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MINUTES OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE GREENFIELD CITY HALL ON WEDNESDAY,  
MAY 22, 2024

1. Meeting Call to Order and Roll Call.

The meeting was called to order by Alderperson Drzewiecki at 5:24 PM.

Present: Alderpersons Andrew Drzewiecki, Bruce Bailey, Shirley Saryan

Also present: Christopher Geary, City Attorney; Gina Vlach, City Planner

2. Election of Chairperson.

Place on next agenda.

3. Election of Vice-Chairperson.

Place on next agenda.

4. Approval of the December 13, 2023 meeting minutes.

Motion by Alderperson Bailey, seconded by Alderperson Saryan to approve. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Discussion and possible recommendations for revisions to the lighting ordinance for permanent accent lighting on residential homes.

Alderperson Drzewiecki explained the complaints from constituents regarding permanent accent lighting on residential homes. He explained that this is in regard to LED lighting affixed permanently to a house all year round, not holiday lighting. At this time, there is no regulation in the Municipal Code regarding operating times for permanent residential lighting, only for commercial lighting.

Alderperson Saryan spoke about the brightness of certain LED bulbs and possible restrictions on the lumens of bulbs used in residential lighting as well. Alderperson Drzewiecki agreed and would like the time restrictions to be the same as the commercial lighting restriction, which is 11pm to 6 or 7am.

Alderperson Saryan asked about how a lighting ordinance would affect homeowners who have security lights installed on their houses at night. Attorney Geary stated that this would have to be carefully looked at as it could affect all homeowners' lighting. He would like more details about the house that is being referenced in order to have an idea on what needs to be restricted.

Alderperson Drzewiecki said he would forward Attorney Geary the communications between himself, the Police Department and Officer Keith Kummer, the Code Enforcer. Attorney Geary explained that usually in commercial lighting ordinances there are restrictions on light pollution and spill-over, but he has not had experience with residential lighting restrictions in other municipalities.

Residential Christmas lighting was discussed.

Alderperson Saryan and Bailey both described complaints they received in regard to residential security/floodlighting being too bright and disruptive. Alderperson Drzewiecki and Attorney Geary agreed that there should be distinctions in the ordinance between motion sensor security lighting and flood lights/accent lighting that is continuously on. Attorney Geary stated that he will consider time limitations, clarify light types/definitions, and possibly light distance from property lines.

6. Discussion and possible recommendations related to AirBNB/VRBO regulations for short-term

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rentals.

Attorney Geary explained that state statues allow municipalities to put restrictions on AirBNB/VRBO and other short-term rentals. These may include: restricting rental periods to 7-180 days, having a municipal license, prohibiting outdoor activities after a certain time, or limitations on occupancy. At this time, the Greenfield Municipal Code does not allow short-term rentals, which is no longer able to be enforced per state statues. He stated that some municipalities require owners to submit their contact information so they can be contacted if there are any problems or emergencies. He spoke about some short-term rentals having issues with parties and late night noise complaints.

Gina Vlach, City Planner, stated that she recently had a call from someone looking into buying a Greenfield property to use as a short-term rental.

Aldersperson Drzewiecki discussed the importance of having limitations on short-term rentals to deter corporations from buying single-family homes in Greenfield solely for the short-term rental purpose. The state already requires rentals to pay sales tax and have a state license to operate.

Attorney Geary agreed to put together a draft ordinance with the most common restrictions for short-term rentals for review.

Aldersperson Drzewiecki went to item 7.

Aldersperson Saryan asked about neighboring municipalities' restrictions. Attorney Geary explained that a few have a licensing process that requires pulling a permit with a fee. Other communities who have not had any issues, do not have any restrictions.

Aldersperson Drzewiecki went to item 10.

7. Update and discussion on overnight parking of commercial and recreational vehicles on City rights-of-way and residential properties.

Aldersperson Drzewiecki discussed how the Mayor would like to make sure the Municipal Code restricts overnight parking in the Park and Ride locations.

Attorney Geary discussed how this is a statewide issue and that a draft is already in the works. He discussed how city and state jurisdictions at Park and Rides can overlap. In regard to commercial vehicle overnight parking on residential streets, it was agreed that it was an enforcement issue. The definition of a commercial vehicle is defined by weight, but that may have to be looked at for smaller business vehicles.

8. Update and discussion on State Bill allowing the raising of Fowl within the City.

Attorney Geary explained how the state has not yet adopted a law regarding fowl, but it has been introduced a few times over the past few years. Since Greenfield has an ordinance not allowing chickens, the issue would not be able to be forced unless a new state law is passed or the ordinance is changed.

9. Discussion and possible recommendations as to structure and policy considerations and limitations of City's alcohol licensing ordinances, including "full-service retail sales outlets" under new state statute.

Attorney Geary explained that the city has a 90-day moratorium against any new alcohol licenses

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until mid-July. The city is concerned about the number of alcohol licenses, the locations, and the types of businesses that are applying. He discussed the possibility of imposing a quota. The state already enforces a Class B quota, but municipalities are allowed to enact additional quota systems for other licenses as well. This quota could be based on population or the number of existing licenses right now. The other option would be to restrict the types of businesses that are allowed to hold a certain license. This would involve tailoring an ordinance for restrictions on specific business types and would need documentation on why the city is taking this action in the event it is challenged. He provided examples of municipalities that have this type of ordinance.

Alderman Drzewiecki discussed the preference of restricting the type of businesses over a strict quota system.

Attorney Geary recommended not being too specific in the ordinance as to not be too arbitrary and restrict business competition or restrict a future new business that the city would like to approve. Ordinances that are too limiting could deter certain large grocery or gas station entities from opening a location in Greenfield. They also discussed the differences between convenience stores and liquor stores and how that may have to be further defined.

Alderman Drzewiecki discussed the density of businesses that sell alcohol in Greenfield and how they do not want to discriminate against any size or type of business when creating the new restrictions. Attorney Geary also suggested considering the definition of restaurants within gas stations. Alderman Drzewiecki suggested a modified quota system that would allow only a certain number for each type or size of business.

Attorney Geary also discussed the aspect of grandfathering current businesses. Attorney Geary said he will create drafts of a few different options for the next meeting.

Attorney Geary described the new State Statute for full service retail sales outlets. Alcohol producers (distilleries, breweries, wineries) are allowed under their state permit to open businesses to sell their own products and other alcohol products at another location. This could include temporary locations (festivals, farmers markets) as well. Municipalities can impose certain restrictions to these businesses.

Alderman Saryan circled back to item 6.

10. Adjourn.

Motion by Alderman Bailey, seconded by Alderman Saryan to adjourn at 6:15PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Melissa Ramsey, Clerk Specialist

Minutes transcribed by Melissa Ramsey, Clerk Specialist

Distributed: 5/24/2024