



**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the
Edina Planning Commission
Wednesday, August 31, 2005, 7:00 PM
Edina City Hall Council Chambers
4801 West 50th Street**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair David Byron, Michael Schroeder, John Lonsbury, Helen McClelland, David Runyan, Geof Workinger, Stephen Brown, Floyd Grabel

MEMBERS ABSENT: Michael Fischer

STAFF PRESENT: Craig Larsen and Jackie Hoogenakker

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

The minutes of the July 27, 2005, meeting were filed as submitted

II. OLD BUSINESS:

**Z-05-1 & S-05-2 Final Rezoning and Final Plat
Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan
4121 50th Street West
5017 Indianola Avenue**

Mr. Larsen informed the Commission the City Council granted preliminary approvals for the proposed redevelopment at their August 16, 2005, meeting. Mr. Larsen told the Commission the proponent has submitted all plans necessary for Final Rezoning and Final Plat.

Mr. Larsen concluded the plans submitted are consistent with those given preliminary approval by both the Commission and Council. All requirements have been satisfied for final approvals. Staff recommends approval conditioned on:

1. change the land use designation of the northerly 28 feet of 5017 Indianola Avenue from Single Family to High Density Residential
2. Final Rezoning from R-1 to PRD-4.

3. Final Plat approval.
4. Lot Width and lot area variance for the single dwelling lot
5. vacation of alley right-of-way.

The proponents, Mr. Chris Cowen, and Mr. Dean DoVolis were present to respond to questions.

Mr. Cowen told the Commission all plans have been finalized, including landscaping features for the project. Mr. Cowen told the Commission Mr. DoVolis is present this evening with samples of the exterior building materials and landscaping materials.

Mr. DoVolis addressed the Commission showing them the exterior building material samples that will be used on the façade of the proposed building. Continuing, Mr. DoVolis with graphics pointed out the landscaped areas around the proposed building and photos of the vegetation and water elements that will be placed in those areas.

Chair Byron thanked Mr. DoVolis for his presentation and on presenting exterior building material samples and landscaping graphics. Chair Byron said it is great to see the materials first hand, suggesting when this goes before the Council to include those materials in their presentation, adding seeing the materials is a big help.

Commissioner McClelland asked Mr. Cowen if he has set a price on the single family home. Mr. Cowen responded no price has been set but he believes the home will be sold in the one million dollar range, but under 2 million dollars. Commissioner McClelland thanked Mr. Cowen

Commissioner Grabiell questioned if the single family house will be individually owned as a private residence or will it be part of the condo development, like a seventh unit. Mr. Cowen responded the single family home is separate with private ownership, however, after careful consideration we believed landscaping and maintenance of the single dwelling lot would be tied to the condominium association. This will ensure continuity between lots. Continuing, Mr. Cowen said it is important for both properties to complement each other and having the private single family home pay a small association fee for landscaping and maintenance ensures that continuity. Commissioner Grabiell responded that makes sense.

Commissioner McClelland moved to recommend Final Rezoning, Final Plat, and Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan for Riverview Properties. Approvals are subject to: changing the land use designation of the northerly 28 feet of 5017 Indianola Avenue from Single Family to High Density Residential, Final Rezoning from R-1 to PRD-4 (for that strip of property), Final Plat Approval, lot width and lot area variance for the single dwelling unit

lot and vacation of alley right-of-way that separates the two properties at this time. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion.

Commissioner Workinger asked for clarification on the lot width and lot area variances. Chair Byron responded if he understands correctly approval is for a lot width variance from the 75 foot lot width requirement to 50.5 feet and a lot area variance from the 9000 square foot requirement to 7060.3 square feet. Mr. Larsen added that is correct.

Commissioner Lonsbury said he would like noted in the minutes that on the plans submitted a sidewalk is indicated extending down to the driveway it should be noted that this is an exception. Commissioner McClelland accepted that comment.

Chair Byron told the proponents they should also realize from the Commissions point of view the condominium building and construction of the single family home are viewed as one project. Mr. Cowen said he understands the condominium and single family lot are considered as one proposal.

All voted aye; motion carried.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

**Z-05-2 & S-05-4 Preliminary Rezoning & Preliminary Plat
Final Development Plan
Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan
CSM Equities
7600 Metro Boulevard**

Mr. Larsen presented his staff report and informed the Commission the subject property is approximately 20 acres in size and is zoned PID, Planned Industrial District. Mr. Larsen explained that presently the property is developed with an office-warehouse building and at this time the building is vacant. Mr. Larsen noted until recently the property was used as a parts distribution center for General Motors.

Mr. Larsen concluded CSM would like to like to redevelop the site and Mr. Gelderman of CSM is present to explain their interest and plans for this parcel of land.

The proponent, Mr. John Gelderman, CSM Corporation was present to

respond to questions.

Mr. Gelderman addressed the Commission informing them his company began looking at redevelopment of this site about one year ago (with interest expressed by Home Depot). Mr. Gelderman explained presently this piece of property is leased by GM and their lease continues for another 11 years. Mr. Gelderman asked the Commission to note the proposal as submitted also includes GM as owners. Mr. Gelderman outlined a brief history on CSM informing the Commission CSM is a 29 year Minnesota based company that develops and redevelops property. Mr. Gelderman told the Commission the meeting this evening could be considered a "work session" to inform the Commission interest is "out there" on redeveloping the subject site. Continuing, Mr. Gelderman asked the Commission to note the site is zoned industrial with only half of the site developed which results in a very large undeveloped area. Mr. Gelderman pointed out the vacancy of the site by GM provides a redevelopment opportunity that could include retail/commercial and the school district bus garage located near Jerry's. The existing GM building could be renovated to provide office space, etc. for the bus garage and a new building could be constructed on the remainder of the site with a Home Depot. Mr. Gelderman said after careful consideration and continued discussion with City Staff it was felt a Home Depot or similar store wouldn't work on this site. Concluding, Mr. Gelderman reiterated their intent at this time is to begin the discussion process at the Planning Commission level by informing the Commission there is interest in redeveloping the GM site, and finding the right redevelopment "fit". Mr. Gelderman said CSM was approached by Home Depot which was the reason for beginning a dialogue with the City.

Chair Byron thanked Mr. Gelderman for bringing this information to the Commission adding he is encouraged the process of communication is underway.

Commissioner McClelland questioned if commercial rezoning were approved, what would the size be of a Home Depot (or similar type big box store). Mr. Gelderman responded stores are usually roughly 116,000 square feet; however, the store proposed for this site is somewhat smaller. Commissioner McClelland asked Mr. Gelderman what time Home Depot closes. Mr. Gelderman responded presently Home Depots close at 10:00 PM, but that is negotiable.

Commissioner Brown commented that CSM is a reputable developer, adding he believes they can do an excellent job converting the existing building and redeveloping the site, however, in his opinion introducing the bus garage on this site lessens the appeal. Commissioner Brown said in his opinion due to the size of the existing building it is a bit of an albatross.

Commissioner Grabiell told the Commission this is a judgment call on his part, adding he doesn't believe "big box" retail is appropriate in this location, or in any location in Edina. He said stores of this magnitude create traffic issues and are not consistent with Edina's Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Grabiell concluded he is not in favor of "big box" retail in Edina.

Commissioner Lonsbury said in his opinion the City should take a careful look at this site, acknowledging the redevelopment potential of the site, while ensuring the site is redeveloped correctly. Commissioner Lonsbury said he understands from the proponent that at this time they are beginning the discussion phase; however, the Commission has a plan before them that needs some form of action.

Mr. Larsen said the Commission can grant the proponent an open ended extension allowing them to return at their leisure or not at all. This extension can also advance talks between the school district, city and proponent regarding the bus garage.

Commissioner Brown asked Mr. Gelderman if his intention is to have the Commission act on the submitted Home Depot proposal. Mr. Gelderman responded the intent this evening was to begin discussion. Mr. Gelderman reiterated their firm was approached by Home Depot and at this time the firm has no intention of moving forward with the Home Depot proposal. Mr. Gelderman said the discussion this evening is to inform the Commission there is interest in redeveloping this site and our desire is to continue discussion with the City on what is the best use of this site.

Chair Byron asked Mr. Gelderman if the Commission can continue this "discussion" with your consent. Mr. Gelderman responded in the affirmative.

Commissioner Lonsbury moved to continue the discussion with the consent of the proponent to no date specific. Commissioner McClelland seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

P-05-3

**Amendment to Overall Development Plan
for Centennial Lakes by Cypress Equities
7311 France Avenue South**

Mr. Larsen informed the Commission the subject property is part of the 95 acre Centennial Lakes development. The approved Centennial Lakes master plan illustrated 1,085 dwelling units, and 1,256,900 square feet of non-residential space. The eventual build out contained 1,037,200 square feet of non-residential and 348 dwelling units. The result is that there is the ability to add 737 dwelling units and 219,000 square feet of non-residential space under the approved master plan.

Mr. Larsen noted the proposal in general conforms to the allocation of development rights, however, it would reduce, by approximately 20,000 square feet the amount of non-residential development for the total development. Mr. Larsen explained the condo tower provides a setback of 35 feet. The required setback for a building 300 feet tall is 132.5 feet.

Mr. Larsen concluded staff recommends that the Commission continue this item for one month to allow staff additional review time, and time for the proponents to provide further information necessary to fairly evaluate the proposal. Additional work needs to be one on traffic and circulation, impact of building height, and impact on the park.

Mr. Brett Witzig with Cypress Equities, and architect Mr. Walter Hughes were present to respond to questions.

Bret Witzig, 15601 Dallas Parkway, addressed the Commission and with graphics pointed out to the Commission Cypress projects that are similar to the proposal before them. With graphics Mr. Witzig pointed out mixed use developments constructed by Cypress in New York (residential, office and retail) Tuscaloosa, Alabama (200 residential units with a retail component). Atlanta, Georgia (mixed use project residential and retail) and Dallas, Texas which is a development similar to the proposal before the Commission this evening. Mr. Witzig said a goal of this project is to promote interaction between the residential and retail components. Architecture will be mixed, traditional with more modern

elements and amenities. The project will also have an interactive court yard. Concluding, Mr. Witzig said in general Cypress Equities is trying to create a life style center with an old world feel. The condo tower is up-scale with private elevators to each floor. Mr. Witzig stated after careful study he believes this site is perfect for this concept, with interest already expressed by retailers and local residents.

Commissioner Runyan asked Mr. Larsen what the tallest building is in Edina. Mr. Larsen said he believes the Edinborough tower is the tallest at 17 or 18 stories.

Mr. Hughes, Humphreys Architects, addressed the Commission informing them his firm has worked on a number of projects in Minnesota - in Edina, Woodbury, Minneapolis, and St. Paul, adding they have also worked with Ron Clark and Opus (of this area) to name a few. With graphics Mr. Hughes pointed out design projects completed in Minnesota; Grant Park and the Carlyle tower, both in downtown Minneapolis. Continuing, Mr. Hughes said the proposed project is mixed use with a retail base (restaurant(s)) with residential units above and more retail along France Avenue. Mr. Hughes explained the project has basically three components. Eighty-eight residential units, 86,000 square feet of retail space, to include two or three restaurants, retail on the west side is one and two stories with parking for the retail below the stores. Parking for the residential component is below the tower/restaurant(s). Continuing, Mr. Hughes told the Commission the proposed residential tower is 22 stories with the units marketed to the high-end empty nester. He added he believes the proposed units will appeal to people who have sold their single family home and desire to remain in their community with familiar surroundings. Mr. Hughes pointed out the residential tower is a single loaded building with all units facing the lake. There are four units per level with private elevators. Units will range in size from 1800 to 2300 square feet. Mr. Hughes stated their goal is to create an overall community where if desired residents can shop, entertain, all within the same area. The proposed restaurants will also open up towards the lake creating synergy. Mr. Hughes concluded the architectural style is "classy" with traditional brick, cast stone around doors and windows, and stucco on the upper levels. It is also believed the proposed trolley or tram will connect to this area.

Chair Byron commented, when referencing the tram, you are a bit ahead of the City. Mr. Hughes said in discussion with City Staff we were apprised of the goal the City has in providing a tram and/or interior roadway system linking residential, retail and office components throughout the area. Mr. Hughes said this site was developed with that in mind.

Commissioner Runyan asked Mr. Larsen the proposed setback off France Avenue. Mr. Larsen responded the proposed building setback is 35 feet off France Avenue - which is in line with the existing retail to the south. Chair Runyan commented that in his opinion the Southdale area is heavily traveled,

adding this project will only add to that congestion. Mr. Hughes responded this build-out was planned for in the overall Centennial Lakes Master Plan. Mr. Larsen added the original overall traffic study included this amount of residential and retail. Continuing, Mr. Larsen said there are specific questions with this development and a big part of the question is this proposal has no direct access to France Avenue. All traffic in and out of the site will come from Gallagher Drive via the France Avenue intersection. Concluding, Mr. Larsen said City staff along with the developer is studying this intersection, acknowledging these issues need to be addressed.

Chair Byron asked about parking and circulation within the site. Mr. Hughes with graphics pointed out when you enter the site off France Avenue via Gallagher Drive and you are a resident of the tower you would turn left and go straight into the below grade parking garage. If you are a visitor to the area and want to go to the restaurant(s) you would also turn left to park in the garage below the restaurant area. Retail parking is also available when you access the site with a right hand turn. The restaurant and condo towers have five levels of parking below them. Three public and two private with the private condo parking being the lower two levels. Concluding Mr. Hughes said he also believes the restaurants will offer valet parking.

Commissioner Brown said that he finds this concept interesting, but he pointed out further study must be done on the trolley/tram system. He noted that it would be very difficult for the trolley/tram to gain access to this site from the south. Mr. Larsen agreed, he said at this time that is being studied along with development of a Greater Southdale Area Redevelopment Plan.

Chair Byron commented on the loading area for retail and how that configuration may impact circulation. Chair Byron said at least in his opinion everything can't come into the site from the south. Commissioner Schroeder added access from the south, at least the way everything is presently configured, won't work. He pointed out the medical building to the south consists of grade level parking and a ramp system, adding no direct access off France Avenue could also create some issues.

Commissioner Workinger questioned how pedestrian circulation would work between public areas. Continuing, Commissioner Workinger asked if there is a connection from the parking ramps under the restaurant/tower to the retail stores along France Avenue. Mr. Hughes responded there is no lower level access between elements. A pedestrian cross-walk is proposed in the event people that are dining choose to shop after their meal or vice versa.

Commissioner McClelland stated private elevators were mentioned and questioned if private elevators take up a lot of space. Commissioner McClelland added she is very uncomfortable with the 22 stories. Continuing, Commissioner McClelland said another concern is with the traffic flow from France Avenue onto

Gallagher Drive. Commissioner McClelland acknowledged she realizes this isn't the final plan, however, many things are too vague, including traffic circulation especially in light of the trolley/tram system. Commissioner McClelland stated she worries about parking and pedestrian crossover and the possibility, if in the future, there is a tramway system that that system could get bogged down. Commissioner McClelland acknowledged she feels very protective of the park element of Centennial Lakes and Edinborough and doesn't want to see the park compromised. Concluding Commissioner McClelland stated in her opinion the proposed building is too tall. The 18 story building of Edinborough backs up to 494 which is a major freeway. This building will "poke up " in the middle of the City. Commissioner McClelland added she also feels there is adequate housing in Edina for empty nesters. Commissioner McClelland said she agrees with staff that this item should be continued to facilitate further discussion between the proponents and City staff.

Mr. Witzig explained the building could be lowered to accommodate the 88 units but when one reduces the height of the building the footprint enlarges, and in their opinion it was best to maintain as much open space as possible.

Commissioner McClelland commented maybe every unit doesn't need a "lake view", adding this is designed in such a way that it cuts the park off from the public. Mr. Hughes said their objective is to create a European town square atmosphere, adding it is not our intent to have a busy hectic center area. Commissioner McClelland concluded in her opinion the height of the building makes the area appear more private and not part of the park, adding she is still concerned about car trips, pointing out France Avenue is a very very crowded street.

Mr. Larsen informed the Commission in the overall Centennial Lakes development plan there is the option for more then 88 residential units. Continuing Mr. Larsen agreed the roadway and movement in and out of the site needs further study. Mr. Larsen pointed out it is also a requirement of the City's to move the trolley/tramway system through this area. Mr. Larsen also asked the Commission to note a major storm sewer line also runs through this area.

Commissioner McClelland said she is not concerned with the tramway, she believes that will be ironed out, adding she is still worried about the size and bulk of the building and that the public space in this area will be viewed as exclusive use by the tenants of the tower. Mr. Larsen pointed out at present it is very difficult to see the any park elements from France Avenue, adding he doesn't believe this development will significantly change that.

Commissioner Lonsbury said if he follows the thought process of the developer that taller rather than wider does retain more green space. Commissioner Lonsbury stated it is also obvious from the discussion that at 22 stories this would be the tallest building in Edina, adding that makes the

Commission uncomfortable. Commissioner Lonsbury told the developers in understanding the reaction of the Commission it is “we haven’t done one like this before”, adding that shouldn’t dissuade you from trying. Continuing, Commissioner Lonsbury said he understands the parking pattern and believes if he understands correctly that parking is available immediately as you access the site, either to the left or right. This should prevent a lot of traffic from flowing into the center common area. Concluding, Commissioner Lonsbury encouraged the proponents to be mindful that this is a development in Minnesota and there are many months in Minnesota of inclement weather whereby a covered walkway or underground feature connecting the restaurant and retail areas may be worth looking at more closely. Commissioner Lonsbury stated in his opinion this is an interesting project and he likes the idea that it is integrated toward the lake. Commissioner Lonsbury stated he will keep an open mind when considering redevelopment on this site, however, stressed he is a stickler on traffic, adding he wants assurances everything will be done to ensure that traffic flows smoothly, adding he is very interested in a traffic report analysis.

Commissioner Schroeder said in his opinion this proposal looks better from the lake than the back of the existing theatre building. He added one issue of concern to him centers on three stories of exposed parking spaces. Commissioner Schroeder commented the appearance of the condo tower from the lake could be a welcome change. Continuing, Commissioner Schroeder noted that while the complex has a great front door, the door overlooking Marshall Fields could use redesign. Gallagher Drive also doesn’t present a very welcome approach to a high end development, and questioned if Gallagher Drive is a viable road. Commissioner Schroeder commented in his opinion if parking is allowed in the courtyard area it would get in the way of everything. He added that center area may be more successful if vehicle parking is not permitted or at least limited. He pointed out more traffic issues could evolve in this area if people are driving around looking for the best surface space to park. Commissioner Schroeder told the Commission the mass of tower doesn’t bother him if it is done correctly. He pointed out the building as proposed is a large masonry structure, adding it is possible to construct a slender graceful tower that blends in better with the skyline. Concluding Commissioner Schroeder said he thinks the developers should focus on a less obtrusive building, adding this may be more of a materials issue and not a height and massing issue.

Commissioner Brown said his concern is that there appears to be a lot going on in the courtyard area. Keeping the amenities for the condo units on the roof appears to be a good idea, reiterating there appears to be lot going on in a localized area.

Commissioner Grabiell said at first glance this appears to be a quality development, however, he added he has some concerns about the project especially as they relate to how the project presents itself. Commissioner Grabiell said in reviewing Ordinance 810 that ordinance talks about orderly

development, adequate provisions for transportation, design flexibility, and consistency with the zoning code to preserve, enhance and protect the character and symmetry of Edina's neighborhoods. Commissioner Grabel pointed out Edina is a community of different neighborhoods and consistency within those neighborhoods is important. Commissioner Grabel said he is concerned on how this development will impact its neighborhood. He said a 300 foot tower may not be the right fit . He pointed out the majority of the housing units in the near vicinity are not multi-story buildings but two and three level buildings. Concluding, Commissioner Grabel stated this is a beautiful project, but he is not sure how it fits or whether a development like this protects the character of the neighborhood.

Chair Byron commented it strikes him that the application for such a large development is rather "skinny". He added in his opinion there are unanswered questions with regard to traffic, traffic studies and concerns expressed by the City Engineer. Chair Byron pointed out this proposal also hasn't come before the Transportation Committee. Chair Byron said at least in his opinion until all questions are answered this issue should be continued.

Mr. Jeff Coker, told the Commission the feedback presented this evening is good, adding there are many things that can be done to make the Commission feel more comfortable. Mr. Coker added Cypress wants to meet the City's vision and present a development plan that is an asset to Edina. Mr. Coker said he has no problem going back to the drawing board, adding communication is important, and we believe good points were received this evening from the Commission.

Mr. Larsen explained to the proponents and the Commission if the Commission tables this request it would be of benefit to receive from the proponents' their agreement on this. Minnesota law requires that action is taken within 60 days after application was made. Mr. Coker agreed to a continuance, adding it is no problem for the firm.

Mr. Minks with Staubach, which Cypress Equities is a subsidiary of said the owner of the company, Mr. Roger Staubach, has much passion for this City and project and believes what they are proposing will be great for their company as well as for the City of Edina. Mr. Minks commented he knows there is much interest in the area for this type of development, adding there is no problem continuing this to another date.

Commissioner Lonsbury moved to continue this item to the next meeting of the Planning Commission on September 28, 2005, with the acknowledged consent of the applicant. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

**The Gramercy Club of Edina
5101 70th Street West**

Mr. Larsen asked the Commission to recall that several proposals to redevelop this site were considered in 2004. The City approved a 117-unit building with the intent at that time to have two buildings, under separate ownership; one would be rental and the other condominium. Following all City approval the property was sold to a third party. The new owner does not intend to develop the site as approved.

Mr. Larsen explained the new plans include a 4 story 128 unit co-op. The units range in size from 970 to 2,000 square feet. The plans indicate 190 parking spaces in the garage area and 36 surface spaces. The plans comply with garage space requirements but do not meet the surface parking requirements.

Mr. Larsen concluded staff believes it is extremely important to the quality of the overall development that the entire site is now under a single owner. Staff recommends approval of the proposed Final Development Plan and plat, including the requested variances. Conditions of approval are: Agreement to grant easement for intersection improvements (possible left-turning movement), Watershed District permits and staff approval of revised landscape plan and schedule.

The proponent, Mr. Nichols and his development team Dena Meyer, Link Wilson and Aardvid Gottemukkula, were present to respond to questions.

Commissioner Grabiell asked Mr. Larsen the number of units in the previous building(s). Mr. Larsen responded the original building that was destroyed by fire contained 60 units. The Commission and Council approved two buildings with a total of 117 units to replace the original building.

Commissioner Brown said he is delighted this site is now under one owner. He told the Commission he drives by this site on a regular basis and is curious why this type of development (senior co-op) doesn't require as much surface parking as the more traditional condominium development. Mr. Larsen responded it could be possible our surface parking requirement is on the high side for this type of development, adding he would defer to the proponent to address co-op surface parking needs. Concluding, Commissioner Brown pointed out this site offers no on-street parking, and if the need arose for more surface parking there is no where to add additional parking. Mr. Larsen acknowledged that point.

Commissioner Workinger questioned if subsidized units would be a part of this proposal. He noted when redevelopment of this site was heard and

approved approval included a set number of affordable housing units. Commissioner Workinger asked if that approval transfers the affordable housing component to this project. Mr. Larsen responded affordable units are not part of this equation. Those units were lost when ownership changed. Commissioner Workinger said he is uneasy losing those units. He pointed out before the fire destroyed the original building units in that building were affordable, adding in reality 60 affordable housing units have been lost in the City.

Commissioner McClelland questioned what would happen if the building changed ownership - would there be enough parking to support a more traditional condo use? Continuing, Commissioner McClelland asked if the proposal meets the City's lot coverage requirements. She pointed out the site contains ponding and little green area. Mr. Larsen responded the site complies with lot coverage requirements. Mr. Larsen said in response to the building no longer being used as a co-op he has no response to that.

Chair Byron asked Mr. Nichols to explain to the Commission the proposed co-op concept.

Mr. Nichols, 12750 Nicollet Ave , Burnsville, addressed the Commission stating he has been looking for an opportunity to develop in Edina for some time and is every excited that opportunity presented itself. Mr. Nichols said the proposal is a limited equity product that develops gramercy park and gramercy club facilities. Gramercy Club is occupied by active seniors 55 +. The units range in size from 900 + square feet to 2,400 square feet. Individual units are owned through a cooperative association. Continuing, Mr. Nichols said he has had great success with this type of concept, adding he has been involved in over 30 similar developments since in 1989 . Mr. Nichols added all have been very well received, and currently all have wait lists. Mr. Nichols explained the "club" concept could be considered a community of active seniors (55+) linked to the larger community. He said this facility will be developed with common areas, swimming pool, virtual golf, fitness center, library, guest suites and many other community based amenities. Mr. Nichols told the Commission a number of units are pre-sold. With interest already mounting for this project.

Commissioner McClelland questioned the co-op concept and how the units are sold, adding she is familiar with the New York concept where unit owners oversee and approve potential owners. Mr. Nichols responded our facilities operate democratically. There is a board of directors that would oversee the by-laws, etc. Continuing, Mr. Nichols explained they have an operational framework concept that has worked very well in the past and continues to work efficiently. Individual units are sold to people that qualify under our financial guidelines. Ownership in a sense is based on the ability to pay. Continuing, Mr. Nichols said their co-op framework was based on the 7500 York co-op. Mr. Nichols told the Commission the co-op on 7500 York was the first senior co-op in the country. Commissioner McClelland asked if there would be a waiting list to

purchase a unit when one becomes available. Mr. Nichols responded there will be a waiting list, which is presently how the Gramercy co-ops are resold.

Mr. Wilson addressed the Commission informing them in the near future the Washington Post will be running an article on senior developments highlighting Mr. Nichols and his successful senior developments in Minnesota. Continuing, Mr. Wilson said in response to comments on affordable housing that there are affordable units (smaller units) by Edina standards in this development, with a monthly association fee of \$350.00. Mr. Wilson explained there are changes from the previous plan submitted by the Bernardi brothers. The biggest change is that the site will now only have one structure on it. Located in the center of the proposed building are all the amenities; swimming pool, fitness area, office space, business center and library. The exterior materials are brick hardy stucco finished panels which are superior to efis. The exterior materials for the Bernardi plan was rock face block. Mr. Wilson said he believes the proposed exterior will look very good. He added the look will be similar to the Stephen Scott development, Cornelia Place. Concluding, Mr. Wilson said landscaping is very important to this project and we will work with staff to ensure proper landscaping is implemented. Mr. Wilson added the berm along West 70th Street will be retained and also planted with additional landscaping

Commissioner Workinger questioned if traffic flow was reviewed by the Engineering Department. Mr. Larsen responded it was reviewed. Commissioner Workinger said he noticed there may be some intersection reconfiguration in the future. Mr. Larsen responded that is a possibility, adding he believes the developer has the right to know there may be reconstruction of the intersection in the future. Commissioner Workinger questioned if reconfiguration of the intersection would have any impact on the surface parking spaces. Mr. Larsen responded there would be no impact.

Commissioner Lonsbury noted the 7500 York co-op has been mentioned and asked Mr. Larsen if he knew the number of units and surface parking spaces at 7500 York. Mr. Larsen responded 7500 York is a large complex with 335-338 units. Mr. Larsen said at this time he doesn't know the amount of surface parking spaces on that site, adding he has been there often, and if he remembers correctly there didn't appear to be that many. Commissioner Lonsbury agreed, adding his mother lives at 7500 York and when visiting her he has never had a problem parking. Commissioner Lonsbury suggested that Mr. Larsen find out the exact number of surface spaces at 7500 York to draw some parallel, and pass that information on to the Council. Commissioner Lonsbury stated this is a final development plan, with everything rolled into one and also suggested to the developer that they bring to the Council samples of the exterior building materials. He said at least to him it is difficult to envision what something will look like from a colored rendering. Mr. Wilson responded he would be very happy to do that. Commissioner Lonsbury thanked Mr. Nichols and pointed out this building is being constructed in a very prominent busy location and it should

be developed taking that into consideration. Mr. Nichols said he agrees this building is located in an area of high visibility, adding when formulating the plans for the exterior materials they were hyper cognizant, and want this development to stand the test of time.

Commissioner Schroeder asked for clarification on the plans. He said there is a path from the building leading to West 70th Street and questioned its purpose. Mr. Nichols responded the path doesn't really lead to anything but the public sidewalk. Mr. Nichols said Edina code requires that all exit stairways must provide access to the nearest public way. He explained this stairway will not be used often - only on an emergency basis. Mr. Nichols added the pathway will be maintained by the association. Continuing, Commissioner Schroeder stated at least in his opinion, the plans aren't clear enough with regard to the berm and landscaping. Mr. Nichols said the berm depicted on the plans is an existing berm and that berm will be re-landscaped. Commissioner Schroeder commented the proposed building isn't a bad looking building, however, the mass of the structure (north elevation) will be very apparent from the residential homes on West 70th Street. Commissioner Schroeder said that building wall may have the appearance of a large mass of sameness. Commissioner Schroeder added this is just his opinion, but the north elevation lacks variety.

Commissioner Workinger stated he agrees with the comment from Commissioner Schroeder regarding the north elevation. He added that wall expanse will be fairly imposing, suggesting that the mass could be diffused with additional and more substantial plantings. Continuing, Commissioner Workinger questioned how the City can attract moderate and low income people to a development like this. He pointed out the City's prior approach was to include affordable housing in our motion. Commissioner Workinger stated the City should make every effort to provide affordable housing when it is eliminated (for redevelopment). Mr. Nichols reiterated to the best of his knowledge at least three (3) of the Gramercy Club units will be priced as affordable by Edina's standards. Mr. Nichols said Met Council standards for affordable housing in Edina is around 190 thousand dollars. Mr. Nichols added one bedroom units would be priced in the 190 thousand dollar range with one bedroom units plus den in the 200 thousand dollar range. Mr. Nichols stated the average unit price would be around 385 thousand, with some units 600 thousand dollars. Mr. Nichols said he believes this development offers a large pricing range. Concluding Mr. Nichols said he believes there will be three affordable units in this proposal which is the same number reached in the Bernardi proposal. Commissioner Workinger thanked Mr. Nichols, pointing out the proposal before the Commission this evening contains more units than the Bernardi plan which could mean more affordable units are warranted.

Chair Byron asked Mr. Larsen if he remembers the number of affordable units in the previous proposal. Mr. Larsen responded in previous proposal three units were designated as affordable, however, that was reduced to two units

when one building went condo/owner occupied. Continuing, Mr. Larsen said the City is very interested in maintaining and achieving affordable housing, but from the City's standpoint this proposal is very reasonable, with a wide range in unit price.

Chair Byron said a concern he has is with parking and asked Mr. Nichols if he believes the unit owners will always park their vehicles in the parking garage. Mr. Nichols said he believes the owners will routinely park their vehicles in their underground garage stalls.

Chair Byron suggested to the proponents when this is forwarded to the City Council that samples of the exterior building materials are brought to the meeting along with a more detailed landscaping plan. Chair Byron said while the landscaping plan appears to meet code it would be beneficial to add more landscaping.

Commissioner Brown said while he believes the site is better served with more garage space parking he has a concern that visitor parking may not be adequate. He reiterated when developed there would be no way to achieve more surface parking if the need arose. Mr. Nichols acknowledged that statement and reiterated in his experience this type of facility doesn't encounter the same surface parking demands seen in the more traditional condominium developments. Mr. Nichols said a large reason for that is the residents of the proposed facility are over 55 years of age, are empty nesters or single adults, and many are retired which reduces the demand for two vehicles.

Discussion ensued with Commissioners in agreement the proposal has merit, is of similar building height to the one previously approved and stressing to the proponent the importance of retaining and maintaining the existing berm along West 70th Street, and adding additional landscaping to that berm to provide for adequate screening of the building from the residential properties across West 70th Street.

Commissioner McClelland moved to recommend Final Development Plan and plat approval subject to an agreement to grant an easement for intersection improvements, Watershed District permits, staff approval of revised landscape plan and schedule (to include berm), and satisfactory compliance with City Engineer's recommendations. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. Ayes, Schroeder, Lonsbury, McClelland, Runyan, Workinger, Brown, Grabiell and Byron. Nay, Workinger. Motion carried.

III. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM

Jackie Hoogenakker