

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE EDINA PLANNING COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2003, 7:30 PM  
EDINA CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**David Byron, Bill Skallerud, David Runyan and Gordon Johnson**

**STAFF PRESENT:**

**Craig Larsen and Jackie Hoogenakker**

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**I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

The minutes of the February 26, 2003, meeting were filed as submitted.

**II. OLD BUSINESS:**

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**Z-03-7      Preliminary Rezoning  
                 MadisonMarquette  
                 3100 West 66<sup>th</sup> Street**

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Mr. Larsen reminded the Commission the proposed rezoning was heard at their February 26, 2003, meeting. The proponents have now returned with a revised plan that addresses some of the issues raised by the Commission.

Mr. Larsen said the revised plan reduced the size of the Gross Floor Area from 21,570 square feet to 17,900. Mr. Larsen also informed the Commission no parking variance is requested.

Mr. Larsen concluded staff recommends Preliminary Rezoning subject to: final rezoning, street vacation, Richfield approvals, Watershed District approvals, and Hennepin County curb cut permits.

Mr. Lee Hoffman and Mr. Brian Neuman were present representing the proponents MadisonMarquette.

Commissioner McClelland asked Mr. Larsen if Richfield reviewed the old or revised plan. Mr. Larsen responded the City of Richfield reviewed both plans and will act on the plan approved by the City of Edina.

Commissioner Lonsbury asked Mr. Larsen if he believes this is the best “use” of this site and if other “uses” were entertained. Mr. Larsen noted the site is zoned office but if one considers the size and location of this site it seems to make the most sense to integrate this island into the larger retail center and to rezone it as commercial. Mr. Larsen added he also believes to keep the site viable common ownership is important and common ownership is accomplished with this proposal

Commissioner Lonsbury pointed out the City of Edina is committed to providing opportunities for low income housing and asked Mr. Larsen if he would consider this site a good location for low income housing. Mr. Larsen said in his opinion this site would not be a good location for low income housing.

Commissioner Swenson said in light of her not being present when the Commission heard this issue last month she questioned what the Commission is actually voting on. Mr. Larsen said the proponent is requesting that the Commission vote on preliminary rezoning of the site from office district to commercial. Continuing, Mr. Larsen said at final rezoning all “loose ends” need to be tied up. “Loose ends” can include curb cuts and exterior building materials. Building size and location (if applicable) is usually set at preliminary rezoning.

Commissioner Brown asked Mr. Larsen what city code requires for parking spaces in a commercially zoned district. Mr. Larsen said code requires 5 spaces per 1000 square feet. Commissioner Brown asked if the 5 required spaces are based on retail use. Mr. Larsen responded that is correct.

Commissioner Swenson asked Mr. Houle if he reviewed the proposed plan as it relates to traffic and traffic circulation. Mr. Houle responded he reviewed both the original proposal and the revised proposal. Commissioner Swenson asked Mr. Houle his thoughts on this proposal. Mr. Houle said the proponents addressed all questions he had and in his opinion this proposal is an improvement over what exists today and what the Commission reviewed last month.

Commissioner Lonsbury told the Commission he is uncomfortable with the internal layout of the parking lot and traffic flow. He added he uses this mall often and from personal experience he has observed that no one obeys the traffic directional signs and the parking lot and internal flow are confusing at best.

Mr. Hoffman told the Commission the revised plan submitted addressed concerns expressed at the previous Commission hearing. Continuing, with regard to traffic flow what is depicted is conceptual and can change according to

Commission suggestions and further discussion with the city's engineering department. Mr. Hoffman said Hennepin County has approved this plan. He added he is willing to "tweak" the parking layout reiterating they are not locked into this layout and will entertain suggestions from the Commission.

Commissioner Brown commented when he reviewed the parking area plans he observed that a long strip of vegetation is proposed to be planted in the northwesterly portion of the lot (Richfield). He added this strip of vegetation in his opinion could create "clear view" issues and encumber circulation. Mr. Hoffman responded their intent was to soften the look of the parking area by reducing concrete. Commissioner Brown said he also has a concern with the configuration of the northwesterly entrance off York Avenue. He added in his opinion that configuration may be difficult to navigate. Mr. Hoffman responded he would review that intersection explaining to the Commission traffic circulation is still in the conceptual stages

Commissioner McClelland asked Mr. Hoffman if the proposed building schematic depicted on the plans is pretty firm with regard to exterior materials, building size and façade variation, etc. Mr. Hoffman responded building size and location is pretty firm. He said all exterior materials would flow throughout the entire mall and it is believed they will be similar to what is depicted on the schematic. Commissioner McClelland told Mr. Hoffman she likes the color contrast depicted and hopes the final outcome resembles what she is viewing this evening.

Commissioner Workinger told the development team he appreciates all the work they did in revising the plans to address the concerns the Commission expressed at their last meeting.

Commissioner Lonsbury referred to the Traffic Impact Study submitted and told the proponents he finds issues with the study with regard to projections. Continuing, Commissioner Lonsbury said in reviewing the revised plan he still has concerns with interior traffic circulation. Commissioner Lonsbury asked Mr. Houle how wide the drive aisles are behind the Tires Plus facility. Mr. Houle said he believes the width is between 22 and 24 feet. Mr. Houle reiterated in his opinion the interior traffic circulation plan presented this evening is better than their present plan and what exists today. Continuing, Mr. Houle said he was concerned about the north entrance but he believes the north entrance now is an improvement. Commissioner Lonsbury stated in his opinion the drive aisles need to be widened to make it safer and reconfigured.

Commissioner Swenson asked where the location is for the loading dock and trash containers for the proposed building. Mr. Neuman said there isn't a traditional loading dock but there is a loading bay at the east end of the building. Trash will be stored internally. Mr. Hoffman said the majority of the stores are

front loading and the possibility of semi trucks backing up into the loading area during store hours is remote.

Commissioner McClelland commented in reference to Commissioner Brown's comments with regard to the proposed row of landscaping near the northwest entrance of the site that the Commission usually likes to see greenery planted to break up the mass of concrete. Continuing, she said she understands Commissioner Brown's point and understands the interior traffic flow is conceptual and asked the proponents if they decide to "tweak" the traffic circulation to keep in mind that some landscaping would be welcome to soften the site.

Commissioner Brown questioned if the parking area will be re-stripped. Mr. Hoffman said he believes that will happen, adding what we are trying to accomplish at this preliminary stage is to get the rezoning, building size and location approved. Continuing, Mr. Hoffman said the City of Edina, Richfield and the development team have met a number of times to discuss this proposal and the goal of all is to upgrade the entire property including parking and traffic circulation.

Commissioner Brown said that while he supports the concept of upgrading the site and incorporating the Edina site with the Richfield site, he believes the site needs to flow better. He added he is uncomfortable supporting the proposal as submitted without a firmer traffic circulation and parking plan. Commissioner Brown reiterated he is concerned with the configuration of the north entrance and the row of vegetation near the northwest end of the site. Mr. Hoffman responded as he views this mall he believes it would not be high retail but more of a village concept with destination shops.

Commissioner McClelland said when finalizing the parking plans she wants the proponents to pay attention to the width of the drive aisle lanes. She added she visited the site but does not shop there regularly but wants to make sure since they have this opportunity that the drive aisles are of adequate width.

Commissioner Lonsbury told the Commission he is prepared to vote on this issue and asked Mr. Larsen what the Commission is voting on. Mr. Larsen responded the Commission is voting on preliminary rezoning from Planned Office District to Planned Commercial District. The vote approves the preliminary concept (building location, size) to include that many parking spaces. Continuing, Mr. Larsen explained last month the proponents requested a parking variance but have revised their plans so that no variance is required. The way the plan is now configured the Edina property could stand-alone as a retail store with parking that meets Edina city code. Continuing, Mr. Larsen said the City of Richfield has a different formula with regard to parking spaces, adding he believes it is around 4 spaces per 1000 square feet of retail space.

Commissioner Brown said he is still concerned with traffic and traffic circulation. Commissioner Lonsbury commented if the proponents “tweak” the parking in any way or widen the drive aisles parking spaces will be lost. He said he is still concerned with the amount of parking spaces. He added he views this in its entirety and not only that the Edina property can “stand alone”. He asked the proponents if they know exactly the amount of parking spaces in the plan. Mr. Hoffman said the exact number of spaces throughout the Edina and Richfield sites is not known at this time due to changes and can occur between preliminary and final rezoning.

Commissioner Brown said in his opinion the City is being asked to make a long-term decision that will have an effect on both Edina and Richfield and he is uncomfortable with the site within Richfield. Mr. Hoffman responded it is difficult for Edina to impose its parking requirements on Richfield property. Mr. Hoffman added every effort will be made to ensure that the property in Edina is incorporated into the Richfield site creating a good development project for both cities and addressing the traffic needs and circulation requirements of both cities and County.

Commissioner McClelland said as she views this project she has no problems with the preliminary rezoning or the street vacation, noting between now and final rezoning some minor changes may occur with regard to parking, traffic circulation, etc.

Commissioner Swenson moved to recommend preliminary rezoning approval subject to staff conditions noting the building size at 17,900 and parking spaces at 91 on the Edina property is firm.

Commissioner Lonsbury stated he still has a problem with the Richfield site and inner circulation and traffic flow.

Commissioner Workinger seconded the motion. Ayes, Swenson, Workinger, McClelland. Nays, Brown, Lonsbury. Motion to recommend preliminary rezoning approval passed 3-2.

### **III. NEW BUSINESS:**

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<b>S-03-2</b>	<b>Preliminary Plat 2 Lot Subdivision Salvador Mendoza 5117 Ridge Road</b>
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Mr. Larsen informed the Commission the subject property is 340 feet wide and 334 feet deep with a total lot area of 2.61 acres. The property also contains wetland areas. Mr. Larsen added the proponent is hoping to subdivide the lot creating two lots with lot areas of 45,420 and 68,495 respectively.

Mr. Larsen concluded both lots exceed ordinance standards for dimensions and lot size. The new lot can be developed without impacting the wetland areas, and with minor disturbance to the site. Staff recommends Preliminary Plat approval conditioned on Subdivision Dedication.

Mr. Knoll grandfather of Mrs. Mendoza was present representing Mr. and Mrs. Mendoza.

Commissioner McClelland inquired if the wetland areas on the site usually retain standing water. Mr. Larsen explained the wetlands are low land areas that can flood during heavy rains and during some major wet periods standing water can be found in those wetland areas. Mr. Larsen pointed out much of Ridge Road was developed with large lots but with the houses constructed close to the street to accommodate the wetlands that run behind most of the homes along Ridge.

Commissioner Swenson asked Mr. Larsen if building construction setbacks are set from the high water mark of the wetland areas. Mr. Larsen responded in this instance that requirement does not apply. Commissioner Swenson asked Mr. Larsen if he believes new homes could be constructed on these lots without variances. Mr. Larsen responded if he understands correctly the existing house will remain but will undergo a major renovation. Both lots are larger than the neighborhood average and he believes variances should not be an issue.

Commissioner Swenson moved to recommend preliminary plat approval subject to the staff condition of subdivision dedication. Commissioner Lonsbury seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

#### **IV. ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

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Jackie Hoogenakker