

Special permit zoning change denied

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Thursday, 24 March 2011 13:52 -

Council asks resident to re-file proposal.

A downtown Gothenburg resident would like a special use permit so his ground-level living quarters, in a commercial district, can be considered residential.

Jason Fiese, who lives in a building at 616 Ninth St., asked the Gothenburg City Council to grant his request because of high costs to operate a heat pump.

During a public hearing at the council's March 15 meeting, Fiese said his water bill has been as high as \$800 a month because water is metered and charged a commercial business rate by the city.

Fiese said he lives in the front half of the building and stores cars and motorcycles in the back half where he also keeps tools to use in his Do It All Drywall and Decks business.

City administrator Bruce Clymer said the planning and zoning commission, earlier this month, approved a special use permit for the single-family dwelling but later had questions about the request.

Clymer said members didn't know they could apply conditions to special use permits.

Council president Jeff Kennedy said he would like to see conditions so planning and zoning and the council could better control how special use permits are used.

"We need to be comfortable that everyone understands what can or cannot happen," he said.

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For example, unless properties are abandoned for a year, special use permits remain attached, according to city attorney Mike Bacon.

With a special use permit allowing the commercially zoned building to be used as a residence, Bacon said problems could occur if Fiese sold the building and the new owner wanted to turn the property into a shop.

“You can do limits with time and ownership,” Bacon said.

Jason’s father, Larry Fiese, pointed out several

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