

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 Bill Scepaniak at 6:30 o'clock in the evening on Wednesday, September 13, 2023, at City Hall, 400 Railroad Avenue for the said City.

Other Planning Commission members present at the meeting were: Allison Dudek, Nate Ronning, Joseph Wedel, and Todd Horton. None were absent. Also present were Councilor Adam Rushmeyer, Liaison, Al Amdahl, resident, and Tom Schneider, Interim Administrator.

Chairman Bill Scepaniak called for any additions or corrections to the minutes of August 1st and hearing none declared them approved.

Pursuant to due notice, Chairman Bill Scepaniak called the public hearing into session at 6:32 o'clock in the evening on a request by Alan and Dana Amdahl, 250 6th Street, for a variance to relax the corner side yard requirement from twenty (25) feet (Section 80.15, Subd 6(d.2) to allow for the construction of a 24' x 28' detached garage. Mr. Amdahl appeared before the commission to inform the commission the purpose of his request is to demolish his old, detached garage and replace it with a new larger garage similar to what other properties have done in his neighborhood. Mr. Amdahl noted the new garage will be farther off the alley and Forest Avenue. Mr. Ronning questioned if any trees need to be removed from the property to allow for the construction. Mr. Amdahl noted there are no trees affected by the new construction. Mr. Horton noted the new garage will improve site lines for vehicles exiting the alley or traveling northerly to access Forest Avenue. Mr. Schneider noted a proper notice was published in the Star Post on August 30th and no written comments were received. Chairman Bill Scepaniak closed the public hearing at 6:38 PM. After due discussion, a motion was made by Joseph Wedel and seconded by Todd Horton to recommend to the council the request by Alan and Dana Amdahl, 250 6th Street, for a variance to relax the corner side yard requirement from twenty (25) feet (Section 80.15, Subd 6(d.2) to allow for the construction of a 24' x 28' detached garage be approved as per the following findings:

- The garage door will face Forest Avenue. Vehicles parked in front of the garage doors will not block the sidewalk on Forest Avenue.
- The variance request is consistent with the comprehensive plan in that it encourages new construction, removal of non-conforming structures, and increased property tax base.
- The variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare.
- The variance will allow homeowner additional storage.
- Approve residential exterior material for garage similar in color to home.
- As per Section 80.10, Subd. 3(b-iii) driveway shall be hard surface (concrete, or bituminous).
- The request is similar to characteristics and square footage of other properties in the neighborhood and not unusual.
- Many properties in the neighborhood also have detached garages in the rear yard due to small lot sizes.
- The variance is not sought solely for reasons of increased financial gain.
- The site line or visibility for motorists driving north in the alley to access Forest Avenue will be improved.
- Approve the variance request to relax the corner side yard requirement from twenty-five (25) feet to sixteen (16) feet.

All voted for the motion and it carried.

Mr. Schneider informed the commission that the city attorney is preparing a zoning ordinance amendment for the purpose of clarifying language relating to exterior material requirements in each zoning district. Mr. Schneider noted new exterior metal vertical non-exposed fasteners are being installed on residential exteriors to improve street views and a unique look to the front of the home; whereby language will be included in each district rather than referenced in one section. Mr. Schneider also noted that due to many hailstorms in the past few years' residents have requested permission to install metal roofs rather than

standard shingles. Mr. Schneider also noted corrugated, galvanized, or unfinished metal steel exterior siding and roof materials on residential homes will be prohibited. Mr. Wedel informed the commission as new building products and materials are provided to homeowners; the language must be amended from time to time. Chairman Bill Scepaniak, with the consensus of the commission, directed Mr. Schneider to schedule a public hearing to consider the aforementioned proposed amendment to the zoning ordinance.

Chairman Bill Scepaniak adjourned the meeting at 6:43 PM.

Tom Schneider
Interim Administrator