

CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting

Wednesday, May 7, 2025, at 6:30 P.M.

At Five Points - 360 N. Wilmor Road, Washington

Call to Order Chairman Burdette called the regular meeting of the City of Washington Planning and Zoning Commission to order at 6:34 p.m., with a quorum present.

Roll Call *Present:* Commissioners Burdette, Milot, Reeder, Shelton
Absent: Commissioners Ritter, Scott, Williams
Also present: Planning and Development Director Oliphant, Building and Zoning Coordinator Boyer and City Clerk Brod

Approve Minutes Commissioner Reeder motioned to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2024 meeting; Commissioner Shelton seconded.
Motioned passed by voice vote.

Public Comments None provided.

Public Hearing At 6:35 p.m., Commissioner Burdette opened the public hearing to consider a special use request
Special use request of Anabelle and Gale Johnson to operate a non-owner-occupied STR at 1406 Westgate Rd. Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared that rental regulations were adopted by the PZC and approved by Council. It is important to define “non-owner occupied”. He shared that the following four STRs do not have the owner on premise. He noted that the Westgate/Gilmore location meets regulations. We also want to make sure they are on same playing field as hotels for taxing purposes. The petitioner was present but did not provide statement. Planning and Development Director Oliphant explained to an inquiring audience member that an inspection is done by the Building and Zoning Coordinator who reviews life safety, hotel motel collection, parking, quiet hours, and a permit is needed annually. The audience member noted that basements without an egress window should not be rented as a space. Building and Zoning Coordinator Boyer explained the International Residential Code specifies that any sleeping space, rented or otherwise, has to have an egress system and spaces rented without an egress would be in violation and it would need to be corrected.
At 6:41 p.m., Commissioner Burdette closed the public hearing.
Commissioner Milot motioned to accept the request; Commissioner Reeder seconded.
On roll call the vote was:
4 Ayes: Burdette, Milot, Reeder, Shelton
0 Nays:
Motion carried.

Public Hearing At 6:42 p.m., Commissioner Burdette opened the public hearing to consider a special use request
Special use request of Schlueter Properties to operate a non-owner-occupied STR at 132-134 N. Main St., A-B. Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared that the requester would like to continue operating they meet all regulations. Property Owner Scott Schlueter shared that the property was purchased as supplemental income and it has been in operation five years without any complaints. They also own the building next door. He noted that the Airbnb and VRBO do not allow basement bedroom rentals.
At 6:44 p.m., Commissioner Burdette closed the public hearing.
Commissioner Milot motioned to accept the request; Commissioner Reeder seconded.
Commissioner Milot noted a possible uptick of use due to its proximity to the square and wondered about issues with intoxication. Mr. Schlueter explained that they screen all renters through the reservation system and most people are coming to the area for lower key reasons like reunions, funerals etc. Their renters are also shopping on the square. They are also community minded and promote local business. Commissioner Milot asked about liability insurance and Planning and Development Director Oliphant explained that the city requires STRs to submit a liability insurance certificate with a one-million-dollar liability rider. Planning and Development Director Oliphant clarified that the city insurance requirement is in addition to insurance provided on rental platforms.
On roll call the vote was:
4 Ayes: Burdette, Milot, Reeder, Shelton
0 Nays:
Motion carried.

Public Hearing At 6:48 p.m., Commissioner Burdette opened the public hearing to consider a special use request
Special use request of Candy Presley to operate a non-owner-occupied STR at 711 S. High St. Planning and Development Director Oliphant noted that this has been previously discussed and this location also meets all regulations. Josh Whiting was present to represent the owner. He shared that they have occasional guests but the owner lives there full time. It is mostly business people and event people who rent the STR and they also pre-screen renters. Audience members, Thomas and Nancy Russell asked about the number of renters at one time and Mr. Whiting shared that it is limited to two people per bedroom. The Russells noted college students that flew kites off the roof and a company from Chicago that parked semi-trucks on Elm and Oakland and a neighbor picked up a lot of trash when they left. Another STR petitioner shared that she

screens each renter and they don't allow for bachelor/bachelorette parties. They also have other properties with little issues and they try to de-escalate if needed. Mr. Whiting shared that he was notified about the people and truck; they immediately responded and the truck was there for a delivery and left. Another construction company was told they can stay but not park large trucks at property.

Commissioner Shelton and Mr. Whiting clarified that the rentals have contactless entries and most have Ring doorbells. Commissioner Milot and Planning and Development Director Oliphant clarified that anyone can park on street if it is not a large truck or trailer. They also clarified that an owner's contact numbers can be provided to the police department if needed. Mrs. Russell suggested letting neighbors know if a property is an STR. They worry about the safety of neighborhood children. Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared that the city is creating a map to show the public where they are located. He also noted that STRs tend to have more visits by the owner while long-term rentals receive fewer owner visits. Commissioner Milot and Planning and Development Director Oliphant clarified that there is a process to revoke a permit if needed.

At 6:58 p.m., Commissioner Burdette closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Milot motioned to accept the request; Commissioner Shelton seconded.

On roll call the vote was:

4 Ayes: Burdette, Milot, Reeder, Shelton

0 Nays:

Motion carried.

Public Hearing
*Special use request of
Bethany Zerbonia to
operate a non-owner-
occupied STR at 406 N.
Main St.*

At 6:59 p.m., Commissioner Burdette opened the public hearing to consider a special use request of Bethany Zerbonia to operate a non-owner-occupied short-term rental at 406 N. Main St. Planning and Development Director Oliphant noted that this is just north of Monroe Street, and is a little more than half acre. He shared that this is an accessory structure and our code does not prohibit it. Ms. Zerbonia added that 90% of her visitors are families and the property is owner occupied. They have a camera to monitor the property. She shared that the structure is behind her house and it doesn't affect their neighbors. She further shared that they sometimes have people come for a gathering then leave.

At 7:01 p.m., Commissioner Burdette closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Milot motioned to accept the request; Commissioner Reeder seconded.

Building and Zoning Coordinator Boyer invited anyone to call if they have issues with garbage.

On roll call the vote was:

4 Ayes: Burdette, Milot, Reeder, Shelton

0 Nays:

Motion carried.

Public Hearing
*Request of Brent
Ricketts of Ricketts
Properties to rezone
Mallard Crossing
Commercial Park Lot 5
from C-2 (General
Retail) to C-3 (Service
Retail)*

At 7:03 p.m., Commissioner Burdette opened the public hearing to consider a request of Brent Ricketts of Ricketts Properties to rezone Mallard Crossing Commercial Park Lot 5 from C-2 (General Retail) to C-3 (Service Retail).

Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared that the owner would like to rezone the property to be used for the outdoor retail sale of sheds, chicken coops and duck blinds. This property has a history of being rezoned. It was originally part of Mallard Crossing Subdivision. He further explained that it is a transitional property, not ideal for regular retail and its location is not suitable visually for sales. There are decent traffic counts at the Cruger and Cummings area and this property does not touch the multi-family unit property. Cheryl Ricketts, mother of the petitioner, said the property is still for sale and they would like to sell Amish made buildings. She noted that there is not plan to put a permanent building on the property at this time.

At 7:07 p.m., Commissioner Burdette closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Reeder motioned to accept the request; Commissioner Milot seconded.

Commissioner Burdette and Ms. Ricketts clarified the Amish items are built in Arthur and they are similar to Countryside Barns. The petitioner currently sells them from his home.

On roll call the vote was:

4 Ayes: Burdette, Milot, Reeder, Shelton

0 Nays:

Motion carried.

Public Hearing
*Proposed amendment to
the Zoning Code,
specifically, Section 56-
77 "Permitted uses,
generally" for the
purpose of adding or
deleting text regarding
poultry*

At 7:08 p.m., Commissioner Burdette opened the public hearing to consider a proposed amendment to the Zoning Code, specifically, Section 56-77 "Permitted uses, generally" for the purpose of adding or deleting text.

Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared that this is to allow residential chickens. The city previously adopted text in 2019 but repealed it in 2020. An alderperson expressed interest and council agreed to proceed. Most of the proposed code is the same as 2019. It addressed a maximum number of chickens, no slaughtering, waste disposal, and permit fees. They have added text clarifying that chickens could be permitted and not a special use, a limit on lot size, chickens only allowable in enclosures, it would not go through the PZC, and it would be up to the code officer to make sure regulations are met. He also shared that all enclosures would need to be at least 15 feet from property lines and 25 feet from a residential structure. He further noted that there are very few lots larger than ¾ acre in Washington. Washington resident, Jacob Spitzer, provided a statement that is attached and made part of these minutes. He supports chickens. He feels chickens can be educational, bring neighbors together and support local businesses. He suggested a lot size of ¼ acre and would like case by case consideration for smaller lots. He feels this can benefit the community. Mr. Whiting shared that he is from the Eastern United States and noted that many communities allow backyard chickens. He also feels the ¾ acre requirement is very restrictive.

At 7:16 p.m., Commissioner Burdette closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Reeder motioned to accept the request; Commissioner Shelton seconded.

Commissioner Milot and Planning and Development Director Oliphant noted that the average lot size in Washington is ¼ - 1/3 acre. Commissioner Reeder noted most of the previous

complaints came from smaller lot sizes. The majority of the PZC feels this is a good start and it can be reevaluated, amended or repealed if needed. One suggestion was to set the requirement allowing a ¼ acre lot but allowing evaluations for anything smaller. Concern was expressed that allowing variances could open the door for complaints. Commissioner Burdette noted that City Council would need to approve it. Planning and Development Director Oliphant can look further into setting an ordinance but allowing a variance to the ordinance. Commissioner Milot does not favor the possibility of variances. Planning and Development Director Oliphant agreed with an earlier statement that the people going through the process will likely do everything right and they will follow the rules. Concern for the setback requirements was expressed.

On roll call the vote was:

4 Ayes: Burdette, Milot, Reeder, Shelton

0 Nays:

Motion carried.

New Business	Planning and Development Director Oliphant shared that there will be a June meeting.
Commissioner/Staff Comments	None provided.
Adjournment	At 7:25 p.m., Commissioner Reeder motioned to adjourn; Commissioner Shelton seconded. <u>Motion carried by voice vote.</u>


Valeri L. Brod, City Clerk