

# Planning Commission

## Work Session Minutes Wednesday, October 28, 2015 11:00 a.m., Conference Room A



City of South Haven

The meeting was called to order 11:00 a.m. Present were planning commission members Paull, Peterson, Smith, Stimson, Webb, Frost and Heinig. Zoning administrator Anderson was also present.

City manager Dissette arrived to explain some of the options city council members had discussed for helping alleviate resident concerns over rental properties in their neighborhoods. He included in his comments reducing house size maximums in residential zones, increasing the time limit that separates rentals from commercial uses and possible changes to sign regulations as far as rental signs are concerned. Other non-zoning ideas discussed were increased utility hookup fees for houses exceeding a certain number of bedrooms and having the city hire additional weekend code enforcement officers to help respond to noise and public disturbance complaints.

After Dissette left the members discussed the items he had mentioned as well as issues left from the last meeting. Stimson described rental parking requirements for cities she had contacted. She found that Bay City and Traverse City require 2 spaces for residences; Cadillac requires one space and Kalamazoo bases parking need on the square feet of the house.

Frost asked if parking is really such a large problem since most houses have garage and driveway parking that is adequate. Even with adequate parking people may park on the street to avoid "car shuffling". It was generally agreed that parking alleviation should be pursued even if parking congestion is more of a perceived problem than a real one.

There was a discussion about increasing the minimum stay from 48 hours to 7 days. That way any rental of less than one week would be a commercial use and limited to commercial zones. That idea was generally dismissed due to the number of people who visit the city for weekends or shorter periods than an entire week. This is probably especially true in the spring and fall seasons and during festival weekends. Requiring a 7 day stay could actually hurt the city in the long run. This discussion will continue at later meetings.

There was some discussion about signs and the need for sign ordinances to be content neutral. Any sign change will affect all residential properties whether they are rented, vacant or owner-occupied. There was some discussion about lowering the maximum height allowed for signs in the residential zones.

First discussion at the next meeting will be parking related with Heinig explaining his findings on permit programs.

Stimson will do some research on rental sign regulations in other cities.

Next meeting on Wednesday, November 4, 2015 at 11:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,  
Linda Anderson, Zoning Administrator