

**Harris Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 28, 2023**

- I. **Call to Order** - Chairman Siedow called the Planning Commission to order at 7:00 pm.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance** - All present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. **Roll Call** - City Clerk Shannon Geier conducted roll call. Present were Chairman Al Siedow, Commissioner Sheri Denny, Commissioner Haley Peabody, Commissioner Jeff Borash, and Commissioner Neil Elmquist. City Clerk Geier announced a quorum was present.
- IV. **Consent Agenda** – Denny made a motion to approve the July 24, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes. Elmquist seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
- V. **Public Hearing** – 2023-05 Interim Ordinance Prohibiting acceptance or consideration of applications for new mineral extraction IUP’s – The public hearing was opened at 7:02 pm. There were no questions or comments. The public hearing was closed at 7:03 pm.
- VI. **Regular Agenda**
 - A. **2023-05 Interim Ordinance Mineral Extraction Moratorium** – Borash made a motion to pass Interim Ordinance #2023-05 to the Council for consideration and final approval. Denny seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.
 - B. **Managed Natural & Native landscaping permitted** – City Planner Claire Michelson was present to explain the need to update existing city ordinances to bring them in line with new state laws. The main changes will be to add definitions for managed natural landscapes and to strike out any sections that are contrary to state law. A draft ordinance will be presented at the September meeting for discussion followed by a public hearing on same.
 - C. **Micro units on Sacred communities & religious properties** – Michelson explained the basics of this new law which allows religious institutions to provide permanent housing for people who are chronically homeless, extremely low-income, or designated volunteers in sacred communities composed of micro units. There will be multiple sections of the Harris Ordinance to consider changes to regulate such things as size of units, limiting number of units, and requiring conditional use permits.
 - D. **Solar Ordinance** – Peabody and Denny brought results from their research on how residents were affected by local solar farms. Some of the concerns included loss of farmland, mercury disposal, loss of wildlife habitat, property value loss, where does the stray energy go, power is sold out state and not used to benefit local communities, and enforcement issues with the solar farms’ Conditional Use Permits. Michelson has worked on ordinances for several cities and will forward copies to Geier for distribution to the Commissioners as examples for consideration.

The Commissioners directed staff to prepare a moratorium prohibiting development of solar for non-residential use for a period of 12 months to allow them time to research and create a local Solar Ordinance. A public hearing on the moratorium will be held at the next Planning Commission meeting.

- E. **Recreational Vehicles** – Garret Pearson was present to discuss a situation where a person living in a recreational vehicle next to his property resulted in a negative experience. The person living there apparently did not have good intentions because the Sheriff’s Dept. reported incidents of thefts, drugs, and prostitution. Pearson’s concerns included devaluation of his property and the safety of young children living in the area. He acknowledged the difference between his situation and someone living in a recreational vehicle short term with good intentions. Geier noted that she is currently dealing with several situations involving recreational vehicles and the difficulty with enforcement. There is a process to follow and if the party involved has no good intentions, it drags on and requires constant follow-up. Michelson acknowledged that enforcement is a major issue and that a process for abatement may be a consideration. The Commissioners requested a Deputy Sheriff be invited to the next meeting to discuss options for enforcement.
- F. **Comprehensive Plan** – Reviewed the Land Use Plan section of the City of Harris Comprehensive Plan. Going forward, each month another section will be reviewed to help the Commissioners understand the purpose of a Comprehensive Plan.
- VII. **Commissioner Reports** – Siedow reviewed the Park & Recreation meeting minutes. There were no commissioner reports.
- VIII. **Adjourn** – Borash made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Denny seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

City Clerk – Shannon Geier

Allen Siedow - Chair

Date Approved