

Planning commission

Members present: Jim Beneke, Mia Divecha, Katie Merten, Tom Weber, Jan Youngquist

Members absent: Matt Eckholm, Sylvie Hyman

Staff present: Gary Morrison, Sean Walther, Marcus Hansen

Guest: Karl Eicher, applicant and owner of Haggard Barrel Brewing

1. **Call to order – roll call.**
2. **Approval of minutes – August 7, 2024, Regular meeting and Study Session minutes**

Commissioner Eckholm noted a correction related to the condominium issue, which should read: “Commissioner Eckholm added there is legislation proposed for more housing reform at the state level to help push costs down for many people. Speaking to representatives could help elevate the condominium building issue with a resolution on future housing reform legislation.”

Commissioner Beneke noted a correction on page 7 that should read: “Commissioner Beneke stated he still has concerns that the zoning changes do not promote affordable owner-occupied housing enough.”

Commissioner Beneke added a correction on page 8 which should read: “Commissioner Beneke asked that staff outline more how the zoning changes could promote affordable owner-occupied housing.”

It was moved by Commissioner Weber, seconded by Commissioner Merten, to approve the Aug. 7, 2024, regular meeting and study session minutes with corrections. The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Hearings.**
- 3a. **Zoning Text Amendment – breweries with taprooms**
Applicant: Karl Eicher
Case No: 24-17-ZA

Marcus Hansen, Community Development Intern, presented the report.

Commissioner Weber asked related to IG and why taprooms are not permitted at this time. Mr. Hansen stated it was likely because no one else had requested it.

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Mr. Walther added the city initiated allowing taprooms in the business district and then with subsequent changes, they were initiated by the applicants to address their site and zoning district, and an overall review had not yet been conducted, but a comprehensive review is planned next year.

Commissioner Beneke asked if any other current breweries in the IG could be affected. Mr. Hansen stated no, in the general industrial area this is the first brewery. He added any future breweries that come into IG zones will be able to have taprooms.

Chair Divecha asked about the decision not to limit the total barrel production to 20,000 and to rely on the limit of the state which is 250,000. She asked for staff to explain that decision as it would leave inconsistencies between the districts.

Mr. Walther stated previously this district allows breweries of any size. The cap on production relates to state requirements for taprooms, limited to microbreweries. Since the city code changes were initially adopted, the cap at the state has changed multiple times, and the city's zoning codes have not kept up with that. He added this has not caused any concerns for existing breweries and that would also be reviewed as part of the broader update to the commercial and industrial zoning districts, but this change today will allow this business to continue to operate in the IG and to add a taproom.

Chair Divecha opened the public hearing.

There were no speakers from the public.

Chair Divecha closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Youngquist stated this is important for small businesses in St. Louis Park and noted the IG zone is the only place where a taproom is not allowed, which puts this brewery owner at an extreme disadvantage in St. Louis Park and the metro area as most general industrial zones with breweries do allow taprooms.

Commissioner Youngquist added when the zoning code is changed, the city has to look at all implications to the zoning district. She noted the typical hours a taproom is open- usually evenings and weekends- is the opposite of industrial uses in these zones, so potential concerns about trucks and other industrial items are reduced. She stated this could provide the potential for shared parking in the future and she said she will support this.

Commissioner Merten stated they do allow distilleries to operate cocktail rooms so why not allow breweries to operate taprooms, noting it makes sense and she will support it.

Commissioner Weber thanked Mr. Hansen for presenting and invited him to return to St. Louis Park in the future.

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It was moved by Commissioner Merten, seconded by Commissioner Youngquist, to approve the zoning text amendment allowing taprooms in the IG general industrial zoning district as recommended by staff. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Other Business – none.

5. Communications.

Mr. Walther noted following the regular meeting there is a study session on the zoning code update and uses allowed in the proposed zoning code districts. He added several boards and commissions have openings for new members and the council is scheduled to make appointments by Oct. 21, and as of Nov. 1, the outcome of those appointments will be known.

Mr. Walther stated an appeal of the BOZA zoning decision was received and will be brought forward in November.

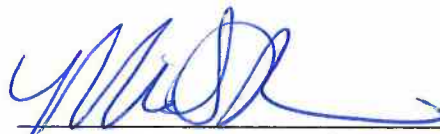
Mr. Walther stated the next planning commission meeting is Sept. 18 with a proposed addition at Aquila Elementary School. He stated the October meeting will be on Oct. 9 due to Rosh Hoshana.

Mr. Walther stated that the planning commission's presentation to the council will be on October 28, along with all of the other statutory boards and commissions, including the planning commission, BOZA, and the Housing Authority.

6. Adjournment – 6:16 p.m.



Sean Walther, liaison



Mia Divecha, chair member

