

**CITY OF EYOTA  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 18, 2017**

**Present:** Members: Lief Hughes, Janet Hughes, Casey Johnson, John Chesney and Franklin Merchant  
Secretary: Marlis Knowlton

**Absent:** Council Reps Bryan Cornell and Ray Schuchard

**Guest:** Galyn Speltz and Karen Larson, property owners

**Call to Order:** Chair Lief Hughes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Approve Agenda:** Motion was made by Janet Hughes and seconded by Johnson to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried.

**Minutes:** Motion was made by Lief Hughes and seconded by Chesney to approve the December 21, 2016 regular meeting minutes and the January 11, 2017 special meeting minutes as presented. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried.

**Public Hearing – Rezoning for Galyn Tucker Speltz, 123 Center Avenue S:**

Current zoning does allow for living units on the second floor. The main level is designated to be commercial use. Speltz would like to have apartment units on both floors. The parcel would need to be rezoned in order to allow for living units on the main level. It is conceivable to rezone it because there is other R-2 nearby. The building does, however, take up the entire parcel so there is no space for parking; R-2 has specific parking availability requirements.

Motion was made by Lief Hughes and seconded by Janet Hughes to close the regular meeting and open the public hearing. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried.

Lief Hughes explained the property, 123 Center Avenue S, PIN 62.14.24.028199, lot 10, block 9 of the Original Eyota Plat, is currently zoned C-1 (commercial) and the request is to have the zoning changed to R-2 (high density residential). See “Exhibit A”

Galyn Speltz, owner of the vacant apartment building, addressed the Commission and gave a little history of the property. He is involved in other rental property, he had seen this property was for sale last February and believed it was a six unit building. Just days before the closing he was informed current zoning regulations would be enforced; living quarters allowed on the second floor only and commercial units on the main floor. He bought it anyway, knowing he could request it to be rezoned. He started to gut the interior and advertised apartments coming soon to Eyota. He got one hundred responses, at a price of \$575 for a single bedroom and from that saw the need for housing in Eyota. The next two or three months he saw very few commercial opportunities with the connections he had made. He is excited to have apartments, six units with eight bedrooms, and that would be very feasible. The building has been vacant a long time and is a drain on the City and it does not look nice.

Speltz noted that if there are commercial business opportunities he is open to that, but still likes the idea of having all apartment units.

Karen Larson, owner of the Greendoor adjacent to the apartment building, commented that this was a previous hotel but there is nothing historical about it. It has been flooded and two previous owners received money to improve the building but did a terrible job. Previous owners have not screened tenants and that was apparent by the tenants that lived there. She worked with the previous owners (regarding renting parking spaces to the tenants) but it did not work out well. The tenants would not move their cars when the lot needed to be plowed, the tenants owned her money for the parking spaces and she even had to have one towed at her expense. There are animals living in the building right now. Larson is not ready to rent parking spaces now because she is flirting with the idea of selling her business and would not want to be in a rental agreement. Larson questioned how previous owners got by with having rental units and now the rules have changed. Larson also went on to explain the apartment property is not being maintained, there is water coming off the roof into the parking lot. It is very dangerous and looks terrible. How long is this rehab going to take, it needs to be fixed soon because it looks terrible and it is dangerous with all the ice in the parking lot coming from the water off the roof.

Lief Hughes noted that the parking is a huge issue.

Speltz explained that within one hundred feet there are property owners to ask to rent out parking spaces and he would even maybe pay for gravel for a parking spot. He would work with other businesses in the area for options. Speltz explained to Larson that the regulations have changed because the water was shut off for a long/specific amount of time.

Larson said if she sells her business a future owner may rent out parking spots, but right now she does not need the money that bad or the headaches. She just cannot rent spots right now.

Speltz said anyone can go to the Speltz Property LLC website and sign up as a tenant. The applicant will be screened by a national software system. Screening used to be expensive and time consuming; now it is quick and only fifteen dollars.

Larson commented that the other rental property to the west is also a problem.

Lief Hughes questioned if there were any written public comments submitted. Knowlton verified there were not.

Chesney voiced his concern about providing parking spaces for the renters. How is Speltz going to remedy that?

Speltz said he would pay for the parking spaces, a year in advance; that way there would not be a need to run down tenants for payments. He would pay for gravel to create parking spaces.

Janet Hughes asked what if no one will agree to rent out spaces.

Speltz said the prices will determent that. He could also limit, in the lease, one car per unit. He lived in the twin cities in college with thirteen others and there were only four parking spots and they made it work. The market will fix it. He could offer a lottery or auction off the parking spots; there are a variety of options on his end for the tenants.

Larson said now the story is changing, Speltz did not previously say that he would pay in advance for the rent on the parking spots. How would he move the cars for plowing?

Speltz said maybe he could impose fines, court appointed penalties or require the owners to give him a set of car keys so he could move the cars.

No more comments. Motion was made by Lief Hughes and seconded by Merchant to close the public hearing and reopen the regular meeting. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried.

Janet Hughes sees the need for lower level apartments, but knowing the parking is still an issue, it needs to be hammered out. Chesney agree there needs to be off street parking provided. Lief Hughes agreed there is a need for apartment units but without undue burden on the other businesses. Merchant suggested one space per unit would need to be in writing.

Motion was made by Janet Hughes and seconded by Chesney, do not rezone to R-2 at this time because of the unknown, due to lack of parking spaces. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried.

The City needs to make a decision regarding the rezoning request within a specific time period; so Speltz may not have unlimited time to provide a solution for the parking situation. The sixty day rules need to be researched and provided to the Commission and to Speltz.

Speltz requested information regarding area property owners to contact regarding parking options and if an extension could be requested. The regulations will need to be verified.

**Ordinance Codification:** Merchant said he would provide the final edited version of the fire ordinance to Knowlton to be included in the next agenda. Yes, it includes wording that the City will invoice for fire calls and the fees will be set in the fee schedule.

It was suggested to have Knowlton contact American Legal and request an extension to submit ordinance information to maybe May.

**Other Business:** none

**Adjourn:** Motion was made by Janet Hughes and seconded by Merchant to adjourn. Ayes 5, Nays 0. Motion carried. Meeting was declared adjourned at 8:04 p.m.



Marlis Knowlton  
Clerk/Treasurer

CITY OF EYOTA, MINNESOTA

DATE:

TO: Zoning Administrator  
City Hall  
Eyota, Minnesota 55934

PETITION FOR A ZONING DISTRICT CHANGE

The undersigned (do) (does) hereby petition the Common Council of the City of Eyota, Minnesota, to change the zoning districting of the real estate described herein and (do) (does) hereby certify (he) (they) (is) (are) the owner(s) of at least one property proposed to be reclassified.

NAME OF PETITIONER: Galyn Tucker Speltz

PETITIONER'S ADDRESS: 16673 Bethany Dr. Altura, MN 55910

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY TO BE REZONED: PIN 62.14.24.028199

Sect-14 Twp-106 Range-012 Original Plat (Eyota)

Lot-010 Block-009 S45FT Lot 10 Blk 9

ADDRESS OF PROPERTY TO BE REZONED: 123 Center Ave. <sup>South</sup> Eyota, MN

EXISTING USE OF PROPERTY: Lower <sup>(C-1)</sup> Level: Commercial Use Upper Level: Residential <sup>(R-2)</sup>

EXISTING ZONING DISTRICT: Lower (C-1) Upper (R-2)

REQUESTED ZONING DISTRICT: Requesting Residential zoning for 6 units <sup>(R-2)</sup> N<sup>o</sup> Commercial

PROPOSED USE OF PROPERTY: 6 Unit apartment building (R2)

REASONS FOR THIS PETITION: Would be a very good use for the property - Commercial prospects would be more attracted to single buildings near Kwik-Trip. (See Attached Sheet)

The undersigned hereby attests to the truth and correctness of all information presented with this application.

Respectfully,

Tucker Speltz  
(Petitioner(s) Signature Required)

16673 Bethany Dr. Altura, MN (507)-429-1338  
(Address) (Phone)

(Petitioner(s) Signature Required (address) (Phone)

"Exhibit A"

## Petition for a Zoning Change

**Name Of Petitioner:** Galyn Tucker Speltz

**Petitioner's Address:** 16673 Bethany Dr. Altura, MN 55910

**Legal Description of Property to be Rezoned:** Original Plot; Block 9, Plat 10  
PIN-62.14.24.028199

**Address of Property to be Rezoned:** 123 Center Ave. Eyota, MN 55934

**Existing Use of Property:** Lower Level-(C-1) Commercial Upper Level-(R-2) Residential

**Existing Zoning District:** Multi-Use~ Lower(C-1);Upper (R-2)

**Requesting Zoning District:** Residential Multi-Family (R-2) for whole building

**Usage Proposed Use of Property:** The vision of the project is to utilize the space in its most appropriate and valuable use. I propose that the existing 6 units in the building be renovated into rustically finished eco-friendly living spaces. They will be completely gutted and refinished.

**Reasons for Petition:** I am petitioning the council because 6 well finished housing units optimizes the value of 123 Center Avenue and its benefit to the community. Having 6 additional units available in the downtown area of Eyota would be very attractive to individuals that may work in the Rochester/Eyota area. Housing in Rochester and the surrounding communities is currently very expensive because of the demand due to Rochester's Destination Medical Center. Eyota is a perfect alternative; it has great features including the small town feel, great parks, walking paths, and an outstanding school district.

The commercial use prospects of the lower level would be a logistical nightmare due to all of the unknowns and variable factors. The fundamental question that would need to be answered encompassing development concerns would be: What would a commercial business want/need? With respect to the allowable uses for the current space under zoning and allowable business operations, the scope of businesses looking for the type of space offered are severely limited. Putting myself in the mind of a business owner, they would have to wait for construction to be completed as well as be locked into a long term commitment while paying rent on a space they don't own. However, an individual can put up a building relatively cheap in the current market. Steel prices are extremely low due to slowdown in China, concrete is competitively priced and if a business wants to establish themselves in the community, a new building is a great brand builder and advertiser; being visible from highway 14. This adds value and makes more sense for the establishment of continued economic growth in the city of Eyota.

The single largest concern of the project to the public good is parking. Looking at the lot and the parking directly connected to the street from the building, 4 spots could be allocated for reasonable use for parking directly connected to the property. Taking notice of the amount of cars normally street parked there should be no issue with overcrowding parking in the area. This being said, from an aesthetics point of view and to satisfy snow removal regulations, households and businesses surrounding the property will have the opportunity to rent out additional available parking. These contracts would be short or long term with prices based on supply and demand. I am a firm believer that the market can find creative solutions to solve a variety of challenges; with respect to parking, the market will find a solution.

Over the years 123 Center Avenue's maintenance and updates have been sub-par making the current space relatively uninhabitable. By using trendy, structural and design

approaches my vision is to make 123 Center Avenue a Cornerstone in the downtown area for professionals to live in Eyota. This would optimize the value of the property and its benefit to the community by providing quality, eco-friendly housing as well as increased population leading to economic growth opportunities for the existing businesses in the downtown area.