

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF
THE EDINA PLANNING COMMISSION
THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2002, 7:30 PM
EDINA CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
4801 WEST 50TH STREET**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Acting Chair Helen McClelland, John Lonsbury, Steve Brown, Geof Workinger and Ann Swenson

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Gordon Johnson, Lorelei Bergman, David Byron and David Runyan

STAFF PRESENT:

Craig Larsen and Jackie Hoogenakker

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the January 30, 2002, meeting was filed as submitted.

II. OLD BUSINESS:

Z-01-4

Final Rezoning

**Steven Scott Development Company and The Craig Co.
4015 West 65th Street**

Mr. Larsen informed the Commission the City Council at their December 18, 2001, meeting approved preliminary rezoning for 4015 West 65th Street.

The proponents have met all City requirements and staff recommends Final Rezoning approval and Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Dennis Sutliff and Mr. Scott Bauder were present to respond to questions

Commissioner Swenson asked Mr. Larsen if West 65th Street will continue it's no parking status. Mr. Larsen responded that is correct. Vehicles will not be permitted to park on West 65th Street.

Commissioner Lonsbury observed the subject property has a gentle slope and asked Mr. Sutliff if the proposed building will be taller than the existing building. Mr. Sutliff said the proposed first floor would be approximately 5 feet higher than the existing structure. Continuing, Mr. Sutliff explained the reason the proposed building will be taller is due to the high water table on the site. Watershed District requires floor elevation at the same elevation or higher.

Mr. Scott Bauder interjected and told the Commission two levels of underground parking and the water level are driving building height.

Chair McClelland asked if the proposed building will be taller than the Point of France building. Mr. Sutliff responded the Point of France building is taller. Mr. Sutliff added he believes Point of France is around 10 stories.

Chair McClelland asked Mr. Sutliff if he knows if the present Edina Reality Building suffered any water damage in the past because of the high water table. Mr. Sutliff said to the best of his knowledge the existing building has not incurred water damage. Mr. Sutliff pointed out to the Commission after the proposed building is constructed the site will actually contain less hard surface.

Commissioner Workinger commented he is concerned with the height and mass of the proposed building. He stated it appears to him the building lunges toward Valley View Road, adding it will be a large presence along that expanse of roadway.

Commissioner Lonsbury said he also has a problem with the mass of the proposed building. He said in his opinion the view of the proposed building from both Valley View Road and West 65th Street needs to be softened. Continuing, Commissioner Lonsbury said to him it appears the structure will tower over the surrounding area, reiterating in his opinion the views from Valley View Road and West 65th Street will be impacted in a negative way by this development. Concluding, Commissioner Lonsbury suggested lowering the building, reducing the number of units by 8, and buffering the proposed building with plantings, etc.

Commissioner Swenson asked if the proposed curb cuts correspond with the curb cuts across the street. Mr. Larsen said the curb cuts for this proposal have been approved by the City Engineer and will be moved farther east. Staff finds no conflict between curb cuts.

Commissioner Lonsbury inquired if all units will be similar. Mr. Sutliff said the proposed building offers different living options. First floor units will have patios with some units having their own "outside" front door. Mr. Sutliff said the 4th floor would be stepped back providing penthouse units with terraces.

Mr. Larsen interjected and explained the developers have met all the conditions required by the City for Final Rezoning and Amendment to the

Comprehensive Plan, and if the Commission feels changes should be made to the plans that should be addressed at the preliminary stage not final.

Chair McClelland said while the height of the proposed building is driven by the requirements of the Watershed District there is an expressed concern regarding its height from the Commission. Chair McClelland suggested that the Watershed District be informed of Commission concerns regarding building height and consider allowing the construction of the building to be at the lowest elevation possible. Continuing, Chair McClelland stated the proponents should also do everything possible to provide more landscaping, especially on the southwest side of the building.

Commissioner Lonsbury said he does not have a problem with the proposed land use. He added he believes a residential use on this site better suits the site than office, but reiterated he has a concern with the proposed building height and general mass of the building. Commissioner Lonsbury concluded its mass is more than I thought it would be at the first hearing.

A discussion ensued between Commission Members acknowledging the presence of the high water table drives the elevation of the proposed building, with the Commissioners expressing their desire to have the building constructed at the lowest elevation possible and that additional landscaping be provided along Valley View Road.

Commissioner Swenson moved to recommend approval of an Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan from office to residential. Commissioner Lonsbury seconded the motion. Ayes; Lonsbury, Swenson, Workinger, McClelland. Nay, Brown. Motion approved.

Commissioner Swenson moved to recommend Final Rezoning approval subject to Watershed District Approval, Developer's Agreement covering responsibility for relocating utility lines, vacation of and rededication of utility easements, and planting additional landscaping along Valley View Road. With regard to Watershed District approval - the Commission encourages the Watershed District to allow the 1st floor elevation of the proposed building to be as low as possible or to maintain the present elevation. Commissioner Workinger seconded the motion. Ayes, Lonsbury, Swenson, Workinger, McClelland. Nay, Brown. Motion approved.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

P-02-1	Final Development Plan Edward and Lisa Noonan 5400 France Avenue South
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Mr. Larsen informed the Commission the City Council approved a rezoning of this property from PCD-4 to PCD-1 on June 19, 2001. At this time

The proponent is requesting a 750 square foot addition to the south side of the building triggering the need for Final Development Plan approval.

Mr. Larsen concluded the proposed addition results in a significant loss of green space and staff cannot support the request as submitted.

Mr. Edward Noonan was present to respond to questions.

Chair McClelland asked for clarification on what Mr. Noonan is requesting. Mr. Larsen explained Mr. Noonan received rezoning approval on June 19, 2001. Previously the site was zoned PCD-4 reflecting the Tires Plus automotive facility. Mr. Noonan had the site rezoned to PCD-1 indicating he would remodel the existing building and use it for his construction office. Renovations have already occurred on the site and now Mr. Noonan is requesting a Final Development Plan for additional square footage.

Mr. Noonan addressed the Commission and informed them he wants to create something tasteful and the additional square footage he is requesting will accommodate a "showroom". Continuing, Mr. Noonan told the Commission he discussed his proposal with tenants of the apartment building to the south and he believes what he is proposing will soften the impact of his building from the south property line. Mr. Noonan said he believes there is enough green space along the south line adding that area will be tastefully landscaped.

Commissioner Swenson asked Mr. Larsen if in the future because this site is zoned for commercial could Mr. Noonan reconvert the garage space into retail space. Mr. Larsen told the Commission any changes to the interior that add more retail space would have to be heard and approved by the Commission and Council. Commissioner Swenson said she has a concern that this site could become "maxed" and parking will not be adequate.

Commissioner Workinger asked Mr. Larsen if in the future this site could become a gas station again. Mr. Larsen reiterated any change to this site requires a public hearing before both the Commission and Council.

A discussion ensued between Commission Members on the merits of allowing additional square footage on an already "tight" site. A majority of the Commission agreed with staff that a hardship does not exist to warrant the reduction in green space. Commissioner McClelland added she usually cannot support redevelopments that require variances, but in this case the roofline and landscaping soften any impact.

Commissioner Swenson moved to recommend denial of the Final Development Plan. Commissioner Lonsbury seconded the motion. Ayes;

Lonsbury, Swenson, Brown. Nays, Workinger and McClelland. Motion to deny carried 3-2.

P-02-2 **Final Development Plan**
 Premier Storage LLC
 7225 Bush Lake Road

Mr. Larsen informed the Commission the proponents have acquired the property and intend to convert the existing building to a climate-controlled mini-warehouse and construct an additional two-story storage building.

Mr. Larsen concluded staff recommends approval of the Final Development Pan as proposed. The proposal requires no variance. Approval should be conditioned on Watershed District approval and permits.

The proponent, Mr. Todd Jones was present to respond to questions.

Chair McClelland commented on the fencing around the site and asked Mr. Jones if he feels the fencing is adequate. Mr. Jones said in his opinion the fencing is adequate adding the storage buildings will be secured.

Mr. Larsen said in his opinion this is a good addition to the City. This facility helps accommodate residents in our City that have recreational vehicles by providing close storage options for them.

Commissioner Brown asked Mr. Jones what would be located on the upper level of the proposed new building. Mr. Jones said that area would be walk-in storage.

Mr. Jones told the Commission he proposes to convert the existing building into a 100% climate controlled drive through storage facility. Mr. Jones explained you could either drive your vehicle up to your storage door or to a loading area. Mr. Jones said the existing building will be remodeled to improve curb appeal and the new building will match. Landscaping for the entire site will also be enhanced. Mr. Jones pointed out a facility of this nature is low intensity, generates minimal traffic and is quiet. Concluding, Mr. Jones pointed out the facility does not pollute and places minimal demand on City services.

Commissioner Swenson asked Mr. Jones if on this site traffic would be directed in one direction. Mr. Jones responded the site would be a one-way environment.

Chair McClelland asked Mr. Jones if he has met with the 9-Mile Creek Watershed District. Mr. Jones said he met with the Watershed District and they

informed him they found no problems with the proposal, concluding the Watershed District will not act on his proposal until the City acts.

Commissioner Lonsbury moved to recommend Final Development Plan approval subject to approval from the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District. Commissioner Workinger seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

**C-02-3 Conditional Use Permit
 City of Edina/South Metro Public Safety Training Facility
 7525 Braemar Boulevard**

Mr. Larsen informed the Commission South Metro Public Safety Training Facility Association is seeking Conditional Use Permit approval to allow the construction of a police and fire training facility in Braemar Park.

Mr. Larsen concluded staff recommends approval of the Conditional Use Permit. The facility is ideally located to minimize impact on other properties. All firearms activity will occur within the building and parking should be adequate even when the building is fully occupied.

Mr. Tom Schmitz, Edina Fire Department and Mr. Roger Erickson, facility architect, were present to respond to questions from the Commission.

Mr. Schmitz told the Commission the proposed Police/Fire training facility will be shared between the cities of Edina, Bloomington and Eden Prairie. Mr. Schmitz introduced Mr. Erickson, architect for the joint project to explain more about the proposed training facility.

Mr. Erickson addressed the Commission informing them he has been working with representatives from the three cities since 1996 to locate the right site and design a state of the art training facility. Mr. Erickson explained in the beginning two locations were considered, one in Bloomington and one in Edina, with the end result the location and design before you this evening. Mr. Erickson pointed out the present location better serves all cities because it is located in an unpopulated area in the corner of Edina where the three cities meet.

Mr. Erickson explained the facility is divided into a number of different areas. Classrooms, defensive and simulated training areas and a weapons firing range. In addition to the 20,000 square foot facility a 7-story tower will be located on site. This tower will be used for fire simulations. Continuing, Mr. Erickson told the Commission the firing range would be completely soundproof so a classroom

session could occur concurrently with the firing range. The windows of the facility will be glass block to provide maximum security.

Commissioner Workinger asked Mr. Erickson if the facility will be secure at all times from the public. Mr. Erickson said it is of the utmost importance that this building is secure at all times from the public because of the nature of the activities that occur on site and the storage of ammunition. Mr. Erickson stated the building will be open to the public only during certain monitored times. Commissioner Workinger asked Mr. Erickson if the facility will be "manned" at all times. Mr. Erickson said at this time it is believed the facility will have a full time site manager with the possibility of a part-time person.

Chair McClelland inquired about outdoor security. Mr. Erickson said the site would be secured with an 8-foot high fence. Continuing, Mr. Erickson said he understands the security concern expressed by the Commission and informed them all ammunition will be stored in a locked bulletproof room in the rear of the facility.

Commissioner Brown stated while he supports the proposal before him this evening he has a concern regarding traffic circulation. Commissioner Brown asked Mr. Larsen if he would review the proposed roadway configuration as it relates to the activities that occur at the ice arena and possible distractions from the training facility to ensure that traffic flows smoothly and safely between the ice arena and the proposed training facility. Commissioner Brown pointed out the road used by both facilities is curved which may create blind spots. Mr. Larsen agreed with Commissioner Brown's observation and stated he would inform the City Engineer, Wayne Houle of the concern.

A discussion ensued with Members of the Commission expressing support and interest for the state of the art training facility.

Commissioner Lonsbury moved to recommend Conditional Use Permit approval subject to staff conditions. Commissioner Swenson seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Jackie Hoogenakker