

KENNEWICK PLANNING COMMISSION
May 6, 2024
MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Morris called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chairman Morris led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Community Planning Administrative Assistant Melinda Didier called the roll and found the following present:

PRESENT: Chairman Victor Morris, Vice Chairman Thomas Helgeson, Commissioners Tina Gregory, James Hemsstead (*All in person*); Commissioner Nikki Griffith (*attended remotely*).

ABSENT: Commissioners Lola Franklin, Ken Short (*Excused*).

STAFF: Steve Donovan, AICP Development Services Manager; Planner; Melinda Didier, Community Planning Administrative Assistant.

Four commissioners were present (Commissioner Griffith then arrived remotely at 6:52 pm after Public Hearing closed) and two absent; Ms. Didier declared a quorum was established.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of the minutes dated February 5, 2024.
- b. Approval of the agenda.
- c. Motion to enter Staff Report(s) into the Record.

MOTION: Commissioner Hempstead moved to approve the Consent Agenda; Vice Chair Helgeson seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: The motion passed on a unanimous roll call vote.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Chairman Morris made the following statement:

“Good evening and welcome to the May 6, 2024 Kennewick Planning Commission meeting.

It is important that everyone who wishes to do so has an opportunity to speak. Each person who has either signed-in (in person) or registered (via Zoom) will have one, three-minute opportunity to address the Planning Commission.

If you are attending via Zoom, please confirm your microphone has been unmuted before you begin your comments.

Please state your name and address for the record; once you begin your remarks the countdown timer will start. At the end of your time, please mute your microphone.

The order of the hearings shall be as follows:

1. Planning staff shall provide a staff report; the Commission may ask questions of staff;
2. The Applicant or Applicant's Representative(s) Presentation;
3. Testimony in Favor of the Request;
4. Testimony Either Neutral or Against the Request;
5. Final Applicant Comments;
6. Final Staff Comments;
7. Close the public hearing and discuss the request."

A. DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENT (DCA) #2024-0001:

Chairman Morris opened the public hearing at 6:34 pm for Development Code Amendment (DCA) #2024-0001, proposing to amend Kennewick Municipal Code Sections 18.12.130(4)(d) & 18.12.130(10)(e) by removing screening & setback requirements for specific types of mini-storages. Applicant is AMERCO Real Estate Company, c/o Lara Lakov, 2727 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85004.

1. Mr. Donovan described the application, presented the staff report, and recommended the Planning Commission forward a recommendation for denial of DCA-2024-0001 to City Council.

Planning Commission asked clarifying questions of staff: The location of this proposal (*proposal is not site-specific*).

2. Testimony of Applicant/Applicant's Representative: Casey Jones, 2707 88th St. Ct. NW, Gig Harbor, WA. Mr. Jones gave testimony to clarify in support of this request (*under contract for property here and currently in design phase; would very much like to be in the City; asked for "wiggle room" on the ordinance; stated the current ordinance adopted in 2007 has been good for Kennewick mini-storages; their product is more attractive; reluctant to invest in community with current ordinance*).
3. Testimony in Favor of the Request: Co-Applicant Lora Lakov, 18223 N. 16th Way, Phoenix, AZ. Ms. Lakov gave testimony remotely in support of this request: (*speaking to further support co-applicant Casey Jones; the facility will be screened; they are multi-million dollar and multi-story facilities, would like them set on the street/visible; will be a modern multi-story facility*).
4. Testimony Neutral/Against the Request: None
5. Testimony of Those Registered on Virtual Format: See testimony of Co-Applicant Lora Lakov, Testimony in Favor of the Request.
6. Applicant/Owner Final Testimony: None
7. Staff Final Comments: None
8. Planning Commission Questions of Staff: The current setback is 150 feet (*correct; the main issue for applicant is they don't want to be 150 feet from frontages in all commercial zoning districts where mini-storages allowed*).
9. Public Testimony Closed at 6:48 p.m.

MOTION: Commissioner Hempstead moved to concur with the findings and conclusions in staff report DCA-2024-0001 and recommend City Council DENY the request. Vice Chair Helgeson seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Gregory, Commissioner Hempstead, Vice Chair Helgeson asked clarifying questions of staff: Do we have a standard commercial setback *(No standard commercial setback if commercial-commercial other than building code requirements. Commercial-residential or commercial-less intense zone there are specific side & rear setbacks but no specific frontage setbacks)*; Would a site specific variance approach be more amenable *(This would be a major variance requiring proof of hardship - ensuring no special privileges granted & there is a topography issue. Would go to Hearing Examiner for public hearing)*; Is this code amendment request too broad due to not being site specific *(Staff concern with changing the overall code is having that commercial dead space and not getting commercial, retail etc. foot traffic)*. Commissioner Hempstead commented that although he welcomes change and dialogue regarding health, safety and economic viability of the citizens in the City of Kennewick, we need to make sure we're doing what's right long-term & sustainable, we're not ready to make this change and layer it across the entire City.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.

4. VISITORS NOT ON AGENDA:

- a. None

5. OLD BUSINESS:

- a. City Council Action Updates – None for Planning action; new City Manager Erin Erdman will be introduced at tomorrow's City Council meeting. There will be an item for the May 20, 2024 Planning Commission meeting.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Mr. Donovan said the 2024 Comp Plan application window closed, with four applications received; the first Comp Plan presentation to Planning Commission will be possibly the first meeting in June.

7. REPORTS, COMMENTS, OR DISCUSSION OF COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF:

Ms. Didier announced that Commissioner Nikki Griffith joined the meeting at 6:52 pm; Commissioner Griffith asked the Planning Department if the volume of applications received thus far is different this year. Mr. Donovan said we are down slightly this year and trending more in line with 2022 levels.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting concluded at 6:59 p.m.