



## MINUTES

**Carbondale Planning Commission**  
**Wednesday, April 5th, 2023**  
**Room 108, 6:00 p.m.**  
**City Hall/Civic Center**

Ms. Litecky called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

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**Members Present:** Litecky, Hamilton, Allee, Carrier

**Members Absent:** Sheffer, Burnside, Love, Doherty (ex-officio)

**Staff Present:** Lenzini, Becker, Maxwell

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### **1. Approval of Minutes:**

Mr. Carrier moved, seconded by Dr. Hamilton, to approve the minutes for March 15, 2023.

### **2. Citizen Comments or Questions**

Pheral Lamb stepped forward to introduce themselves and spoke about their plans for community involvement and their interest in the commission's work.

### **3. Report of Officers, Committees, Communications**

There were none.

### **4. Public Hearings**

**PC 23-07** The City Council of the City of Carbondale, Illinois has directed city staff to initiate a text amendment to Title 15 of the City of Carbondale Revised Code (CCRC) to define and allow for community gardens and their associated accessory uses.

Ms. Litecky declared Public Hearing PC 23-07 open.

Ms. Litecky asked Ms. Becker to read the staff report. Ms. Becker read Part A of the staff report.

Ms. Litecky asked if the Commissioners had questions for staff.

Commissioners had no questions of staff.

Ms. Litecky asked if the applicant was present and wished to speak.

City staff was present and willing to answer any questions.

Ms. Litecky asked if anyone wished to speak in favor.

Mr. Hall stepped forward to speak in favor of PC 23-07. Mr. Hall asked city staff what kind of structures would be permitted in community gardens. Ms. Becker stated that the text amendment allows for sheds or gazebos as accessory structures in community gardens.

Ms. Litecky asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition.

Victor Ludwig stepped forward and stated that he seeks clarification. Mr. Ludwig noted that he did not see anything in the proposal allowing greenhouses and asked if glass structure greenhouses would be allowed. Mr. Lenzini stated that they would be allowed and considered a principle structure.

Mr. Ludwig stated he was opposed to the fact that there is no grandfather clause in the proposal regarding structures on existing community gardens. Mr. Lenzini stated that the city would work with existing community gardens regarding their existing structures.

Mr. Ludwig stated that his opposition is based on this is not being outlined within the proposal. Mr. Ludwig stated he would like those going through the permit process for community gardens to be rewarded in some way by the City.

Ms. Litecky asked the Commissioners if they had any questions for the community member.

There were none.

Ms. Litecky asked Ms. Becker to read Parts B and C of the staff report. Ms. Becker read Parts B and C of the staff report for PC 23-07, with a recommendation of approval.

Ms. Litecky asked if the Commissioners had questions for staff.

Mr. Carrier asked about requirements for insurance coverage for community gardens. Mr. Lenzini stated he believes that is a decision for the private property owner or community garden organization to make. Mr. Lenzini asked if there were any community garden members present that would like to share their input. Abby Cruz, a member of several community gardens in Carbondale, stepped forward to speak. Ms. Cruz stated the three gardens she is involved with do have insurance policies.

Dr. Hamilton asked Mr. Lenzini what additional costs were foreseen with the policing of community gardens. Mr. Lenzini discussed the potential enforcement needed for community gardens.

Ms. Allee voiced concern about the design and maintenance plan for a zoning certificate to be given to those wishing to start a community garden and discussed possible changes to the text amendment. Ms. Becker discussed the intention behind the design and maintenance plan. Ms. Maxwell added that there are no limits or requirements as the text amendment is written.

Mr. Carrier asked if a community garden would need to renew their permit or if it was continuous after first obtaining their zoning certificate. Mr. Lenzini confirmed that it would be a one-time zoning certificate without need for renewal. Mr. Carrier and Mr. Lenzini discussed the process of decommissioning community gardens that have fallen wayside.

Dr. Hamilton asked how many community gardens currently existed in Carbondale. Dr. Hamilton also asked what the demand of new gardens or a need for text amendment was. Ms. Becker stated that there are 10 community gardens currently in Carbondale. Ms. Becker stated the text amendment was not necessarily a response to community request but rather to support existing community gardens and allow for more to be established.

Ms. Litecky asked if there were questions from anyone to anyone.

Pheral Lamb stepped forward and asked if the text amendment could be written to include more flexibility for greenhouses. Mr. Lenzini discussed principle and accessory structures and their limits on community gardens. Mr. Carrier discussed the need for clarification of the definition of greenhouses. Mr. Lenzini discussed the possibility of increasing the limit on size of principle structures. Ms. Becker clarified that most hoop houses are not considered an accessory structure since they are temporary structures. Ms. Becker discussed the differences between hoop houses, greenhouses, sheds, gazebos, the size limits for them and their use categories. The commissioners agreed to change the size limit of a principle structure on a community garden lot from 5% of overall lot size, to 10% of the overall lot size.

Mr. Ludwig stepped forward and asked if the commission realized that raising the limit of a principle structure to 10% of total lot size would include not only community gardens, but all parks and open spaces. Mr. Lenzini stated he did not foresee this becoming an issue.

Dan Jutrice stepped forward and asked if there was a cost associate with a community garden application. Ms. Becker stated that zoning certificates, which include fences, site plans, accessory structures, etc., have a \$10 fee and that community gardens would need a zoning certificate. Mr. Jutrice asked if community gardens would have support from the city for community garden organizations seeking funding. Ms. Becker stated that the city is able to write letters of support for community gardens who may seek outside grants or funding.

Pheral Lamb stepped forward again and asked if community gardens should be included in the same area of code as parks and open areas, or if it would be better if community gardens were their own category. Ms. Becker stated that staff chose to outline community gardens as an example of a principle use because previously, community gardens had been included

in the definition of parks and open areas.

Ms. Litecky declared PC 23-07 closed and asked for a motion on the findings of fact.

Mr. Carrier moved that the Commission accept as findings of fact Part A & B of the staff report for PC 23-07, and seconded by Dr. Hamilton.

The motion was passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Ms. Litecky asked for a motion for the recommendation to City Council

Mr. Carrier moved to recommend City Council to approve PC 23-07 as proposed with the inclusion of the commission's decision to raise the principle structure limit to 10%, seconded by Dr. Hamilton

Roll Call Vote:

Yes – 3 (Carrier, Hamilton, Litecky)

No – 1 (Allee)

Mr. Lenzini stated that the item will move forward with recommendation for approval of PC 23-07 for the April 25<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting.

**PC 23-08** The City Council of the City of Carbondale, Illinois has directed city staff to initiate a text amendment to the City of Carbondale Revised Code (CCRC) to define and establish parameters for pollinator-supportive landscaping.

Ms. Litecky declared Public Hearing PC 23-08 open and for Ms. Becker to review PC 23-08.

Ms. Litecky asked Ms. Becker to read the staff report. Ms. Becker read part A of the staff report.

Ms. Litecky asked if the Commissioners had questions for staff.

Commissioners had no questions of staff.

Ms. Litecky asked if the applicant was present and wished to speak.

City staff was present and willing to answer any questions.

Ms. Litecky asked if there were any questions for the applicant.

There were no questions of the applicant.

Ms. Litecky asked if anyone wished to speak in favor.

Ms. Jane Cogey stepped forward and spoke in favor of PC 23-08.

Ms. Litecky asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition.

There were none.

Ms. Becker read Parts B and C of the staff report for PC 23-08, with a recommendation of approval.

Ms. Litecky asked if the Commissioners had questions for staff.

Mr. Carrier asked who would be policing pollinator gardens. Ms. Becker stated that the neighborhood weed inspector would be. Mr. Carrier asked if they would be receiving special training relating to pollinator gardens. Ms. Becker confirmed. There was a discussion about the weed inspector position and policy.

Dr. Hamilton asked how much education would be provided to the new weed inspector. Ms. Becker confirmed that the weed inspector would receive training from the University of Illinois Extension. There was a discussion between the commissioners and staff about the city code and the enforcement of the code, and reasons for specific language being used within the code for clarification and protection rather than restriction.

Ms. Litecky asked if there were questions from anyone to anyone.

Ms. Cogey stepped forward and asked Mr. Carrier if there was anything in particular in the list of requirements that he disliked or if it was the requirements in general. Mr. Carrier stated he didn't like the idea that there needs to be written regulations on gardening but he understands that this text amendment is in the spirit of protection rather than restriction.

Mr. Joe Powers stepped forward and asked for clarification between the difference of a flower garden and a pollinator garden. Mr. Powers asked for clarification on what the sight visibility standards meant and if this was the 15 foot required front setback. Ms. Becker confirmed sight visibility standards and clarified that flower gardens and pollinator gardens are the same.

Ms. Litecky declared PC 23-08 closed and asked for a motion on the findings of fact.

Mr. Carrier gave a motion for a finding of fact, seconded by Ms. Allee.

The motion was passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Ms. Allee moved that the Commission recommend approval of PC 23-08 to City Council, seconded by Mr. Carrier.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes – 4 (Carrier, Allee, Hamilton, Litecky)

No- 0

Mr. Lenzini stated that the item will move forward with recommendation for approval for the April 25th City Council meeting.

**5. Old Business**

There was none.

**6. New Business**

There was none discussed.

**7. Adjournment**

Dr. Hamilton moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Carrier.