

**UNAPPROVED
CITY OF BLAINE
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
December 13, 2022**

The Blaine Planning Commission met in the City Hall Chambers on Tuesday, December 13, 2022. Vice Chair Halpern called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

Members Present: Vice Chair Halpern, Commission Members: Deonauth, Gorzycki, Olson, and Swanson.

Members Absent: Chair Goracke and Commission Member Homan.

Staff Present: Shawn Kaye, Planner
Elizabeth Showalter, Community Development Specialist
Shelia Sellman, City Planner
Teresa Barnes, Project Engineer

PUBLIC HEARING

Item 4.4 – Case File No. 22-0079 – Public Hearing – The applicant is requesting approval of a conditional use permit to operate an approximately 3,000 square foot event center in a B-2 (Community Commercial) zoning district.
BLAINE EVENT VENUE, 1250 126TH AVENUE NE.

The report to the planning commission was presented by Elizabeth Showalter, Community Development Specialist. The public hearing for Case File 22-0079 was opened at 7:34PM.

Michelle Rice, 1250 126th Avenue NE, explained she has been working with staff to bring this property into compliance. She reported she wants to work well with all of the other tenants in the center. She stated the landlord was in attendance and noted he supported putting in additional parking spaces. She discussed how the event center would assist with bringing more people into Blaine.

Jerry Gus, owner of Big Dipper Creamery, stated his biggest concern was how he fought to get a restaurant into this center. He explained he was also concerned with parking and that his guests would not have adequate parking. He believed that the additional parking at the rear of the building would be a fire code concern. He reported he wanted every small business in the center to thrive, but he feared the event center would be using the entire parking lot. He stated he was open until 9PM and he would like there to be parking spaces available for his patrons.

Ms. Rice reported she would not have 100 cars on the site. She explained after receiving one complaint she has encouraged the other tenants within the center to approach her with any concerns they may have. She noted the parking in the back would be for employees. She indicated dedicated spaces for Big Dipper and the other tenants would be posted for the center.

Mr. Gus commented on how the event center was operating without an occupancy permit in place. He expressed concern with how Ms. Rice has built out her space and was holding functions in the event center without speaking to the city of Blaine.

Vice Chair Halpern understood the parking at this center was a contentious matter. He noted the commission has received comments from the neighborhood regarding neighbors trying to visit these businesses.

John Hardinger, owner of the Creek View Shopping Center, explained he has owned this center for the past 20 years. He indicated he was trying to keep the peace between all of his tenants. He reported each of the tenants within this center was very popular. He stated designated parking signs would be installed for Big Dipper and the Vietnamese restaurant. He commented there was some miscommunication between the churches that previously occupied the event space. He reported he was willing to install the additional parking and would have this in place prior to July of 2023.

The public hearing was closed at 7:46PM.

Commissioner Swanson asked if the event center and church were already operating out of this space.

Community Development Specialist Elizabeth Showalter reported this was the case.

Vice Chair Halpern stated the concern would be the event center would be operating at a time when all of the other tenants within the shopping center were in their prime time of operating.

Commissioner Gorzycki questioned what incentives would be in place to encourage visitors to use the proposed shuttle for the event center.

Ms. Rice explained she would give the wedding guests tickets explaining where they would need to park prior to the event.

Vice Chair Halpern inquired if an allotment of parking spaces have been set aside for the event center.

Ms. Rice stated an hours analysis was completed for the shopping center in order to better understand how many spaces are available throughout the day.

Commissioner Olson indicated she frequented this shopping center often and she understood parking was a concern. She stated having an event center, on top of all of the existing uses, was a safety concern for her. She understood the Roadside needed access for their property and stated she did not support the requested conditional use permit.

Motion by Commissioner Olson to recommend denial of Planning Case 22-0079 based on the fact the site does not have adequate parking to support the proposed use.

Vice Chair Halpern asked if site could support any additional parking.

Community Development Specialist Elizabeth Showalter explained the property owner has maximized the parking available on the site.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Gorzycki. The motion passed 5-0.

Vice Chair Halpern noted this would be on the agenda of the January 4, 2023 city council meeting.