

Agenda
Joint Meeting
Baltic P&Z and Baltic City Council
October 26, 2022 7 PM
Baltic City Hall 130 St. Olaf Ave.

The Baltic Planning & Zoning Board, along with the Baltic City Council, met jointly on Wednesday, October 26 at 7 pm in the Baltic City Hall.

Answering roll call were Mayor Deb McIsaac, Alderman and P&Z Member Ryan Sinding, Alderman and P&Z Member Travis Schreurs, Alderman Brian McGreevy, Alderwoman Nikki Oien, P&Z Members Deb Murphy and Nate Vrchota, and P&Z Chairman Ed Wilson. Also present were City Attorney John Hughes, Finance Officer Linda Hunnel, Community Relations Manager Lacey Branham, Maintenance Superintendent Ryan Fods, ISG Engineer Justin Heim, and Andy Grocott and Barry Sackett of Goosman Law Firm.

Mayor McIsaac led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Tony Lee-Proposed Sewer Main

Tony Lee explained his preliminary plans of changing his sewer line as it has collapsed by the old school and is undersized. Chairman Wilson said a six-inch line would not need manholes but could not be shared with other services. An eight-inch line would need manholes but could be shared with other business or homes. Either way, the sewer main would be the property of Mr. Lee's and he would be allowed to charge a fee to whomever wished to tap into the eight-inch line. City Attorney John Hughes said this would need an easement agreement and the private sewer main responsibility would stay with the property. Mr. Lee said he would obtain bids for installing an 8" sewer line with the necessary manholes.

b. Lot 74-No discussion.

c. School Board Letter- Mayor McIsaac went over a timeline of leading up to the Baltic School Board letter to the City & PZ Committee. Regarding school and city communication, there was ongoing conversation after the July 5 rain event between Ryan Fods, Mayor McIsaac and Superintendent Sittig, resulting in a meeting on September 8, 2022. Many matters were discussed including the erosion issues involving the development, city and school property.

Regarding the city and DANR, in April 2022 DANR received the initial citizen complaint. DANR site visits were conducted in June, July and October. The city has had ongoing conversations with the developer and concerning development erosion issues. On October 26th a Zoom meeting was held with DANR officials Kelli Buscher & Jill Riedel, Mayor McIsaac, P&Z Chairman Ed Wilson, ISG Engineer Justin Heim, City Attorney John Hughes, and Barry Sackett & Andy Grocott of Goosman Law Firm.

The SD DANR in the October 26 Zoom meeting advised the participants that Murphy's Pond and the surface waters draining into Murphy's Pond are State Waters and the ongoing lack of erosion control and sediment flowing into the discharge channel and culverts from Grant Park and through the property owned by the School District are in violation of state law and an environmental issue. The DANR confirmed that state laws are not being followed. City Attorney John Hughes stated that the city has every right to stop a project to protect the taxpayers. He continued to explain neither the developer nor the school district can allow pollution via sediment into Murphy's Pond, which is on city property and constitutes State Waters.

Ryan Sinding made the following motion:

The city is requiring the developer to make a public statement to both the school and the city in three parts;

1. Clarifying that it is the state DANR requiring the developer to clean up of both the school and city properties and future sediment downflow needs to cease.
2. The developer needs to clarify that the city's intent was simply to invoke their fiduciary responsibility to protect our taxpayers, public safety, and our city's environment. They must acknowledge that the city is neither anti-development nor do they wish harm on any present or future citizens.
3. The developer will request the school to publicly retract their uninformed and false statements regarding the city, specifically referencing their letter.

McGreevy seconded the motion.

P&Z Member Deb Murphy asked if a deadline could be inserted into the motion. City Attorney Hughes said the state will issue deadlines. The question was asked if there will be a public meeting with the City of Baltic and the DANR. Mayor McIsaac will check into a meeting. The City Attorney also received from the DANR a 100-page binder of documents that were not provided by the developer or its attorneys to the City. Hughes said many items are easily fixable, but nonetheless should have been communicated to both the school and city. Previous developments, namely Baltic Heights and Valley View, went through the approval process with the DENR and the city council. P&Z Chairman Ed Wilson stated that building permits were suspended to resolve these issues quickly. Mayor McIsaac noted that the city has incorrectly been put in a bad light and we need to 'right the ship'. City Attorney Hughes commented that there are standards to be applied, basic to any residential development. Hughes also stated that gossip and slander should be challenged by the city and all citizens.

Ryan Sinding called the question. The joint members voted on the motion. All voted aye, motion passed.

- d. Phillips Crossing\Grant Park Addition Mayor McIsaac said there was no response at this time to the agenda item. The binder from the DANR had just been received and the much-awaited drainage plan hadn't been received until the day before, making any decisions premature. Mayor McIsaac assured the citizens that all public documents involved will be posted on the city's website for those interested to stay up-to-date and make informed decisions. Jason Pittman, an architect for the Baltic School System asked if there was any truth to a rumor he had heard concerning the city not issuing any building permits within the city. This is untrue. The city has suspended building permits to Grant Park Capital and Phillips Crossing only.

There being no further business before the joint council and board, Sinding made a motion to adjourn at 8:14 PM. Vrchota seconded. Motion carried, all voting aye.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda D. Hunnel
Finance Officer