

CITY OF VERGAS PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING
MINUTES
Monday, August 26, 2024
5:30 pm
Vergas Event Center and Zoom

The City of Vergas Planning Commission meeting held a public hearing on Monday, August 26, 2024, in a hybrid meeting at the Vergas Event Center with the following members present: Bruce Albright, Jim Courneya, Rebecca Hasse and Alex Ohman. Absent: Shane Hasse. Also present: Clerk-Treasurer Julie Lammers and Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane; and citizen Dwight Lundgren and Shelley Bunkowske; Otter Tail County Employee Kyle Westergard.

Chairman Bruce Albright called the public hearing to order at 5:30 pm.

Albright reviewed the property at 110 Park View Drive. The Planning Commission approved a permit for a shed to be built 10 feet from the property line and the shed was built 1.5 feet from the property line. Lundgren questioned reasons shed was not placed where construction permit stated it would be. Reasons given for the building moved from construction permit plans: power and water lines in the space, placement of dock and lift access would be blocked, this allowed shed to be farther from lake, shed is in line of other sheds along the lake, having shed in planned location would not allow docks and lifts to be removed from lake. Albright reviewed the League of MN recommendation for a variance to be approved.

Granting variance:

The following 3 factors must be satisfied: Use of property in a reasonable manner, use maintains circumstances unique to the property and maintain essential character. Is variance consistent with the comprehensive plan.

DuFrane stated that it seems there is a habit of letting people put their stuff wherever they want, and the water line is his not the city water line. Courneya stated he would have preferred the variance was applied for before the shed was built.

Motion by Courneya, seconded by Hasse to close the public hearing at 5:41 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

CITY OF VERGAS PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING
MINUTES
Monday, August 26, 2024
6:00 pm
Vergas Event Center and Zoom

A City of Vergas Planning Commission meeting held a public hearing on Monday, August 26, 2024, in a hybrid meeting at the Vergas Event Center with the following members present: Bruce Albright, Jim Courneya, Rebecca Hasse and Alex Ohman. Absent: Shane Hasse. Also present: Clerk-Treasurer Julie Lammers and Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane; Otter Tail County employees Kyle Westergard and Chris LeClair; and citizens Dwight Lundgren, Tami Rust, Matthew Lachowitz, Tom Wollin, Cindy Hurt, Bruce Hurt, Jeff Laney, Bob Hager, Steve Tharaldson, Paul Pinke, Shelley Bunkowske and Jeanette Lee Carrell.

Call to Order

Chairman Bruce Albright called the public hearing to order at 6:00 pm. Planning Commission Members introduced themselves.

Albright reviewed the need for the Vergas Lakeshore Management Ordinance to be updated from the current ordinance which is the ordinance Otter Tail County had approved on March 5 of 1992. The state of MN gives the city guidelines of what the City can do. Otter Tail County has updated their ordinance several times and the Planning Commission is recommending the current Otter Tail County ordinance with 2 appendixes for lake classifications and state laws affecting the City differently than the County. The city may not be less restrictive than the County and the County cannot be less restrictive than the State. If the city adopts the proposed Lake Shore Management Ordinance, they will begin discussion with the County to take over our permitting process of property within 1,000 feet of lakeshore for a trial period of two years.

Tom Wollin questioned Vergas being one of the first communities entering into an agreement with the County. Anytime the city relinquishes its authority to another entity the citizens cannot change things or vote the decision makers out.

Bob Hager questioned ordinances being different for city residents and county residents on the same lake.

Dwight Lundgren asked if the city would retain any voice or decisions? Otter Tail County Land and Resource Management Director Chris LeClair stated the County memorandum of agreement states they would be doing the day-to-day construction, but the variances and conditional use permits (administrative) would still be under the city's jurisdiction.

Motion by Ohman, seconded by Courneya to close the public hearing at 6:28 pm. Albright thanked everyone for attending.

Monday, August 26, 2024
6:30 pm
Vergas Government Services Building and Zoom

A City of Vergas Planning Commission meeting was held on Monday, August 26, 2024, in a hybrid meeting at the Government Services Center with the following members present: Bruce Albright, Jim Courneya, Rebecca Hasse and Alex Ohman. Absent: Shane Hasse. Also present: Clerk-Treasurer Julie Lammers and Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane; Otter Tail County employees Kyle Westergard and Chris LeClair; and citizens Dwight Lundgren, Tami Rust, Matthew Lachowitz, Tom Wollin, Cindy Hurt, Bruce Hurt, Jeff Laney, Bob Hager, Steve Tharaldson, Paul Pinke, Shelley Bunkowske and Shawn Day.

Call to Order

Chairman Bruce Albright called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Agenda Additions and Deletions

Motion by Courneya, seconded by R. Hasse to approve agenda with following addition: 2 construction permits. Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes

Motion by Ohman, seconded by R. Hasse to approve minutes for July 22 2024. Motion passed unanimously.

Status of Council Recommendations

Albright updated planning commission members on the council discussion regarding the chicken ordinance. Commission members recommended the Council adopt the ordinance as submitted. The following requirements shall be met in order to keep chickens on a parcel within the city:

1. No more than four (4) chickens shall be kept on the premises;
2. Chickens shall be kept in a coop or attached coop run/enclosed at all times;
3. No roosters shall be kept on the premises;
4. The premises must be located in a Single and Two-Family Residential (R-1) or Limited Multiple-Family Residential (R-2) zoning district; and
5. The premises must have a lot area of at least five thousand (5,000) square feet.

Public Hearing Recommendations

Variance for Shed to be 1.5 feet from property line

Reviewed the request for variance of the shed. Property owner Matthew Lachowitz received a letter from his neighbor stating they have no concerns with the placement of the shed. Albright stated there was no opposition of the shed being placed 1.5 feet from the property line. Courneya stated we would like to see variances come before buildings are built but he did like that they saved a maple tree. Motion by Courneya, seconded by R. Hasse to approve the variance request for the shed. Motion passed unanimously.

Shoreline Management Ordinance

Motion by Ohman, seconded by R. Hasse to recommend to Council to approve the adoption of the Lake Shore Management Ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

Construction Permits

Approved by Clerk-Treasurer

Shingling at 540 S Pelican Ave and wood siding on the back side of 137 E Main St.

Permits needing approval.

480 Glenn St

Motion by R. Hasse, seconded by Ohman to approve permit for house to be built on 480 Glenn St with the approval of the Otter Tail County Land and Resource Management for a sewer permit. Motion passed unanimously.

251 1st Ave N

Motion by R. Hasse, seconded by Courneya to approve permit for lean-to to be built at 251 1st Ave N with the approval of the Otter Tail County Land and Resource Management for a sewer permit. Motion passed unanimously.

490 Glenn St

Motion by R. Hasse, seconded by Ohman to approve permit for house to be built on 490 Glenn St with the approval of the Otter Tail County Land and Resource Management for a sewer permit and home being built no higher than 25 feet. Motion passed unanimously.

460 Oak Circle

Motion by R. Hasse, seconded by Ohman to approve permit for house to be built on 460 Oak Circle with the approval of the Otter Tail

County Land and Resource Management for a sewer permit. Motion passed unanimously.

1156 E Frazee Ave

Motion by R. Hasse, seconded by Ohman to deny permit to build a shop at 1156 E Frazee Ave due to the building being over 25 feet in height. Motion passed unanimously.

Active Construction Permits

Albright and Courneya will meet to update closed permits for both grade and fill and construction permits.

Proposed Construction Permit Form

Motion by Ohman, seconded by Courneya to approve the proposed permit application. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

None.

Old Business:

Ordinances

There are a few committees that have not finished their updates. Lammers will focus on Vergas Basic Code once the Lake Shore Management Ordinance is complete.

Nuisance Properties within Vergas

Lammers received a complaint regarding property at 320 E Frazee Ave as they are harboring cats causing cats to multiply and residents are wondering why they can only have 3 cats, but this property has over 14 cats. Motion by Ohman, seconded by Courneya to send letter to property owner stating they cannot harbor cats, and they need to license their 3 cats and remove the rest from their property. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussed properties with chickens that are not currently in compliance with city ordinance. Motion by Ohman, seconded by Courneya to send letters to those with chickens informing them they are not following the current ordinance, and the city will be discussing the ordinance at their meeting on Tuesday, September 10, 2024. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussed complaint regarding a camper being lived in at 101 E Mill St. There is no proof they are living in the camper, commissioners decided to wait until it can be proven they are staying in the camper.

Vergas Zoning Map

Ohman is updating and will provide information for Lammers to provide to the EDA.

2024 Planning Commission Budget

Lammers updated the commissioners that no decision has been made regarding the 2025 budget yet.

Attached Accessory Structures

Ohman recommended discussing this at next month's meeting after all board members have time to review the information.

Adjournment

Motion by Courneya, seconded by R. Hasse to adjourn at 8:05 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Secretary,

Julie Lammers, CMC
Vergas City Clerk-Treasurer

Follow Up Actions:

Albright and Courneya update grade and fill and construction permit spreadsheets regarding closed permits.

Council recommendations:

Update Chicken ordinance.

Approve Lake Shore Management Ordinance