



Bronson Planning Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
June 18, 2018- 6:00 PM
Bronson City Hall- 141 S. Matteson Street, Bronson MI 49028

Members present: Megan McConn; Betty Rissman; Bill Earl; Matt Watkins; Chad Davis

Members absent: None

Staff Present: City Manager Brandon Mersman; City Attorney Charles Lillis

Chair B. Rissman called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

Motion by B. Earl seconded by M. Watkins to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2018 meeting. Motion carried.

New Business:

A. Rental Housing Ordinance- Ordinance #206

City Manager Mersman presented the draft rental housing ordinance (ordinance #206) to the Planning Commission. Mersman explained the ordinance provides for the registration and regulation of rental housing located within the City; allows inspections; and provides penalties for violation of the ordinance. Mersman stated the ordinance is a mix of the Colon Township and City of Three Rivers rental housing ordinances.

The City estimates there are between 300 and 350 rental houses in the City based on the number of properties which do not currently have a principle residency exemption ((PRE)- formerly called a homestead exemption). Mersman stated a public hearing had been advertised and scheduled for this meeting.

Mersman added that there are a couple of minor changes to add to the ordinance including; the International Property Maintenance Code will be the code under the ordinance, the District Court will be where civil litigation will be handled, and the City Council will serve as the appeals board. Mersman stated one thing for the Planning Commission to consider is to offer an exemption for families that allow a family member to reside in a home if there is no payment of rents beyond paying the standard utilities. The Planning Commission discussed the exemption for families and agreed that this was something they wanted to recommend to be in the ordinance. The Planning Commission also discussed the implementation dates and enforcement dates under the ordinance.

Public Hearing:

Motion by B. Earl seconded by M. Watkins to open the public hearing at 6:10 pm.

Fire Chief Scott Wilber- Chief Wilber discussed the importance of a rental ordinance from the Fire Department's perspective. Chief Wilber said it is very common for them to encounter residences without smoke detectors or with no batteries in the detectors. Chief Wilber also



gave several examples of residences where they encountered electrical issues which posed a significant fire hazard. Chief Wilber also stated they have come across windows that are inoperable and cannot be opened or have other means of egress blocked. Wilber stated that 3 in 5 fire deaths are because there are no smoke detectors present. Wilber also stated that the Fire Department will install 10 year smoke detectors for free through a Red Cross program and that all they need to do is call the Fire Department.

Attorney Lillis also stated that beyond smoke detectors and electrical issues, railings are also a big problem in rental units.

Chair B. Rissman read aloud a letter from Gary & Kathy Crandall at 220 N. Douglas Street stating they are in favor of a rental ordinance in order to protect the City's aging housing stock and to help keep renters safe. The letter also stated that well maintained properties in the City will help to protect the local tax base and have a positive impact on neighboring properties.

Motion by B. Earl seconded by C. Davis to close the public hearing and to go back into regular session at 6:16 pm.

C. Davis made a motion to recommend the rental housing ordinance to the City Council with the changes discussed, seconded by M. Watkins. Motioned carried.

B. Revoke Special Land Use Permit- 300 Mill Street- M&M Core

Manager Mersman discussed that M&M Core was sent a letter with deadlines to bring the site into compliance with the most pressing violations/non-compliant items from their Special Land Use Permit. This included reducing the number of cars to at or below 75 as stipulated in the permit, constructing the 8 foot high fence as shown on the site plan, and to limit loud noises to standard business hours. Mersman stated that the letter also included that the City needed to see progress on cleaning up the M&M Core site at 190 Industrial Ave.

Mersman stated the owners contacted him for a couple of extensions for bringing the site at 300 Mill Street into compliance and extra time was granted. Mersman explained that those deadlines have since passed and the City has received no recent updates. Only the front and part of one side of the fence has been completed and the required front gate has also not been installed. Mersman explained that there has been no recent progress on the fence and the site at 190 Industrial Ave. has seen some progress but there is a ways to go yet. Mersman also explained that since the property at 300 Mill Street has so many vehicles onsite, they have made no progress on getting their vehicle storage areas paved.

Mersman told the Commission he is looking for direction from the Planning Commission on how to proceed. Mersman stated that options include moving to revoke the permit and seek an injunction through the court system to have both sites cleaned up or the Planning Commission may also elect to give them more time.



Attorney Lillis suggested instructing the City Manager to send another letter to the property owner stating that revocation of the permit has been discussed and that the Planning Commission will act on that revocation at a future meeting if they are not fully in compliance at that time.

C. Davis discussed that we do not want to lose businesses in town and that they are trying to get the site in compliance but agreed that they have not done so within the given timeframes. Chair Rissman stated that they brought cars onsite before they had their permit and that the Planning Commission needs to show that we are serious about meeting the conditions of the Special Land Use Permit. Chair B. Rissman stated that during the meeting the owners said they were planning to pave the area already and that it would not be a problem. C. Davis stated that giving them more time will show the City gave them every opportunity to bring it into compliance. M. Watkins asked if the Planning Commission has the ability to grant more time at that meeting if they have made significant progress. M. Watkins asked if the noise complaint was valid and if it was still an ongoing issue. B. Earl suggested having Police do more random checks for noise. C. Davis asked Chief Wilber about the fire concerns with the building. Chief Wilber stated that the site has been inspected and has a suppression system and that there were no violations at the site.

Motion by B. Earl to instruct the City Manager to send a letter that on July 30th the business owner needs to show compliance with the Special Land Use Permit or the Planning Commission will revoke the permit. Seconded by C. Davis. Motion carried.

Motion by B. Earl to adjourn the meeting; seconded by M. McConn. Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 PM.