

**NORMAN PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**

MARCH 12, 2015

The Planning Commission of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in Regular Session in the Council Chambers of the Norman Municipal Building, 201 West Gray Street, on the 12th day of March 2015. Notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Norman Municipal Building and online at <http://www.normanok.gov/content/boards-commissions> at least twenty-four hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Chair Sandy Bahan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

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Item No. 1, being:

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Andy Sherrer
Erin Williford
Sandy Bahan
Jim Gasaway
Dave Boeck
Chris Lewis
Cindy Gordon

MEMBERS ABSENT

Roberta Pailes
Tom Knotts

A quorum was present.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Susan Connors, Director, Planning &
Community Development
Jane Hudson, Principal Planner
Roné Tromble, Recording Secretary
Leah Messner, Asst. City Attorney
Larry Knapp, GIS Analyst II
Terry Floyd, Development Coordinator
David Riesland, Traffic Engineer
Drew Norlin, Asst. Development Coordinator

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Item No. 10, being:

O-1415-35 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA AMENDING CHAPTER 18 (SIGN CODE), SECTION 18-308, FESTIVAL OR PUBLIC EVENTS BANNERS, TO ALLOW ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL OF LIMITED LICENSES IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY; AND PROVIDING FOR THE SEVERABILITY THEREOF.

ITEMS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:

1. Staff Report
2. Attachment A – Limited License Agreements Granted for Festival or Public Event Banners 2010-2014
3. Ordinance No. O-1415-35 Annotated

PRESENTATION BY STAFF:

1. Susan Connors – We allow banners, and you've probably seen them around the City, for all our festivals and public events and we allow them for not-for-profit organizations. What the process is currently is that these need to go to City Council for approval, and they don't come to this body, but they do go to City Council. What has occurred over the years is that they are continuously the same organizations that come. They put them in the exact same locations around the City and nothing changes. City Council has never denied them. It's a lot of paperwork and a lot of process for not too much gain or change. We had a meeting with the Council Business and Community Affairs committee and they indicated that we should come forward with a code amendment that would allow these to be done administratively, so the Planning Director, myself, or designee will be able to do this administratively. We will not change the paper process of the application, just simply it won't go through months – it takes about a month or a month and a half to get these processed. Sometimes that's hard because these organizations, without a lot of staff help, don't have a lot of time ahead of it. So it really won't change anything from the outside, but it really will help in the processing. That's what is before you this evening.

2. Chris Lewis – Susan, I do have a question. In light of recent events – and this is just for sake of conversation. What if a sign came before the staff that was very controversial – how would that be handled?

Ms. Connors – You mean the content?

Mr. Lewis – For content.

Ms. Connors – Well, of course, we could deny it.

Mr. Lewis – Do we have a set of guidelines that set out what a sign can contain or – maybe, because controversial would be ...

Ms. Connors – We don't, but I think that we would consult with the Legal Department if there was something controversial. And it has to be a not-for-profit organization. That's one of the constraints on this. We've never had that come up before, but I do believe that I could not approve it and then it would come – oh, the Sign Code goes to the Board of Adjustment, I believe, for appeals, depending – maybe this body. I'm sorry, I don't have that – I'm pretty sure there's an appeals process.

Mr. Lewis – The only reason I ask is because some very odd things stir up this City and we saw less than two years ago a room that was packed and a young man that took his life the day after a Council meeting. And so I'm thinking what rules are in place and what body, other than an elected body, have the ability to actually talk thoroughly about something that's controversial, because everyone's values are different. I'm just wondering if that sole responsibility lies with one person or one staff or – that's my concern. I don't want us to go down a road that it might be better that an elected body still remain responsible for this task.

Ms. Connors – I think, given what we've had for my six years here – never had that issue come before us and, if it did, and it was denied at a staff level, there's an appeal process.

3. Andy Sherrer – So you're confirming, then, that there is an appeal process?

Ms. Connors – Yes.

Mr. Sherrer – That would go before the Board of Adjustment.

Ms. Connors – Actually, I think it would come here or to City Council. The Sign Code, I think, appeals would come here or to the City Council.

Mr. Sherrer – It's either – or it's an or – that's what I was ...

Ms. Connors – I'm sorry, I don't think she knows, either.

Leah Messner – Terry is pulling the exact provision, but I believe that there are some – the Sign Code is a little bit split. There are some appeals that go to the Board of Adjustment. For example, we just had a billboard by Braums on Robinson on the west side that went to the Board of Adjustment for height and size. Yes, a variance for the Board of Adjustment. It may be that, because it's not specifically called out in this section where the appeal goes, that this might be something that we want to add in there. A provision that said an appeal from a decision of the Planning Director would go to City Council, and then we could write in there specifically if there's a question as to whether the content meets the criteria in the ordinance, which is whether the sign is of a legitimate public benefit to the community at large.

Mr. Sherrer – I wouldn't want to speak for the other Commissioners, but I think that would be a great addition.

Ms. Bahan – I think it needs to be there.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

None

DISCUSSION AND ACTION BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION:

Andy Sherrer moved to recommend adoption of Ordinance No. O-1415-35 to the City Council, as amended to add a provision for appeal to City Council. Chris Lewis seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion, a vote on the motion was taken with the following result:

YEAS	Andy Sherrer, Erin Williford, Sandy Bahan, Dave Boeck, Jim Gasaway, Chris Lewis, Cindy Gordon
NAYES	None
MEMBERS ABSENT	Roberta Pailes, Tom Knotts

Ms. Tromble announced that the motion, to recommend adoption of Ordinance No. O-1415-35 as amended to the City Council, passed by a vote of 7-0.

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