

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a meeting of the Planning Commission in and for the City of Albany, Stearns County, Minnesota, was called to order by Chairman Adam Rushmeyer at 6:30 o'clock in the evening on Monday, May 2, 2016 in the Council Room at 400 Railroad Avenue for the said City.

Other Planning Commission members present for the meeting were: Joseph Wedel, and Keith Heitzman. Will Seiler and Todd Horton was absent. Councilor John Greer, Planning Commission Liaison, was present for the meeting.

Others present for the meeting: Greg Johnson, Superintendent, Albany Area Schools, and Ryan Breitbach, President, Breitbach Construction Company.

Chairman Adam Rushmeyer called for any additions or corrections to the minutes of April 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Greer noted that Robert Rego, Architect, is with the firm of Rego & Youngquist and not Anderson Johnson Associates. Mr. Rushmeyer hearing no others declared the minutes of April 5<sup>th</sup> approved.

Pursuant to due notice, at 6:32 PM, Chairman Adam Rushmeyer called a public hearing into session on a request by the Albany Area Schools, 30 Forest Avenue, for a variance to increase the maximum height of thirty-five (35) feet to fifty-one (51) feet to allow for the construction of a new Auditorium. A proper notice was published in the Albany Enterprise on April 20th and no written comments were received. Mr. Breitbach appeared before the Board to inform the Board that with the exception of the auditorium, all of the proposed building additions are within the building height limit per the City Ordinance. Mr. Breitbach noted that due to the tiered seating in the auditorium, the current design proposes a building height of forty-two (42) feet +/- and the walls at the stage rigging area have a height of approximately fifty-one (51) feet. Mr. Greer questioned if there will be electric motors to raise and lower the curtains in the rigging area and whether the Albany Fire Chief had any comments for the Board to consider. Mr. Breitbach informed the Board that there will be electric motors in the rigging area and a sprinkling system is present throughout the building. Mr. Wedel noted that when he was fire chief the main concern of the fire department was whether buildings greater than thirty-five (35) feet were going to be used for human occupancy being the department has minimal equipment to extricate individuals from structures exceeding the height limit. Mr. Wedel noted that in the past the City has approved structures greater than thirty-five (35) feet in height when the structures are unoccupied or infrequent individual use. Mr. Greer questioned whether or not the ordinance should be amended to reference non-occupied or infrequent human occupancy if this has been the past practice of the City. Mr. Schneider informed the Board that he spoke to the fire chief who reviewed the building proposal and had no objection to the height of the auditorium. Chairman Adam Rushmeyer closed the public hearing at 6:40 PM. After due discussion, a motion was made by Joseph Wedel and seconded by Keith Heitzman to recommend to the Council that the variance to increase the maximum height of thirty-five (35) feet to fifty-one (51) feet to allow for the construction of a new Auditorium be approved as per the following findings:

1. The addition will not adversely affect any abutting property owners.
2. The variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare.
3. The addition does not negatively affect the traffic flow within the off-street parking lot.
4. Building will conform to State Building Code requirements.
5. Any other conditions that may be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council.
6. The rigging area to be sprinkled.
7. Fire Chief to provide written comment on request for file.

All voted for the motion and it carried.

Chairman Adam Rushmeyer adjourned the meeting at 6:42 PM.

Tom Schneider  
Clerk/Adm.