

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SEPTEMBER 25, 2013
7:00 PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

Scherer, Schroeder, Potts, Fischer, Kilberg, Halva, Carr, Platteter, Forrest, Grabiell, Staunton.

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Commissioner Potts moved approval of the September 25, 2013 meeting agenda. Commissioner Platteter seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Scherer moved approval of the September 11, 2013 meeting minutes. Commissioner Potts seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

V. COMMUNITY COMMENT

During "Community Comment," the Planning Commission will invite residents to share new issues or concerns that haven't been considered in the past 30 days by the Commission or which aren't slated for future consideration. Individuals must limit their comments to three minutes. The Chair may limit the number of speakers on the same issue in the interest of time and topic. Generally speaking, items that are elsewhere on this morning's agenda may not be addressed during Community Comment. Individuals should not expect the Chair or Commission Members to respond to their comments today. Instead, the Commission might refer the matter to staff for consideration at a future meeting.

No public comment.

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Preliminary Plat with Variances. AKARE Companies. 5820 Brookview Avenue, Edina, MN

Planner Presentation

Planner Teague informed the Commission AKARE Companies LLC on behalf of John Peterson is proposing to subdivide the property at 5820 Brookview Avenue into two lots. The existing home would be torn down, and two new homes built on the new lots. Planner Teague noted the following is

required; subdivision approval, lot width variances from 75 feet to 50 feet for each lot; and lot area variances from 9,000 square feet to 6,711 square feet for each lot.

Teague explained that both lots would gain access off Brookview Avenue. Within this neighborhood, the median lot area is 6,725 square feet, median lot depth is 134 feet, and the median lot width is 50 feet. The new lots would meet the median width and depth, but would just fall short of the median lot size.

Teague concluded that staff recommends that the City Council approve the proposed two lot subdivision of 5820 Brookview Avenue and the lot width variances from 75 feet to 50 feet and lot area variances from 9,000 square feet to 6,711square feet based on the following findings:

1. Except for the variances, the proposal meets the required standards and ordinance for a subdivision.
2. The subdivision would meet the neighborhood medians for lot width and depth and nearly meet the median area.
3. The proposal would restore the property back to the form of the original plat, which included two lots.
4. The proposal meets the required standards for a variance, because:
 - a. The practical difficult unique to the property is caused by the existing size of the property which is two times the size of every lot on the block. This is caused by the original property owner, who combined two lots into one.
 - b. The requested variances are reasonable in the context of the immediate neighborhood. The existing lot is both larger and wider than most properties in the area, including nearly every lot on the block. The proposed subdivision would result in two lots more characteristic of the neighborhood.
 - c. The proposed lots would be the same size as the lots were originally platted.
 - d. The variances would meet the intent of the ordinance because the proposed lots are of similar size to others in the neighborhood.
 - e. If the variances were denied, the applicant would be denied a use of his property, a 50-foot wide lot, which is common to the area. In addition, the applicant would be denied a subdivision with variances that has been previously approved by the City, including the same request for a subdivision with variances that were approved right across the street in 2011.

Approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. The city must approve the final plat within one year of preliminary approval or receive a written application for a time extension or the preliminary approval will be void.
2. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the following items must be submitted:
 - a. Submit evidence of Minnehaha Creek Watershed District approval. The City may require revisions to the preliminary plat to meet the district's requirements.

- b. A curb-cut permit must be obtained from the Edina Engineering department.
- c. Utility hook-ups are subject to review of the city engineer.
- d. Grading and drainage plans specific to any proposed house would be reviewed at the time of building permit, and shall be subject to review and approval of the city engineer. Drainage from any new home, garage or driveway would have to be directed to Brookview Avenue.

Appearing for the Applicant

Rob Eldridge of Ridge Creek Custom Homes and John Peterson, property owner.

Applicant Presentation

Mr. Eldridge addressed the Commission and gave a brief history of his work, adding in his opinion the subject lot subdivided into two smaller lots creates building pads for homes that are affordable to more people, especially families. Continuing, Eldridge stated he prepared a power point presentation; however, Planner Teague's presentation was similar to his and to avoid duplication he would stand and answer any questions the Commission may have.

Chair Staunton opened the public hearing.

Public Testimony

John Peterson, 5820 Brookview Avenue, addressed the Commission and informed the Commission he purchased the subject property in the 1960's when Pamela Park was a swamp. Peterson said he and his wife have thought long and hard about subdividing their property and felt that the subdivision would provide new families with the opportunity to purchase new homes in Edina. Peterson added that the builder they picked, Mr. Eldridge met the criteria they wanted for the new homes.

The following residents spoke in support of the proposed subdivision:

George Raichert, 5816 Brookview Avenue, Edina, MN 60+ year Edina resident.

John Raichert, 5116 Indianola Avenue, Edina, MN

Jan Storey, 5825 Brookview Avenue, Edina, MN

Chair Staunton asked if anyone else would like to speak to the issue; being none, Commissioner Platteter moved to close the public hearing. Commissioner Scherer seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

Discussion

Commissioner Fischer stated he recalls that the Commission heard a number of subdivision requests in this area; some were approved, some were denied, adding the reasons for approval or denial was mostly based on the immediate neighborhood and if the block contained lots in excess of 50-feet or didn't. Planner Teague said he agrees with that observation. Teague reported there were six subdivision requests in the area; three were approved and three were denied. Teague explained the reasons for denial had to do with lot size on the block, adding the subdivision requests that were denied tended to be on blocks containing multiple lots in excess of 50-feet in width.

Motion

Commissioner Fischer moved to recommend Preliminary Plat approval with variances based on staff findings and subject to staff conditions. Commissioner Grabiell seconded the motion.

Commissioner Grabiell said it was interesting to him to hear positive comments from neighbors on the proposed subdivision and the addition of new homes to the neighborhood.

Commissioner Forrest said that while she understands the issue; and is not averse to subdividing the property she has difficulty supporting the variances because in her opinion the variance requirements were not met. Forrest added she would like the Zoning Ordinance to better address the City's preference in the smaller lot neighborhoods.

Chair Staunton commented the Commission has experience on requests to subdivide the larger lots into two lots in the smaller lot neighborhoods, noting to some on the Commission a two lot subdivision is better than retaining the one large lot because it ensures that the area remains consistent and the houses constructed are smaller than what could be constructed if it remained one lot.

Chair Staunton called the vote; Ayes, Scherer, Schroeder, Potts, Fischer, Platteter, Carr, Grabiell, Staunton. Nay, Forrest. Motion carried 8-1.



VII. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Sketch Plan – 3655 Hazelton Road, Edina, MN

Planner Presentation

Planner Teague informed the Commission they are being asked to consider a sketch plan proposal to redevelop the property at 3655 Hazelton Road. The proposal is to tear

down the existing vacant restaurant and construct a two-story bank on the site. The applicant would seek a Site Plan review and potentially a variance to develop the site. Continuing, Teague reported the applicant is proposing three alternatives for the Planning Commission to consider and provide feedback prior to an official application. Option B would not require any variances as proposed. Options A and C would both require building setback variances.

A traffic study would be required to determine the impacts on adjacent roadways. Access would be obtained from the access road provided as part of the adjacent redevelopment of the Byerly's site.

Concluding, Teague noted that Staff has encouraged the applicant to design the site with emphasis on pedestrian connections to Hazelton Road, the Promenade and the new Byerly's site development. While sidewalk connection would be provided to each; however, connections to the north, south and east to the Promenade, would require crossing an automobile drive-aisle or parking lot.

Appearing for the Applicant

Jeff Pflipsen

Discussion

Commissioner Platteter questioned the reason the Commission is reviewing this as a Sketch Plan since what's submitted as option B meets ordinance requirements. Planner Teague responded that the applicant indicated they wanted feedback from the Commission on differing options with the understanding that in this area the City is looking for specific things.

Commissioner Potts referred to the three options presented by the applicant and asked if all three are two stories and if the signs presented are part of the package. Planner Teague responded that all three are two stories, adding signage would need to comply with the sign ordinance.

Commissioner Carr questioned if the Commission has a preference for less parking along the promenade.

Applicant Presentation

Jeff Pflipsen addressed the Commission and explained the development team talked long and hard on how to relate to the Promenade, adding they like Option B, it works for them. Continuing, Pflipsen said the reason the development team provided three scenarios' was to offer the Commission and Council different options to choose from. With regard to locating parking along the Promenade it was their intent to provide vehicle parking so people could easily access the Promenade during non-business hours (evenings, weekends).

With graphics Mr. Pflipsen indicated to the Commission the three options-highlighting the patio on the second floor that in his opinion interfaces well with the Promenade. Pflipsen also noted sustainable materials would be used, and as previously mentioned by Planner Teague signage would meet ordinance requirements.

Discussion

Commissioner Grabel asked Mr. Pflipsen for clarification on the reason buildings A & C are similarly located. Mr. Pflipsen indicated they brainstormed building placement and located the buildings on options A & C closer to Hazelton and the access road between the subject site and Byerly's per discussions with City staff. Continuing, Pflipsen stated these two scenarios provides the Commission and Council with building placement options; either (A&C) buildings located farther from the Promenade and closer to the street (Hazelton) or option B, a building more centrally located. Continuing, Pflipsen said one component that drives building placement is the drive through for the bank; a counter clockwise movement is required.

Commissioner Potts referred to the site plans and asked if all the parking spots delineated are really needed. Mr. Pflipsen said in his opinion; they aren't needed. He added the site plan reflects ordinance requirements for parking. Potts commented if manageable that some spaces could be removed to provide more green space.

Commissioner Scherer said her concern is with what's up against the Promenade. She added she prefers less parking and would like to see additional green space and landscaping added along the Promenade.

Commissioner Schroeder said in his opinion in viewing Option C he would prefer to see the parking oriented west and the building positioned closer to the street and Promenade to the east. He pointed out if built as depicted the building would be hidden by the Byerly's building (from Hazelton), reiterating moving it north and east would allow the building to be seen. Schroeder also noted that this reorientation allows left and right turns. Schroeder said he agrees with previous Commissioner comments that the "space" nearest the Promenade shouldn't be for parking. Schroeder also said he finds the building interesting and to the proper scale. Concluding, Schroeder said he supports less parking and more landscaping. Mr. Pflipsen stated Option C is the least preferred because it creates a "head on" traffic flow which reduces parking spaces closer to the building and creates difficulty for night deposits. Continuing, Pflipsen said moving the building up and farther east on the site would also eliminate more parking stalls. Concluding, Pflipsen said it can be done; reiterating it's not a banks preference.

Commissioner Platteter stated he agrees with comments from Commissioner Schroeder, adding some variation of Option C may better suit the site and area. Platteter also observed if the building is oriented closer to Hazelton the building would have more exposure, as previously mentioned by Commissioner

Schroeder. Continuing, Platteter said close attention should also be paid to the south access, adding he viewed Byerly's customers using this area to go back to their homes/ apartments. Platteter also stated he doesn't want to see signage oriented toward the Promenade. He further stated enough can't be said about the importance of landscaping. Concluding, Platteter commented he is disappointed this wasn't part of the Byerly's redevelopment.

Mr. Pflipsen In response to the discussion explained that the rationale for offering options A & C was at the suggestion of City Staff, reiterating B works for them. Pflipsen explained that staff shared with them the importance of the Promenade and pedestrian flow, etc.

Commissioner Fischer said that he believes the use of the site for a bank is fine for a bank development; however, he believes the City missed an opportunity to have this parcel folded into the redevelopment of the Byerly's site. He added the plans presented appear out of context, adding it may be helpful if their presentation to the Council places this site more in context with the area. Continuing, Fischer noted the greater Southdale area is being redeveloped as a system for pedestrian movement and in his opinion the site plans presented indicate a bank with parking lot, adding a sidewalk crossing a parking lot wasn't his vision. Fischer stated he favors a Proof of Parking Agreement or variance approval to allow less parking, adding the City shouldn't force parking where it's not needed. Concluding, Fischer stated parking should be located to the west of the building so the site appears welcoming from the Promenade. Also make the pedestrian connection without crossing parking.

Commissioner Carr stated she agrees with Commissioner Fischer's suggestion that when the Sketch Plan Review goes before Council that they place the site in context with the immediate area. She said it would be beneficial to view sketches that included different views and streetscapes and how the properties interface with each other.

Commissioner Grabiell stated he echoes Commissioner Fischer's comments, adding he is disappointed at the missed opportunities that have occurred in this area, including the one before the Commission this evening.

Commissioner Carr stated she is satisfied with the layout presented in Option B with revisions, adding in her opinion this doesn't have to be a disappointment if redeveloped with the suggestions from staff, the Commission and further suggestions from the City Council. Carr said if some parking spaces were eliminated and the site was well screened from the Promenade to include a connection to the Promenade this use may work well. Carr said she agrees with the suggestion of lining up the proposed building with the Byerly's building to establish continuity. Concluding, Carr said she is a member of the Living Streets Committee and asked the applicant to also consider adding bike racks.

Commissioner Forrest stated shifting the building to the northeast could work along with increased landscaping. Continuing, Forrest said with more thought Option B could be rearranged and depicted more in context with the surrounding area, adding she believes it could also work. Forrest said this

shouldn't become a missed opportunity, adding any revisions should keep in mind the goal of continuity and walkability in the area.

Commissioner Kilberg stated if revisions are made to the site plan in his opinion the sidewalk should continue to be located along the south property line, parking spaces should be reduced and additional landscaping should be planted in place of parking spaces. Continuing, Kilberg said he likes the design of the 2nd floor and questioned if the applicant ever considered adding another use with the bank to maximize the use of the property.

Commissioner Platteter asked Mr. Pflipsen how many parking stalls are on site and if there was an "end" number they would be comfortable with. Mr. Pflipsen responded that originally the site was designed with a larger building and more parking (48); however, since the original plan the square footage of the building was reduced to 8,400 square feet and the parking stalls were reduced to accommodate the new square footage which now provides 42 spaces. Pflipsen stated in his opinion they would be comfortable with 33 spaces. Pflipsen said if they proceed with a variation of Option B they could eliminate the parking stalls on the south. Commissioner Grabiell agreed those spaces could be eliminated however, he pointed out those aren't the stalls the Commission was concerned with. The Commission is concerned with parking along the Promenade. Mr. Pflipsen agreed, adding he was only suggesting removal of those spaces to create more green space.

Chair Staunton thanked the applicant for his presentation and added from the discussion this evening the Commission feels if the project proceeds that any revisions should include the relocation of the building toward Hazelton Road, elimination of parking stalls, an increase in landscaping and develop a way to better address the site's presence and connection to the Promenade.

B. WORK PLAN

Chair Staunton complemented Planner Teague on his final draft of the 2014 Work Plan.

Staunton asked the Commission to note the Zoning Ordinance topics that the work plan includes for further discussion:

- Sign Plan
- Should apartment building size for senior buildings be regulated to a specific size;
- Lighting
- Noise regulation

Staunton said that these four items would be handled through City staff. Staff would research these topics and bring their findings back to the Commission for review.

Chair Staunton also noted the 2014 Work Plan also includes developing and reviewing policy recommendations, adding three broad topics would be addressed:

- Sustainability
- Pedestrian friendliness
- Affordable housing

Staunton said much discussion on these topics will be needed as the Commission creates policies as a guide.

Concluding, Staunton said there are a couple large topics out there that have been around for some time; one is a tree ordinance and the other is (keeping in the back of our mind) the Comprehensive Guide Plan. Staunton reported that the Comprehensive Plan was last completed in 2008-2009 with updating 2017-2018.,

Commissioner Platteter also asked for continued monitoring on the impact of the recent zoning ordinance changes and the new Residential Redevelopment Coordinator position. Commissioners agreed those two topics were a good addition to the plan.

Concluding, Staunton reminded everyone that Commissioners also sit on different work group boards; including, but not limited to Living Streets Work Group, Grandview Redevelopment Work Group, France Avenue Revitalization Work Group and different liaison connections.

Staunton said he; along with Commissioner Platteter would be delivering the Work Plan to the City Council on October 1st.

Motion

Commissioner Grabiell moved to approve the 2014 Planning Commission Work Plan. Commissioner Platteter seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS

Chair Staunton acknowledged back of packet materials.

IX. CHAIR AND COMMISSION COMMENTS

Chair Staunton welcomed Taylor Halva as student member.

Ms. Halva reported she is a junior at Edina High and thanked the Commission for this opportunity, adding she’s looking forward to her service on the Commission.

Chair Staunton said that due to unforeseen circumstances the session scheduled for this evening with City Attorney Roger Knutson was cancelled. Staunton said he along with Planner Teague would work on rescheduling this session.

Chair Staunton acknowledged the Open House for the Pentagon Park revitalization.

Commissioner Fischer, member of the Grandview Advisory Team reported the group met last week and is moving forward with a survey, adding the goal is to work with a developer as a partner in the process. Fischer stated the team needs to find the best fit for the public works site within the bigger context.

Chair Staunton thanked Commissioner Fischer for co-chairing the Grandview Advisory Team.

X. STAFF COMMENTS

Commissioner Platter and Commissioner Carr shared the progress from the Living Streets Work Group.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Carr moved adjournment at 8:35 pm. Commissioner Scherer seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

Jackie Hoogenakker

Respectfully submitted