1609 Griffith; Virgil Taylor, 1625 Griffith; Levi Borkholder, 1615 Griffith; Kim Musolff, Sturgis DDA; Kathy Jessup, Sturgis Journal

Acting Chairman Caywood presented the first agenda item – MDOT Grade Crossing Closure Program

MDOT Office of Rail proposes a Grade Crossing Closure at the N. Clay rail intersection.

Acting Chairman Caywood asked if there was a representative and that they would approach the podium. Barry Cox, City of Sturgis Engineer, approached the podium and introduced MDOT Rail Project Manager, Kristian Foondle. Mr. Foondle explained the MDOT's Grade Crossing Closure Program; each year, 50 of the top candidates for closures are contacted. MDOT performs a statewide review of the grade crossings to determine which crossings have the lowest train speeds and the lowest exposure. The candidates then receive an offer from MDOT to proceed with a grade crossing closure. Municipalities that accept the offer will be awarded a maximum of \$150,000 to complete the grade crossing closure. However, the City of Sturgis, in acceptance of the offer, would qualify for a 25% bonus multi-closure award, as the Williams Street grade crossing closure was previously completed. The award would then total \$187,500. Mr. Foondle stressed that the closure is strictly an option, a local approval would be mandatory.

Acting Chairman Caywood opened the Public Hearing related to MDOT Grade Crossing Closure Program.

Jon Good, At Large City of Sturgis Commissioner, approached the podium. He explained that he had motioned at the September City of Sturgis Commission meeting for the MDOT Grade Crossing Closure Program to be brought before the Planning Commission. He felt that the closure would impact travel patterns within the city, which may have a direct effect on the Future Land Use. Mr. Good explained he was not particularly in favor of the closure, but felt it needed to be considered. Mr. Eaton asked what the Commission's wishes were regarding the closure. From the audience, Mr. Hughes explained that the Commission was given a similar presentation, and found it educational, but felt they would like input from the Planning Commission as it directly relates to the city's future. Mr. Hughes went on to say that a decision does not have to be reached by the Planning Commission, opinions could be provided regarding the closure. Mr. Foondle explained that MDOT follows a 6 month timeline from the original offer letter. Mr. Eaton asked Mr. Foondle if it would be out of line to ask for 60 to 90 days to research and review before making a final decision. Mr. Foondle responded 60 to 90 days would fall within their timeline and an extension could be granted if progress was being made.

Lori McClish, owner of a property located on Main Street approached the podium. Ms. McClish shared her concerns that a closure could create problems for the residents on Main Street. Main Street is comprised of a brick roadway, which is already in disrepair. If the Clay Street grade crossing closure were to be completed, Ms. McClish felt it could create more traffic on Main Street, which could lead to more disrepair. Mr. Eaton asked Ms. McClish whether she felt the 60 to 90 days, that he previously mentioned, would be an appropriate enough time to research traffic patterns, etc. and hold another public hearing. Ms. McClish agreed that would be appropriate.

Roger Krantz, owner of The Tool Shed located at 401 St. Joseph Street, approached the podium. Mr. Krantz questioned whether, in order to open an additional railroad crossing, a railroad crossing would have to be closed within the city. Mr. Foondle explained that it would be dependent on what freight line and the purpose of the closure request. Mr. Foondle said there are 3 criteria that are reviewed when making a decision regarding a grade crossing closure: the necessity, the feasibility, and whether it is reasonably safe. Mr. Krantz explained he realized that the St. Joseph Street grade crossing was not on the agenda for closure, however, he is concerned that it could happen in the future if Franks Avenue grade crossing were to be opened. Mr. Krantz would not be in favor of a grade crossing closure at St. Joseph Street due to the direct impact it would have on his business and travel patterns for his customers and vendors.

Acting Chairman Caywood closed the Public Hearing.

Acting Chairman Caywood asked Commission members for any comments or concerns.

Mr. Allen felt he needed more information and would like more time to review. Mr. Eaton made a motion to allow the Planning Commission 60 to 90 days to review and return with a decision or opinion at that time.

The members agreed to further discuss the grade crossing closure at a later date and return a recommendation to the Commission within a 60 to 90 day period.

Acting Chairman Caywood presented the second agenda item – Non-Conforming Use – 110 N. Franks Ave.

The property owner at 110 N. Franks Ave. is requesting a Class “A” Non-Conforming Use status.

Acting Chairman Caywood asked if there was a representative for the property and that they would approach the podium. Eric Jones, property owner of 110 N. Franks Ave., approached the podium. Mr. Jones explained he owns and operates Michiana Corrugated, which is located at 110 N. Franks Ave. As a member of the Planning Commission he has witnessed many Non-Conforming Use status requests. In the future, Mr. Jones may sell the property and is being proactive to request a Non-Conforming Use status now. Acquiring the status should have a positive impact in any future sale of the property. Mr. Eaton showed concerns of the trends that are taking place in the area surrounding the property; trends that revolve around senior citizens. From the audience, Mr. Good explained that any future expansion on the property would be required to be brought before the Planning Commission. He didn’t feel a Class “A” Non-Conforming Use would change anything.

Acting Chairman Caywood opened the Public Hearing related to the request for a Class “A” Non-Conforming Use status.

Virgil Taylor, 1625 Griffith, approached the podium. Mr. Taylor asked why the Class “A” Non-Conforming Use status wasn’t requested when Mr. Jones originally purchased the property at 110 N. Franks Ave. Mr. Jones explained that 21 years ago the Non-Conforming status wasn’t required for financing or insurance purposes. However, due to current zoning laws, the requests have become more frequent.

Motion: Made by Mr. Eaton, seconded by Mr. Stage to approve the Class “A” Non-Conforming Use request.

Voting yea: Four Voting nay: None Abstaining: Jones Absent: Waltke, Mikulenas, Brothers MOTION CARRIED

Action of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVAL of the minutes from the September 8, 2016, Special Meeting as presented.

Adjourned 8:22 pm

Kara falckenstein

Kara Falkenstein, Recording Secretary

REGULAR MEETING – STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2016
WIESLOCH RAUM – CITY HALL

Acting Chairman Mikulenas called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Commissioners present: Mikulenas, Stage, Allen, Jones, Brothers

Commissioners absent: Waltke, Caywood, Eaton

Staff present: Director of Community Development, Will Prichard; Recording Secretary, Kara Falkenstein; City Manager, Michael Hughes; Assistant City Manager, Andrew Kuk; City Engineer, Barry Cox

Also present: Jeremy Gump, Inquire Partners/Block 14, Inc.; Kathy Jessup, Sturgis Journal

Action of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVAL of the minutes from the October 18, 2016, Regular Meeting as presented

Acting Chairman Mikulenas presented the first agenda item – MDOT Grade Crossing Closure Program

MDOT Office of Rail proposes a Grade Crossing Closure at N. Clay Street.

Acting Chairman Mikulenas asked if there was a representative and that they would approach the podium. Barry Cox, City of Sturgis Engineer, approached the podium and recapped MDOT's Grade Crossing Closure Program; each year, 50 of the top candidates for closures are contacted. MDOT performs a statewide review of the grade crossings to determine which crossings have the lowest train speeds and the lowest exposure. The candidates then receive an offer from MDOT to proceed with a grade crossing closure. Municipalities that accept the offer will be awarded a maximum of \$150,000 to complete the grade crossing closure. However, the City of Sturgis, in acceptance of the offer, would qualify for a 25% bonus multi-closure award, as the Williams Street grade crossing closure was previously completed. The award would then total \$187,500. Mr. Cox highlighted the portion of the Commission packet that was not available at the October meeting. The highlighted portion included traffic studies and feedback from a survey conducted regarding the William Street MDOT Grade Crossing Closure that was done in 2010.

Mr. Allen inquired whether the closure would include pedestrian crossings and sidewalks, Mr. Cox confirmed that they would be included. Mr. Brothers inquired whether there was any feedback from industry located adjacent to the Magnolia rail crossing, as the crossing would be an option for closure. Mr. Cox explained that the Magnolia Street crossing would not be a prime crossing to close due to the expansive amount of industry located in that area.

Mr. Mikulenas recapped, pointing out that there are many options, but closure at the N. Clay crossing would make the most sense and be the best solution. Mr. Cox reminded the Commission members that MDOT's Grade Crossing Closure offer is valid for one year only. The cost benefit of a closure diminishes once the offer expiration is reached. Future review and approval of the crossing would result in a substantially lower monetary gain. Mr. Stage asked Mr. Cox if he felt like the Clay Street closure would have the least amount of negative impact. Mr. Cox confirmed that that was his belief. Mr. Mikulenas asked whether other routes will be able to handle the overflow that closure may cause. Mr. Cox explained that overflow would be dependent on destination, but all would be local traffic. Mr. Mikulenas inquired whether Mr. Cox felt that there would be any undue impact against anyone. Mr. Cox confirmed the closure would have an impact, could be positive or negative.

Mr. Cox then gave a summary of his own thoughts on the closure proposal. He explained that at some point Franks Avenue will likely extend and would require the grade crossing located along Franks to reopen. At that point in time, the City of Sturgis would be forced to close another crossing located within the city. Mr. Cox felt that if the city must take action, the greatest monetary benefit would be the best solution. The grant money would be used for expenditures, the balance could be used for transportation.

Acting Chairman Mikulenas opened the Public Hearing related to MDOT Grade Crossing Closure Program.

Jeremy Gump, representative from Inquire Partners/Block 14, Inc., came to the podium. Mr. Gump explained that he owns many properties in the North Clay Street railroad crossings adjacent neighborhoods. He feels that, though it may inconvenience some of the neighborhood residents in the beginning, the closure may make the neighborhoods safer. Mr. Gump feels the closure could help his long term goal of revitalizing the neighborhoods adjacent to the railroad tracks.

Acting Chairman Mikulenas closed the Public Hearing.

Will Prichard, Director of the Community Development Department explained to the Commission that there were three outcomes possible for the Commission to decide from, they were:

1. Make recommendation to the City Commission regarding MDOT's Grade Crossing Closure proposal
2. Hold a Public Hearing for Planning Commission or send recommendation to the City Commission for them to hold a Public Hearing
3. Ask for more time to research/review the information

Mr. Mikulenas asked if it was required for Public Notices to be mailed out if a Public Hearing was to be held. Mr. Prichard confirmed it is necessary to notify anyone that owns a home or lives within 300 ft. of the railroad crossing. Mr. Prichard explained that Public Notice was mailed and posted in the Sturgis Journal, for the current and previous meeting, regarding the closure proposal. Mr. Allen inquired whether anyone felt that the City Commission would hold any more weight on the situation if the Planning Commission members were to recommend they hold a Public Hearing. Mr. Mikulenas responded, saying no.

Mr. Cox explained that the Planning Commission was not involved in the decision making process to close the grade crossing at William Street in 2010. However, Mr. Cox said that he could try to obtain public feedback regarding the N. Clay Street closure proposal, if it would please the Commission. Mr. Stage pointed out he felt that the Commission might be the only one questioning the closure proposal, based on the lack of public turnout.

Mr. Mikulenas then asked to hear a motion.

Motion: Made by Stage, seconded by Jones, to make a recommendation to the City Commission members to accept MDOT's Grade Crossing Closure proposal.

Voting yea: Five

Voting nay: None

Absent: Waltke, Caywood, Eaton

MOTION CARRIED

Acting Chairman Mikulenas presented the second agenda item – Master Plan Update

Will Prichard, Director of Community Development Department, explained that an update to the Master Plan is now due. Update requirements will be presented to outside firms, bids will be accepted. Once a firm is hired, work on the update will begin, preferably in spring of 2017. The current Master Plan took approximately two years to complete, beginning in 2008, and completed in 2010. Andrew Kuk, Assistant City Manager, then explained that there are three new points that are required to be covered in the Master Plan update, these are: Redevelopment Strategy, Downtown Plan, and Economic

Development and Marketing Strategy. These three additional requirements integrate the Master Plan with Economic Development.

Mr. Stage recalled his experience with the previous Master Plan update. He remembered there being subcommittees that researched different parts of the city. He felt the subcommittees were not effective, as no one would show up to do the meetings. Mike Hughes, City Manager, explained that the firm that will conduct the Master Plan update will be able to lend guidance and figure out what items would need to be addressed.

Mr. Mikulenas then asked if the Commission members had any objections to the Community Development Department seeking bids from firms to conduct the Master Plan update, no one objected.

Adjourned 8:19 PM

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kara Falkenstein". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Kara Falkenstein, Recording Secretary

**REGULAR MEETING – STURGIS PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2016
WIESLOCH RAUM – CITY HALL**

Acting Chairman Mikulenas called the meeting to order at 7:46 PM.

Commissioners present: Mikulenas, Stage, Allen, Jones, Brothers

Commissioners absent: Waltke, Caywood, Eaton

Staff present: Director of Community Development, Will Prichard; Recording Secretary, Kara Falkenstein

Also present: Kathy Jessup, Sturgis Journal

Action of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVAL of the minutes from the November 15, 2016, Regular Meeting as presented

Acting Chairman Mikulenas presented the first agenda item – 104 E. Hatch – Zoning District Change

The owner of 104 E. Hatch proposes a Zoning District Change.

Acting Chairman Mikulenas explained that the property located at 104 E. Hatch has split parcel zoning. He prefaced the discussion with a question of how split parcel zoning might have happened. Mr. Prichard explained that, in reviewing the map of the City of Sturgis as a whole, it appears that when the boundaries for the Business Highway 2 were established, the lines were cut straight across. The map does not take into consideration individual parcel boundaries. In the future, the map may need to be reviewed and parcel boundaries, in respect to zoning, may need to be clarified.

Acting Chairman Mikulenas opened the Public Hearing. No public comment. Public Hearing was closed.

Mr. Prichard explained that the owner resides in Texas and was not able to be present for the meeting. The owner's future plans are to resell the property or build upon it to make an income property. The owner is requesting a zoning district change for resale purposes, as potential buyers are not pleased with the split parcel zoning. The owner's request is for the property, in its entirety, to be zoned as Residential 4 (R-4).

Mr. Brothers asked whether the previous proposals for restrictions on the placement of duplexes had been approved. Mr. Prichard responded that duplexes and multi-family homes are not permitted in any zoning district, with the exception of R4.

Acting Chairman Mikulenas closed discussion.

Acting Chairman Mikulenas then requested a motion.

Motion: Made by Jones, seconded by Stage, to approve the request for a Zoning District Change to Residential 4 for the property located at 104 E. Hatch Street.

Voting yea: Five Voting nay: None Absent: Waltke, Caywood, Eaton MOTION CARRIED
Acting Chairman Mikulenas inquired if there was any other business to be discussed at the meeting.

Mr. Allen responded with a request that he had received from Chairman Waltke, who was absent from the meeting. The request was for the Community Development Department to address a trailer that he had noted was parked in the front yard of the property located at 806 S. Lakeview. Mr. Prichard responded that the department would address the situation.

Mr. Prichard then reviewed an item of discussion that had been presented to him at the Community Development Department, the possibility for Urban Farms within the City of Sturgis. He explained that there is an individual interested in placing an Urban Farm within the City and wanted to know if the Planning Commission had any feedback regarding the possibility. The Commission seemed receptive to the idea and tabled it for further discussion at a future meeting.

Adjourned 7:55 PM

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kara Falkenstein". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Kara Falkenstein, Recording Secretary