

Contact: Eric Broce
Phone: (620) 441-4420
Fax: (620) 441-4403
ebroce@arkansascityks.gov

Public Works Department
City of Arkansas City
118 W. Central Ave.
Arkansas City, KS 67005



Press Release

Planning Commission approves subdivision regulations change

Commission votes 5-0 to loosen self-storage restrictions after public hearing

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (February 11, 2016) — The Arkansas City Planning Commission voted 5-0 on Tuesday night to approve yet another amendment to the City of Arkansas City's subdivision regulations.

The change, suggested Jan. 5 in a unanimous motion by the City Commission, will allow the doors on a proposed new storage unit to face Skyline Road or MeadowWalk Apartments, or both, as long as the site is screened from view appropriately. The previous regulations would not have allowed the doors.

The recommended change to Subdivision Regulations Article 13 will lessen existing restrictions on doorways in mini-warehouse facilities, also known as self-storage units.

"No door openings for any mini-warehouse storage unit shall be constructed facing any residentially zoned property or public right-of-way," the current language states.

The City Commission struggled with that requirement when considering a conditional-use permit for just such a storage unit at 1125 W. Skyline Road during its meeting on Dec. 1, 2015.

Testimony from the property owners indicated it would present a hardship for them, and Mayor Chad Giles was critical of the public right-of-way portion because of a possible impact on public safety.

The commissioners sent the permit back to the Planning Commission with a request to consider amending that requirement or deleting it entirely, but after extensive discussion on Dec. 8, that board declined to include an amendment as part of other revisions to the zoning and subdivision regulations.

The Planning Commission's sentiment at the time was that rather than continue to make exceptions for this single piece of property, its members preferred that the City Commission issue some direction.

In response, the City Commission instructed City Attorney Tamara Niles to draft proposed new language to fix the issue. Her alteration will allow screening to obstruct the doors from external view.

For immediate release

more

“The buildings shall be architecturally compatible with the existing neighborhood,” the City Commission’s motion stated. “To that end, newly constructed mini-warehouse storage units either shall (a) install a screen to shield door openings from residentially zoned property and public right-of-way, or (b) face door openings away from any residentially zoned property or public right-of-way.”

The planning commissioners present Tuesday night — Charles Jennings, Mike Munson, chair Dr. Scott Rogers, Charles Tweedy III and Brian Wells — had no issues with the City Commission language.

After a public hearing, during which no one spoke, they voted unanimously to recommend that the City Commission make the suggested amendment to Article 13.

The change will not become official until after the City Commission potentially approves the amendment at its meeting at 7 p.m. Tuesday at City Hall, 118 W. Central Ave., and then it is published.

Planning Commission members absent Tuesday were Gordon Fry, Andy Paton and Rick Rush.

In other business Tuesday, the Planning Commission:

- Held a public hearing to consider the advisability of and voted 5-0 to grant Cowley College’s petition to vacate the right-of-way on Buchanan Avenue, between A and Summit streets, as well as the alley in Block 2 of South Park Addition. The City will maintain a utility easement in the area, but the land otherwise will revert to the college, which owns all of the surrounding parcels. Gloria Walker, vice president of finance and administration, indicated the college has no immediate plans to change anything on the street, which leads directly to a parking lot for the college’s Travis Hafner Training Center. Tweedy said his only concern was preserving access for the Arkansas City Fire-EMS Department to fight fires on the south side of the training center. The vacation also will have to be approved Tuesday night by the City Commission to take effect.
- Received a handout and heard a presentation on the Kansas Open Meetings Act from Public Information Officer Andrew Lawson.