

Planning Commission Meeting Agenda

Monday August 1, 2022 - 6:00 PM
Cologne Community Center, 1211 Village Parkway

Vision Statement

The City of Cologne is a vibrant small town that respects its heritage, embraces its future and offers a high quality of life for all who live, work and visit our community.

Chairperson: Bernie Shambour
Commissioner: Vickie Selness
Commissioner: Jenn Brewington
City Council Liaison: Carol Szaroletta
Commissioner: Kevin Fafinski

NOTE: AGENDA ITEMS ARE APPROXIMATE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE ACCORDING TO LENGTH OF DISCUSSION. TO ENSURE THAT YOU ARE PRESENT FOR ITEMS OF INTEREST, PLEASE ARRIVE AT 6:00 PM.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER & ROLL CALL
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. ADOPT AGENDA
4. PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS
 - a. July 5, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
 - b. Freedom Storage Site Plan Review
 - i. Collaborative Planning Memo 7-29-22
 - ii. Resolution 22-03 Approving Site Plan Freedom Storage
5. BOARD REPORTS
6. ANNOUNCEMENTS
7. ADJOURN

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 5, 2022 - 6:00 PM
Cologne Community Center, 1211 Village Parkway

Vision Statement

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1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Chairperson Shambour called the meeting to order at 6:00PM with Commissioners Brewington, and Szaroletta present. Also present were City Administrator -Jesse Dickson and City Clerk – Michelle Morrison. Commissioner Selness and Fafinski were absent.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ADOPT AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Szaroletta to adopt the agenda as presented, second by Commissioner Brewington. Motion carried 3-0.

4. PLANNING COMMISSION BUSINESS

a. June 6, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Szaroletta to adopt the June 6, 2022 Planning Commission minutes as presented. Second by Commissioner Brewington. Motion carried 3-0.

b. PUBLIC HEARING: Mid County Co-op Sign Variance

Motion by Commissioner Szaroletta to open the public hearing for a Sign Variance at Mid County Co-op, second by Commissioner Brewington. Motion carried 3-0.

Chairperson Shambour reviewed documents related to the sign variance and summarized that it seemed like a reasonable request. Commissioner Brewington asked if there was any information provided about how bright the sign would be. Administrator Dickson said none was provided, but existing ordinances dictate the amount of light and

if there were violations, it could be addressed through existing ordinances. Chairperson Shambour asked if there were any other questions. There being none, Commissioner Brewington made a motion to close the public hearing, second by Commissioner Szaroletta. Motion carried 3-0.

c. Resolution 22-02 Approving Mid County Co-op Sign Variance

Motion by Commissioner Szaroletta to approve Resolution 22-02 Approving Mid County Co-op Sign variance, second by Commissioner Brewington. Motion carried 3-0.

d. PUBLIC HEARING: Swimming Pool Ordinance Amendment

Motion by Commissioner Szaroletta to open the public hearing for the swimming pool ordinance amendment, second by Commissioner Brewington. Motion carried 3-0. Chairperson Shambour reviewed Ordinance 122-A and information provided from neighboring communities pool regulations. After discussion, Commissioner Brewington made a motion to close the public hearing, second by Commissioner Szaroletta. Motion carried 3-0. Motion by Commissioner Szaroletta to adopt Ordinance 122-A Amending the City of Cologne Swimming Pool Ordinance, second by Commissioner Brewington. Motion carried 3-0.

5. BOARD REPORTS

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Administrator Dickson advised that Commissioners were welcome to join the City Council at their booth during Glad Days on July 23rd, and that the Freedom Storage discussion will take place at the August 5th Planning Commission meeting.

7. ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Brewington to adjourn at 6 PM, second by Commissioner Szaroletta. Motion carried 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:

Michelle M Morrison, City Clerk

Bernie Shambour, Chairperson

Collaborative Planning, LLC

Memorandum

Date: July 29, 2022
To: Cologne Planning Commission
From: Cindy Nash, City Planner
RE: Freedom Storage – Site Plan

The Planning Commission has been asked by the City Council to review a site plan for Freedom Storage. A copy of a survey for the site is included in your packets.

Property Name: Freedom Storage
PID: 400135100 (annexed in 2012) and 400132400 and 400134600
Zoning: C-3 General Business

Property Description

The property is being utilized for rental storage and consists of a mix of storage within buildings, storage in containers and outside storage of boats and other items that can be exposed to the weather.

The property also contains a railroad spur line and associated railroad usage including gravel driveways serving the railroad spur. Twin Cities and Western (“TC&W”) Railroad own an easement (“TC&W Easement”) over the northern approximately 100 feet of the property, which includes area that is also currently being used for the mini-storage use.

The property is adjoined by the following uses:

- West: Industrial (United Farmers Cooperative)
- North: TC&W Railroad
- East: TC&W Railroad spur
- South: Undeveloped

The TC&W railroad owns and operates on the parcel immediately north of the subject property. It also operates a spur line that exists on the northern edge of the subject property. The subject parcel and the TC&W parcel are relatively flat, but the elevation rises towards the residential neighborhood north of the TC&W railroad resulting in a difference in roughly 10-16 feet of elevation change. The nearest residences are approximately 250 feet from the portions of the property used for storage (and the railroad is between these residences and the storage uses).

The presence of the active railroad and the United Farmers Cooperative give the area south of the TC&W railroad a traditional smalltown industrial character.

Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan guides the Future Land Use of the Subject Property as “Mixed Use”, which would commercial, residential or a mix of the two types of uses on a parcel. The site is currently used for commercial development, but with its limited size exclusive of the TC&W easement and limited potential for street access it is less likely to be able to redevelop for residential uses than other properties located within this classification. The use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan guidance.

Zoning District

The Subject Property is zoned C-3 General Business, and “Rental Storage Buildings (mini-storage)” is a permitted use within that zoning district. The use is permitted in the zoning district.

Access, Parking and Driveways

Freedom Storage receives access from Adams Avenue South, through a property owned by United Farmers Cooperative (shown on the site plan as the westernmost parcel and building). The United Farms Cooperative access is gravel, and based on a review of historical aerial photos, gravel driveways existed through the Subject Property and over the spur line since at least 1937.

Buildings and Containers

The site contains two existing buildings, along with container storage. The container storage consists of approximately 46 units lined up with the sides touching. Approximately 34 of these units are located in the TC&W Easement, while the remaining 12 units are on the south side of the property. No additional buildings or storage containers are proposed.

For the purposes of building code, storage containers are not structures. The City Building Official previously did require the owner to obtain a building permit to tie-down the containers to ensure safety in the case of high winds. The property owner complied with the permit and it was finalized.

Outside Storage

Outside storage of items that do not need to be protected from the weather such as boats, recreational vehicles and other items is customarily provided in conjunction with indoor mini storage in smaller communities. Section 153.069 of the Zoning Ordinance requires that outside storage be completely screened from adjoining properties and rights-of-way, and it does not require complete screening from all properties in the neighborhood.

The southern property line does not have a fence, but is bordered by forest that provides complete screening at least until such time as the property to the south develops. Trees and buildings completely screen the property for the south, west and east.

A chain-link fence exists on the northern site for security purposes, but the fence does not provide complete screening. The adjoining property to the north and east is owned by the railroad, which is an industrial use. There is no privacy fencing between the TC&W railroad parcel and the residential properties to the north, but both the railroad and those houses existed by at least 1937 . Any negative impact to nearby properties due to their increased elevation above the Subject property are mitigated by the existence of a line of deciduous trees between the TC&W railroad and the residential properties that provide screening from the residential properties to the railroad and the Subject Property as shown in the image below. During the summer when the trees have leaves, there is natural screening provided between the residential properties and Freedom Storage at a height that cannot be achieved by fencing. The addition of slats in the existing fence and the walls of the containers and buildings will provide complete screening from the adjoining TC&W property to the north.



The surfacing of the outside storage must also be reviewed with a decision related to outside storage. The surfacing is currently gravel. The outside storage items are not frequently moved. Considering much of this location is also subject to TC&W Easement, gravel is an acceptable surfacing material for the outside storage.

Lighting

No changes to lighting are proposed from that existing on the site. The lighting on the site is directed downward, but is not aimed at off-site properties. Lighting was previously reviewed by Mr. Dickson in a memo to the City Council dated December 2, 2020.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the site plan subject to the following conditions:

1. No new buildings or storage containers are permitted on the site unless a new site plan is submitted for review.
2. Existing gravel surfaces shall be maintained in a dust-free condition, including the application of chemical treatment or watering as needed.
3. No use other than storage is approved for this site. No businesses shall be operated from any of the storage spaces.
4. Not later than February 1, 2023, slats shall be installed within the existing fence on the north side of the property to completely provide screening.
5. Screening of the property to the south shall be provided within six (6) months of development of the property to the south or the loss of natural screening in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance
6. The outside storage may be located on gravel in the locations shown on the site plan. Items that may be stored outside shall be neatly arranged and shall not block driveway access through the site.

**CITY OF COLOGNE
CARVER COUNTY, MINNESOTA
RESOLUTION NO. 22-03**

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A SITE PLAN FOR FREEDOM STORAGE

WHEREAS, the City of Cologne is a Minnesota Municipal Corporation, duly organized and authorized to conduct its affairs under the laws of the State of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, Freedom Storage, LLC and Alan Boehning (known herein collectively as the “Owner”) are the owners of certain real property located in the City of Cologne, State of Minnesota, located on the following PIDS:

400132400
400134600
400135100

(the “Subject Property”); and

WHEREAS, the Subject Property is zoned C-3 General Business; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the City at the direction of the City Council, at a meeting held on August 1, 2022 reviewed the site plan for the Subject Property and reviewed the staff report; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has reviewed the site plan and it makes the following *findings of fact*:

Subject Property Comprehensive Plan

1. The Subject Property is guided Mixed Use in the Comprehensive Plan. The use of the site for storage is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan guidance.

Subject Property Zoning

1. The property is currently zoned C-3 General Business. Rental Storage Buildings (mini-storage) is a permitted use within that zoning district.

Adjoining Properties

1. The property is adjoined by the following uses:
 - a. West: C-3 Commercial (United Farmers Cooperative)

- b. North: TC&W Railroad
 - c. East: TC&W Railroad spur
 - d. South: Undeveloped
2. The TC&W railroad owns and operates on the parcel immediately north of the subject property. It also operates a spur line that exists on the northern edge of the subject property.
 3. The subject parcel and the TC&W parcel are relatively flat, but the elevation rises towards the residential neighborhood north of the TC&W railroad resulting in a difference in roughly 10-16 feet of elevation change. The nearest residences are approximately 250 feet from the portions of the property used for storage (and the railroad is between these residences and the storage uses).
 4. The presence of the active railroad and the United Farmers Cooperative give the area south of the TC&W railroad a traditional smalltown industrial character.

Traffic and Street Improvements

1. The Subject Property is accessed via a gravel driveway contained within an easement from the United Farms Cooperative property to the west. The United Farms Cooperative access is gravel, and based on a review of historical aerial photos, a gravel driveway has existed through the Subject Property and over the spur line since at least 1937. It does not abut a street improved to City standards.

Buildings and Containers

1. The site contains two existing buildings, along with container storage. The container storage consists of approximately 46 units lined up with the sides touching. Approximately 34 of these units are located in the TC&W Easement, while the remaining 12 units are on the south side of the property. No additional buildings or storage containers are proposed.
2. For the purposes of building code, storage containers are not structures. The City Building Official previously did require the owner to obtain a building permit to tie-down the containers to ensure safety in the case of high winds. The work was deemed satisfactory and the permit was finalized.

Outside Storage

1. Section 153.069 of the Zoning Ordinance requires that outside storage be completely screened from adjoining properties and rights-of-way and it does not require complete screening from all properties within the neighborhood.

2. The southern property line does not have a fence, but is bordered by forest that provides screening at least until such time as the property to the south develops. Trees and buildings completely screen the property for the south, west and east.
3. A chain-link fence exists on the northern site for security purposes, but the fence does not provide complete screening. The adjoining property to the north and east is owned by the railroad, which is an industrial use.
4. There is no privacy fencing between the TC&W railroad parcel and the residential properties to the north, but both the railroad and those houses existed by at least 1937. Any negative impact to nearby properties due to their increased elevation above the Subject property are mitigated by the existence of a line of deciduous trees between the TC&W railroad and the residential properties that provide screening from the residential properties to the railroad and the Subject Property. During the summer when the trees have leaves, there is natural screening provided between the residential properties and Freedom Storage at a height that cannot be achieved by fencing.
5. The addition of slats in the existing fence and the walls of the containers and buildings will provide complete screening from the adjoining TC&W property to the north.
6. The surfacing of the outside storage is currently gravel. The outside storage items are not frequently moved. Considering much of this location is also subject to TC&W Easement, gravel is an acceptable surfacing material for the outside storage.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the site plan is approved subject to the following conditions:

1. No new buildings or storage containers are permitted on the site unless a new site plan is submitted for review.
2. Existing gravel surfaces shall be maintained in a dust-free condition, including the application of chemical treatment or watering as needed.
3. No use other than storage is approved for this site. No businesses shall be operated from any of the storage spaces.
4. Not later than February 1, 2023, slats shall be installed within the existing fence on the north side of the property to provide screening.
5. Screening of the property to the south shall be provided within six (6) months of development of the property to the south or the loss of natural screening in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance.

6. The outside storage may be located on gravel in the locations shown on the site plan. Items that may be stored outside shall be neatly arranged and shall not block driveway access through the site.

Date: August 1, 2022

Approved:

Name: Bernie Shambour
Title: Planning Commission Chair

Attested:

Michelle Morrison
City Clerk