



NORTH BRANCH
City of North Branch
Staff Report

Prepared By: Carla Vita, Community Development Director

Date: October 26, 2021

Subject: An Ordinance Amending City Code Sections 66-507, 66-533, 66-570, 66-603, 66-633, 66-663, 66-675, 66-943

-Background Information:

City Staff periodically brings up areas of City Code that require update, especially with the implementation of the new City Comprehensive Plan. This section of City Code not only is required due to an update from the new Comprehensive Plan, but also from the joint meetings of the City Council, Economic Development Authority and Planning Commission over the past year regarding facades. This section of Code brought all the comments from the meetings together and will ensure that development meets the appearance that was discussed in consensus of the City Council, EDA and Planning Commission.

Planning Commission Recommendation:

The Planning Commission met and held a public hearing on October 5, 2021. A copy of the draft section of minutes is attached. The Planning Commission is recommending approval of the ordinance as presented and with the following:

Findings of Fact:

1. The Code is being updated due to the new Comprehensive Plan and the meetings regarding facades with the Planning Commission, City Council and Economic Development Authority.
2. The text amendments are consistent with the City Comprehensive Plan as it ensures proper and well-thought out development and updating ordinances as needed, pages 28 to 29 within the Comprehensive Plan.
3. The text amendments would apply to all zoning districts.
4. The text amendments are consistent with the spirit and intent of the code.

Requested City Council Action:

Approve the attached ordinance as presented.

Voting Requirements:

>Simple Majority

Attachments:

**66-507, 66-533, 66-570, 66-603, 66-633, 66-663, 66-675, 66-974 Planning Commission Draft
Minutes 10.5.21 (DOCX)**

STATE OF MINNESOTA

COUNTY OF CHISAGO

CITY OF NORTH BRANCH

ORDINANCE NO. 325-21

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CITY CODE SECTIONS 66-507, 66-533, 66-570, 66-603, 66-633, 66-663, 66-675, 66-943

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH BRANCH, MINNESOTA ORDAINS:

SECTION 1: AMENDMENT - Chapter 66 of the North Branch City Code is hereby amended as follows:

DIVISION 11 CBD CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Section 66-507 Design Standards

All structures in this zoning district must meet 66-943(b) ~~the city design guidelines and be approved by the city design committee.~~

DIVISION 12 B-2 LIMITED BUSINESS DISTRICT

Section 66-533 Design Standards

All structures in this zoning district must meet 66-943(b) ~~the city design guidelines and be approved by the city design committee.~~

DIVISION 13 B-3 REGIONAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Section 66-570 Design Standards

All structures in this zoning district must meet 66-943(b) ~~the city design guidelines and be approved by the city design committee.~~

DIVISION 14 I-1 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL/OFFICE DISTRICT

Section 66-603 Design Standards

All structures in this zoning district must meet 66-943(b) ~~the city design guidelines and be approved by the city design committee.~~

DIVISION 15 I-2 GENERAL INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

Section 66-633 Design Standards

All structures in this zoning district must meet 66-943(b) ~~the city design guidelines and be approved by the city design committee.~~

DIVISION 16 I-3 PLANNED INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

Section 66-663 Design Standards

All structures in this zoning district must meet 66-943(b) ~~the city design guidelines and be approved by the city design committee.~~

DIVISION 17 I-4 INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

Section 66-675 Design Standards

~~All structures in the I-4 district must meet city design guidelines and must be approved by the city design committee.~~

~~The city encourages the use of masonry construction for the exterior of all buildings in the I-4 zoning district. Masonry construction is defined as follows: face brick, natural or cut stone, stucco, dri vit, split face rock or other types of artificial stone. With city council approval, the city may approve an alternative exterior surface if it meets the following standards:~~

~~(a) The alternative exterior surface is part of a trademarked look or theme.~~

~~(b) All outside trash receptacles and recycling containers shall be screened with an enclosure that is constructed with materials that match the building.~~

~~Any accessory structure must be constructed of similar materials and appearance to those of the principal structure.~~

All structures in this zoning district must meet 66-943(b).

ARTICLE IX SUPPLEMENTARY DISTRICT REGULATIONS

Section 66-943 Design Standards

~~(b) Additional design standards for architectural appearance, functional plan and landscaping are found in the city design guidelines. Where design standards in this chapter and the design guidelines conflict, the more restrictive standards shall prevail.~~

(b) Architectural standards.

The requirements contained within this Division shall not apply to any structure in the Agricultural, Rural Residential or Park/Open Space districts. It shall apply to all structures used for commercial purposes in Single-Family Residential, Medium Density Residential, and High Density Residential, all structures in the Central Business, Commercial, and Industrial Districts.

These standards are intended to ensure coordinated design of new and existing building exteriors, including additions and accessory structures, in order to prevent visual disharmony; minimize adverse impacts on adjacent properties from buildings which detract from the character and appearance of the district; and aid in improving the overall economic viability of the district. These standards are further intended to prevent use of materials that are unsightly, subject to rapid deterioration or which contribute to depreciation of property values or cause urban blight. It is not the intent of this Section to unduly restrict design freedom when reviewing and approving project architecture in relationship to the proposed land use, site characteristics and interior building layout. While the City of North Branch has not established a theme or particular style of architecture that must be adhered to, a general goal of creating a professional appearance with architectural appeal associated with a small city atmosphere is desired within the City of North Branch.

(1) Architectural plans shall be prepared by an architect or other qualified person (as determined by the Zoning Administrator) and shall show the following:

- (a) Elevations of all sides of the building.
- (b) Type and color of exterior building materials.
- (c) Typical floor plans.
- (d) Dimensions of all structures.
- (e) The location of trash containers and of exterior electrical, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment.
- (f) Utility plans including water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer.
- (g) Additional plans deemed necessary by the Zoning Administrator.

(2) Exterior building materials shall be subject to Zoning Administrator approval and the following:

- (a) Zone 1: Structures must provide a cohesive architectural appearance reflecting its functional purpose and must be composed of at least sixty-five percent (65%) Class I materials; not more than thirty-five percent (35%) percent Class II materials.
- (b) Zone 2: Structures must provide a cohesive architectural appearance reflecting its functional purpose and must be composed of at least fifty percent (50%) Class I materials; not more than thirty-five percent (50%) percent Class II materials.
- (c) Zone 3: Structures must provide a cohesive architectural appearance reflecting its functional purpose and must be minimally composed of thirty-five percent (35%) Class I materials; with the remaining being sixty-five percent (65%) percent Class II materials.
- (d) Classes of materials. For the purposes of this subdivision, exterior materials shall be divided into Class I and Class II categories as follows:

1. Class I consisting of:

- i. Brick,
- ii. Natural stone (or similar appearing, high quality manufactured stone),
- iii. Glass curtain wall,
- iv. Copper,
- v. Other comparable or superior materials, or
- vi. New materials that meet the intent of the preamble above.

2. Class II consisting of:

- i. Specialty concrete block such as burnished, textured or rock face,
- ii. Architecturally precast concrete panels having an exposed aggregate, light sandblast, acid etch, form liner, smooth as cast, tooled, natural stone veneer, brick face and/or cast stone type finish,
- iii. Masonry stucco,
- iv. Fiber-cement exterior siding,
- v. Other comparable or superior materials,
- vi. New materials that meet the intent of the preamble above.
- vii. Exterior finish installation system (EFIS),

- viii. Opaque panels,
- ix. Ornamental metal,
- x. Smooth concrete block,
- xi. Scored concrete block,
- xii. Smooth concrete tilt-up panels,
- xiii. Glazed block,
- xiv. Glass block,
- xv. Ceramic,
- xvi. Other comparable or superior materials, or
- xvii. New materials that meet the intent of the preamble above.

(c) A distinctly different color of brick may be considered as a second Class I material, however, minor blended color combinations shall not be considered as a separate material.

(d) Buildings may be constructed primarily of one (1) specific Class I material provided that the design fits the purpose of the building and is obviously superior to the general intent of this Division to provide visual interest, variation in detailing, and eliminate long wall sections without windows.

(e) Garish or bright accent colors for awnings, trim, banding, walls, entries or any portion of the building shall be minimized, but in no case shall such coloring exceed five percent (5%) of each wall area.

(f) Exposed roof materials shall be similar to, or an architectural equivalent of a high quality asphalt shingle (300# or better), wood shingle, standing seam metal roof, or better.

(3) The overall architectural character shall have a consistent architectural expression on all sides of the building and be compatible with its surroundings.

(4) Windows or simulated windows shall be used on the ground level of any wall parallel to or nearly parallel to a street.

(5) All structures, including parking ramps shall be designed to be architecturally integrated into the overall site and be made of comparable materials and decorative elements.

(6) All façade treatments shall be maintained so as to not be unsightly in appearance or in a state of disrepair, nor shall harmful health or safety conditions be present for the life of the project.

(7) Prohibited Exterior Materials:

(a) Vinyl Siding.

(b) Metal Siding, except as provided above.

(c) Formed Metal Panels with exposed fasteners.

(d) Pre-engineered post-frame structures with agricultural grade metal wall and roof panels, commonly called “pole barns” are not permitted.

(8) Exceptions – The following exceptions to the exterior building material requirements may apply:

(a) The use is an essential service as defined by this Division; or

(b) The applicant shall have the burden of demonstrating that:

1. The proposed building maintains the quality in design and materials intended by this Division,

2. The proposed building design and materials are compatible and in harmony with other structures within the district,

3. The justification for deviation from the requirements of this section shall not be based on economic considerations.

(c) Sides of a building which are not visible from any public road may use any combination of Class I or II materials, if approved by the Planning Commission and City Council. The applicant must be able to demonstrate that said side of building is not visible from any public road.

(d) Garage doors, window trim, flashing, accent items and the like, shall not constitute required materials that make up the exterior finish of a building for the purposes of this section.

SECTION 2: EFFECTIVE DATE - This ordinance shall take effect following its passage and publication.

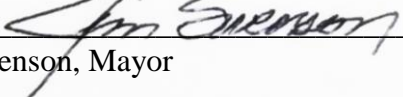
Note: The numbering and alphabetizing within the proposed City Code below may be different upon codification.

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS] MOVER: Jim Swenson, Mayor SECONDER: Kathy Blomquist, Councilmember AYES: Swenson, Neider, Blomquist, Darwin, Meacham

Passed and adopted this 26th day of October 2021

CITY OF NORTH BRANCH



BY: 
Jim Swenson, Mayor

ATTEST: 
Renae Fry, City Administrator

c. An Ordinance Amending City Code, Sections 66-507, 66-533, 66-570, 66-603, 66-633, 66-663, 66-675, 66-943

Vita reported that city staff are recommending revisions to the city code regarding the requirements for building facades in various districts, albeit primarily for commercial buildings in any district and all buildings in the industrial areas. The recommendations are based on conversations at joint meetings of the City Council, Economic Development Authority and Planning Commission over the past year. Staff are recommending to modify City Code sections 66-507, 66-533, 66-570, 66-603, 66-633, 66-663, 66-675 and 66-943 as set forth on the summary attached to the agenda packet.

No one appeared to offer comment and following discussion, the members of the planning commission voted to recommend approval of the ordinance amendments based on the following findings of fact:

1. The Code is being updated due to the new Comprehensive Plan and the meetings regarding facades with the Planning Commission, City Council and Economic Development Authority.
2. The text amendments are consistent with the City Comprehensive Plan as it ensures proper and well-thought out development and updating ordinances as needed, pages 28 to 29 of the Comprehensive Plan.
3. The text amendments would apply to all applicable zoning districts.
4. The text amendments are consistent with the spirit and intent of the code.

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]

MOVER: Steven Schmidt, Commissioner

SECONDER: Kevin Schieber, Commissioner

AYES: Schaefer, Jennrich, Nysse, Schieber, Schmidt