

**WILLMAR PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF WILLMAR, MN
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 2012**

MINUTES

1. The Willmar Planning Commission met on Wednesday, April 11, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. at the Willmar City Offices Conference Room #2.

** Members Present: Mark Klema, Charlie Oakes, Scott Thaden, Nick Davis, Gary Geiger, and Bob Poe.

** Members Absent: Andrew Engan, Randy Czarnetski, and Virgilio Aguirre Jr.

** Others Present: Michael Schramm, Mary Weimerskirch, David Little, Frank Yanish-Mayor, Charlene Stevens-City Administrator, Beverly Dougherty, Bruce D. Peterson-Director of Planning and Development Services, and Megan Sauer- Planner/Airport Manager.

2. MINUTES: The Planning Commission reviewed the seven affirmative findings of fact for the conditional use permit for the Islamic Society to ensure they met statutory requirements. Staff added that the City's new legal counsel reviewed the findings and also found them to be legally sound. The minutes of the March 28, 2012 meeting were approved as presented.

3. DOWNTOWN PLAN DISCUSSION: Staff presented the draft of the Willmar Downtown Plan. The plan was conceived by Mayor Frank Yanish and Charlene Stevens the City Administrator. Adam Regn Arvidson of Treeline, and City staff prepared the document after a series of community meetings and stakeholder brainstorming sessions. The document encompasses 19 elements categorized into five main topic areas as follows: Access, Movement, and Parking; Open Space, Green Space, and Trails; Building Conditions and Aesthetics; Business Mix and Redevelopment; and Housing.

The Commission discussed certain aspects of the Plan such as the Central Business District boundaries, the opening of Litchfield Ave. SW to the Highway 12 bypass, and downtown façade design standards, etc.

Mr. Geiger made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thaden, to approve the draft Willmar Downtown Plan and forward it onto the City Council for public hearing and adoption as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

The motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

4. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS REVIEW: Staff presented a summary of the 2013 Capital Improvement Plans for the City of Willmar. Staff explained that City Administrator Charlene Stevens initiated a new peer review process of the five year capital

improvement plans where every department request is ranked and prioritized on a series of needs assessments qualifications. The Planning Commission reviewed the summary report and discussed the need for community-wide storm sewer improvements as it's an issue caused by the entire community and negatively affects a small portion of property owners.

Mr. Poe made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to forward the Capital Improvements priority list to the City Council to include the recommendations into their budget development process.

The motion carried.

5. MISCELLANY: Mark Klema, the Commission Chair, shared information regarding a workshop he attended on being a member of a Planning Commission. He said he learned a lot, and distributed handouts and shared some insights he had about how to make the public hearing process smoother and to help the public understand the Planning Commissions role in land use regulatory process.
6. There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan M. Sauer, AICP
Planner/Airport Manager