

**CITY OF MOORHEAD  
PLANNING COMMISSION / BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS  
MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 03, 2009 AT 5:00 PM  
1ST FLOOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MOORHEAD CITY HALL**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held in the 1st Floor Council Chambers, Moorhead City Hall, on February 03, 2009, at 5:00 PM.

**I. Roll Call**

**Roll call of the members was made as follows:**

2nd Ward Council Member:	John Rowell	Present
Board Member:	Brian Gramer	Present
Board Member:	Gary Schulz	Absent
Board Member:	Liz Stabenow	Present
Board Member:	Vacancy	Absent
Board Member:	Tod Dahle	Present
Board Member:	Wayne Ingersoll	Present

**Staff present:**

Deb Martzahn, Planning and Zoning Administrator  
Amy Thorpe, Community Services Program Assistant  
Justin Kristan, F-M MetroCOG

**II. Agenda Amendments**

Martzahn stated that she would like to add an item, "Auto Related Uses" to the end of the agenda.

**III. Approval of Minutes from January 6, 2008, Regular Meeting**

**Motion made to Approve made by John Rowell and seconded by Liz Stabenow**  
*Motion Passed: For: 5; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent: 2*

**IV. Citizens To Be Heard**

None.

**V. Public Hearing -- Board of Adjustments**

None.

**VI. Public Hearing -- Planning Commission**

None.

**VII. Other Business**

1. Safe Routes to School - Presentation by Justin Kristan, F-M MetroCOG

**Motion made by Brian Gramer and seconded by John Rowell.**  
Motion to Recommend the Safe Routes to School report to City Council to receive and consider the study.  
*Motion Passed: For: 5; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent: 2*

MINUTES: Justin Kristan, FM MetroCOG, began his presentation of the Safe Routes to School Report with a brief explanation of the program and its goals and objectives. He also summarized the history of the program and Moorhead's participation in it. Kristan stated that Moorhead stood to gain infrastructure improvements based on the results of the study and report. The study, he said, included findings in the following categories: improving infrastructure, encouragement and education, enforcement, and school district policy and programming. He mentioned grant money is available to provide infrastructure improvements within two miles of a school, including street crossing safety improvement, spot improvements in existing pedestrian/bikeways, new pedestrian/bikeways, traffic calming, signing, bicycle parking, and lighting.

Kristan reported that the school district administrators are aware of the study, but have chosen to deal with it internally rather than take it to their board of education for formal action. Kristan stated that it is important to have the study publically recognized in order to receive grant money. Kristan asked the commissioners to review the study and recommend that the City Council receive and consider its findings when making related decisions and applying for grants.

Ingersoll commended the study and the effort that was put forth to bring together the concerns and recommendations.

Gramer asked Kristan if the funds would still be available without the support of the school district. Kristan stated that COG, as an agency, would not move forward on its own, but would be available to help with the application process. Martzahn stated that parts of the study/report were specific to infrastructure and that the city could move forward with that portion of the plan. Kristan confirmed that the city may submit an application of its own. Gramer replied that he hoped that the city would move forward with the application for infrastructure improvements and take advantage of the money available.

Rowell asked if infrastructure projects under safe routes to school undertaken by the city need to first be part of the TIP (Transportation Improvement Plan). Kristan stated that if the application was accepted it would then go into the TIP and then the STIP (State Transportation Improvement Plan).

Stabenow asked if there would be a possibility that the local money spent would not be reimbursed because of state budget cuts. Kristan stated that due to the current federal budget situation, the safe routes program may be "thinned" or eliminated in the future, but if the money had been obligated, it would be there.

2. Election of Officers

**Motion made to Approve the Election of Officers made by Wayne Ingersoll and seconded by Liz Stabenow**

Motion to Approve Tod Dahl as chair and John Rowell as vice chair of the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment for the year 2009.

*Motion Passed: For: 5; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Absent: 2*

After discussion of the board it was agreed that Tod Dahle would continue to be the chair and that John Rowell would continue to be the vice chair.

3. Appointment to MetroCOG Policy Board

The Commission by consensus appointed Brian Gramer as the planning commission representative to MetroCOG Policy Board.

A. Discussion of Auto Related Uses

4. Discussion of "Auto Related Uses" in the industrial park

Martzahn stated that she has received several inquiries from businesses who would like to sell used cars in conjunction with their businesses located in the industrial park. She also reported that a car repair business had found a new location in the industrial park for his business, which is being relocated because of a street project. Martzahn referred to the city ordinance which restricts these uses to "arterial or collector streets via a frontage road or shared drive as approved by the city engineer." Martzahn said she thought the original intent was to restrict auto sales, which would generate more customer traffic, and not auto repair. She stated there were already several auto repair shops in the industrial park. Commissioners agreed with Martzahn to allow auto repair businesses to locate on local streets within the industrial park. Commissioner reaffirmed that selling cars within the industrial park was not appropriate use. Martzahn offered to draft an amendment to clarify the ordinance and submit it to commissioners at the next meeting.

## **VIII. Reports / Information**

### **1. Comprehensive Plan / Active Living**

Martzahn briefed the commissioners on the turnout at the neighborhood meetings. She encouraged the commissioners to attend the last neighborhood meeting on Thursday. Commissioners Ingersoll and Dahle, who had attended meetings, commended staff on the meeting content and organization, stating that the meetings have been well-received and interesting discussions and input have resulted.

Martzahn showed the commissioners a slideshow of digitally enhanced photos to illustrate how enhancements such as sidewalks, bike paths, crosswalks, landscaping, and density can completely transform desolate areas. Commissioners agreed that the enhanced photos were helpful to visualize how these ideas could be implemented and suggested that staff look into photo-enhancing a few areas in Moorhead to show the possibilities.

## **IX. Adjournment**

The proceedings of this meeting are digitally recorded and are available for public review.

*Respectfully submitted by:  
Amy Thorpe, Community Services Program Assistant*