

**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Newton Planning and Zoning Commission**  
**Electronic Formal Meeting**  
**January 19, 2021**

ROLL CALL: Board members present: G. Berndt, Poynter, Repp, Woody  
Board members absent: J. Berndt, Cantu  
STAFF PRESENT: Brian Dunkelberger, City Planner

A quorum being present, Chair Poynter called the meeting to order at 5:07 PM.

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In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Chair Poynter questioned if there was anyone present that may require special assistance in being able to participate in this public meeting. There was no response.

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**Minutes.** Minutes of the previous meeting of October 6, 2020 were reviewed. **Motion** by G. Berndt, **seconded** by Woody to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Voice Vote: Approved 4-0.

Dunkelberger introduced Jane Johnson as the newest member of the Planning & Zoning Commission and described how her appointment had been reviewed by the Newton City Council the day before on January 18, 2021. Introductions and discussion.

**Public Hearing.**

A) AV21-1 (Alley Vacation): 200 block of South 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue East. City of Newton, Applicant.

Staff reviewed the prepared staff report and noted that no comments had been received in advance of the meeting. Feedback was requested of the abutting property owners, but no objections were received. Two property owners supported the vacation, but one had since sold their property and relocated. The buyer, or new property owner, was identified and contacted for feedback.

G. Berndt mentioned that he had visited the area to see the alley in person. He agreed that it was obvious the proposed portion of the alley to be vacated was not used and served no public purpose. Johnson inquired about the process of assigning the alley to the abutting properties. Woody described how a typical alley vacation proposal is usually submitted by neighbors abutting the alley because it is privately used and/or abandoned. She could not recall an occurrence of this specific type of proposal being rejected in the past. Chair Poynter agreed and mentioned that he could not remember one since he began with the Commission. He described how they review and usually find that an alley does not serve a public purpose.

Hearing no additional comments, Chair Poynter called for a motion to close the public hearing. **Motion** by Repp, **seconded** by G. Berndt. Approved 4-0.

With no further discussion, **Motion** by Repp to recommend approval of AV21-1, or the vacation of a portion of the north side of the north-south alley in the 200 block of South 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue East, **seconded** by G. Berndt. Approved 4-0.

**New Business:** Selection of Officers.

Dunkelberger reviewed a letter sent by the Mayor thanking the members for their ongoing service to the Newton community, and encouraging a rotation of leadership in all Boards and Commissions to help

others gain experience. Dunkelberger informed all Commission members of the available options for appointing the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary of the Commission.

G. Berndt nominated Woody to serve as the Chair, seconded by Repp. Woody explained how she had been serving as Vice Chair for years and handled meetings in the past when Chair Poynter was absent. She stated that she would be happy to serve as Chair. Approved 4-0.

Repp nominated G. Berndt to serve as the Vice Chair, seconded by Woody. G. Berndt described how he was humbled by the nomination and appreciated the other commissioners' trust in him. Approved 4-0.

The Commission members discussed the Secretary position, and determined that Repp would remain as the Secretary.

Chair Poynter detailed how he was happy to step back as he had served as Chair for many years and recalled his initial appointment in 1997. He shared with the Commission of his plans to relocate away from Newton in the near future, and felt that he should provide advance notice to all members and Staff. Commission members discussed his plans and his many years of service.

Hearing no further discussion, Chair Poynter called for a motion to adjourn.

**Motion** by G. Berndt to adjourn the meeting, **seconded** by Woody. Approved 4-0. Meeting was adjourned at 5:27 PM.