

**Minutes
Newton Planning Commission
April 24, 2012
Council Chambers
City Hall**

The regular meeting of the Newton Planning Commission was held at 7:00 p.m. on April 24, 2012 in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Members

Present:

Ken Simmons, Chairman
Melinda Travis
Jim Granny
Jim Smith
Mark Stalnaker
Donnie Setzer
Stan Gabriel

Members

Absent:

Staff Present:

Chris Bartleson, AICP, Planning Director
Alex Fulbright, AICP, Assistant Planning Director
Max Sigler, Planner

Item 1: Call to Order

Chairman Simmons called the meeting to order.

Item 2: Consideration of Minutes of the February 28, 2012 Meeting

Chairman Simmons asked for consideration of the minutes of the February 28, 2012 meeting. There being no corrections or additions, **Chairman Simmons** ruled that the minutes were approved as presented.

Item 3: Old Business

None

Item 4: New Business

Discussion Item: Accessory Dwelling Units

The City staff has become aware that some individual home owners retrofit their houses to accommodate accessory dwelling units, but the City's Zoning Ordinance has no provisions for this. Staff put together a memo listing other area municipalities that have such provisions, as well as Catawba County's provisions. Ms. Bartleson showed a general powerpoint presentation on examples of accessory dwelling units. There are many forms they can take: attached (as an addition, an upstairs apartment-type dwelling, rear entry of the main house, etc.) or detached (an apartment over a garage, an existing outbuilding, a new cottage, etc.) The powerpoint also indicated the benefits of allowing accessory dwelling units, the main one being to accommodate family members who may require "independent-type" living quarters. The Public Works Department has stated that they would require separate utility hook ups.

The following comments were taken from the Planning Commission members & public:

Member Jim Granny – thought separate unit would be better, but would like to see pluses and minuses of both types; concerned about parking and the number of people who could live in an ADU.

Member Jim Smith – would like to see a minimum size of 500-700 sf or a maximum of 25% of floor area of principal dwelling unit.

Mark Childers – he is glad that the Planning Commission is considering this issue, and changing the Zoning Ordinance will be appreciated. This is something that is going on under the radar currently.

Member Mark Stalnaker would like to see the Planning Staff come back with some text amendment suggestions at the next meeting, and also bring a whiteboard to write down topics of discussion on the issue.

Item 6: Reports

Monthly activity report distributed at meeting.

Item 7: Training

None

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Bartleson, AICP
Recording Secretary