

READING PLANNING COMMISSION

CITY OF READING

December 9, 2023

Present: Christine Gollnick, Warren Bartels, Chad Penney, Chuck Hartshorn, Emma Everett.

Absent: Dale Cook, Emma Everett. Also present: Kim Blythe, Ben Wheeler, Jim Swafford, Bob Jepson, and Paul Blount.

Chris called a Public Hearing to order at 7:00 pm at Reading City Hall to consider an application for a Conditional Use Permit for a Retail Greenhouse at 218 Michigan Street. Kim shared that she had received verbal communication from Marie Alspaugh that she was ok with it. Paul Blount was ok with it. Jim explained that they would be growing plants, flowers, vegetables, etc. in the newly constructed greenhouse. They would not be using chemical fertilizers. It would be seasonal growing, not something for the fall and winter. Chris opened questions by the commission. Chuck wanted to know if the business would grow. Jim responded that they would not be competing with Walmart or Glei's. They would be operating a cold frame structure. Chad wanted to know if customers would be coming in off State Street. Jim answered, "I believe so." Chris wanted to know about hours. Jim answered, "Thursday through Sunday 8-5." Chris wanted everyone to realize that the sidewalk there on State Street is the one designated for school foot traffic to the west side of town. The sidewalk runs right by the greenhouse and where any retail traffic would be. Warren inquired about possible truck traffic. Jim responded that they would be using UPS for delivery of seeds which would probably come to the front of their house on Michigan Street as that is the address. Jim added that they would possibly expand with only one other similar size greenhouse if things go well. Warren inquired about needed parking. Jim said they would have a gravel parking lot. It was noted that State Street is not a real wide street. There were no further questions. Chris closed the Public Hearing on a motion by Chad, seconded by Emma, passed 6-0, at 7:40.

Chris then opened the Regular meeting. Warren read the minutes of the September meeting. On a motion by Betty, seconded by Chuck, they were approved 6-0. The agenda was approved as presented.

New Business: Conditional Use Permit consideration—Emma wondered whether granting the permit would set too much of a precedent, a concern of the commission's. It was noted that each application is considered separately. Warren noted that it is kind of a hybrid of a Home Occupation, and wondered about employees. Jim said it is going to be a family business as the boys would be helping out. Warren made a motion, seconded by Emma, to approve a Small Retail Greenhouse Business at 218 Michigan Street with the following stipulations: 1) gravel parking be available for 2-4 cars off of State Street, 2) no more than one similar greenhouse be

constructed in any future expansion, and 3) no chemicals/pesticides be used in the operation. The motion was approved 6-0.

A Compliance Permit was issued to:

David Robey, 103 E. Lincoln Street, for a shed.

The resignation of Mary Jo Pattie from the Commission was accepted with regrets. We thank her for her service while serving on the Commission.

Old Business: Municipal Parking Committee Report—Chuck said there was nothing major to report. It was noted that a big No Winter Parking on Streets sign was up. Kim shared that it was for the downtown only right now. There was feeling from many members that it should be for all around town.

Sidewalk Improvement Committee Report—Chad shared a map blueprint highlighting phase areas for improvement. Higher priority centered on routes to the schools. Warren shared a list of streets where improvement is needed. Many of the sidewalks there are in poor or nonexistent condition. This information was shared with Kim who will check further with Region 2 as to the availability of grant funds to help in this project.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 27, 2014. On a motion by Betty, seconded by Emma, carried 6-0, the meeting adjourned at 8:32.