

**MINUTES
CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA
PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
OCTOBER 12, 2011
7:00 P.M.**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Grabiell called the meeting of the Edina Planning Commission to order at 7:00 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Answering the roll call were Commissioners Platteter, Carpenter, Scherer, Staunton, Fischer, Forrest, Rock, Cherkassky, Grabiell

Absent from the roll call were Commissioners Schroeder, Potts

Chair Grabiell noted that the agenda was revised. A lot division was added and an agenda item was continued.

Chair Grabiell reported that later Karen Kurt; Assistant City Manager would introduce herself to the Commission and tell "us" about the projects she was working on.

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Commissioner Staunton moved approval of the September 28, 2011, meeting agenda. Commissioner Carpenter seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried. Meeting Agenda was approved as submitted.

IV. APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEMS

Commissioner Platteter moved approval of the September 14, 2011, meeting minutes. Commissioner Carpenter seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

V. COMMUNITY COMMENT

None.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING

**B-11-09 Sign Area Variance
Fairview Southdale Hospital
6401 France Avenue South, Edina**

Planner Presentation

Planner Teague informed the Commission Fairview Southdale Hospital, 6401 France Avenue is requesting a 236.65 square foot sign area variance to provide for the replacement of the existing wall sign on the north penthouse face of the building that was permitted with a variance in 1970.

Planner Teague explained that Fairview Southdale Hospital is proposing to replace the 41 year old, 249.26 square foot wall sign on the penthouse level of the north face of the building, with a 316.65 square foot sign affixed to the east face of the north elevation of the building above the windows on the top of the 8th floor.

Planner Teague briefed the Commission on pointing out that Edina's sign ordinance No. 460.05, subd. 5 provides for one wall sign and one monument sign per street frontage in the RMD, Regional Medical District. The first sign may not exceed 80 square feet in area, and a maximum of 40 square feet is established for any additional signs, for a total sign area not to exceed 120 square feet per frontage. Currently there is one monument sign "University of Minnesota Physicians/Heart" on the west frontage; and one wall sign on the east elevation, facing north measuring 249.26 square feet, approved by a variance in 1970. There are also three monument directional signs and a "Fairview Southdale Hospital" wall sign on the west elevation, all permitted through the variance process in 2001.

Planner Teague concluded that staff recommends approval of the requested variance based on the following findings:

- 1) The proposal meets the required standards for a variance, because:
 - a. The proposed variance is reasonable since the proposed wall sign will provide much improved identification of the hospital for patients and emergency vehicles on the Crosstown Highway.
 - b. The existing wall sign is in need of replacement and it too received a variance for sign area in 1970.

- 2) The unique circumstances are derived from the emergency medical use of the building requiring clearly legible and immediate building identification.

Approval of the variance is subject to the plans presented.

Appearing for the Applicant

Robb Gruman, Fairview Southdale Hospital and Rick Ferraro, Spectrum Sign

Applicant Presentation

Mr. Ferraro addressed the Commission and stated that the new sign and location was essential for the operation of the hospital and emergency room. Ferraro said that the proposed sign and its location was more visible to vehicles traveling east/west on Crosstown 62. Continuing, Ferraro said that the sign would be internally illuminated with a day/night diffuser.

Discussion/Comments

Commissioner Forrest commented that although she agrees with the importance of visibility she questioned why the word hospital was smaller than the word Fairview. Forrest said maybe the word hospital should be emphasized more. Mr. Ferraro explained that the proposed sign as designed complies with the Fairview Southdale Hospital branding guidelines.

Commissioner Fischer commented from his perspective the proposed sign was proportionally right.

Mr. Robb Gruman addressed the Commission and explained that the hospital wants to maintain its branding standards in identifying the hospital. Gruman informed Commissioners that different locations were studied and the proposed sign, size and location was found to be best, adding this location was visible for those traveling both east and west along Hwy 62. Concluding, Gruman reported that the existing sign would be removed and the wall would be painted.

Public Comment

None

Commissioner Staunton moved to close the public hearing. Commissioner Scherer seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

Discussion/Comment

Commissioner Staunton asked Planner Teague if the sign area standards are unique to the RMD zoning district. Planner Teague responded in the affirmative. Continuing,

Staunton said he has no objection to the sign; however, medical office buildings and hospitals are usually large buildings and the ordinance limits signage to 80 square feet and maybe that standard doesn't make sense on such large building walls.

Commissioner Fischer said he agreed with the comments from Commissioner Staunton. Fischer said hospitals; especially their emergency rooms are life and death situations and signage should be visible. Fischer suggested developing different sign standards for a hospital.

Commissioner Scherer stated that she supports the sign as presented, pointing out the new orthopedic building down the street had the same identification problem and was granted sign variances. Commissioner Scherer pointed out that the existing hospital sign wasn't easily visible because of the buildings curvature. Mr. Gruman agreed adding from certain vantage points the word hospital can't even be seen. The new location would change that.

Motion

Commissioner Fischer moved variance approval based on staff findings and subject to staff conditions. Commissioner Carpenter seconded the motion.

Commissioner Forrest asked if two findings could be added as an amendment to the motion as practical difficulties; location and curvature of the building.

Commissioners Fischer and Carpenter accepted Commissioner Forrest's amendment.

All voted aye; motion carried.

B-11-10

**Side Yard Setback Variance
Koren & Andy Nelson
4809 Rutledge Avenue, Edina
An 8.1 foot side yard setback variance to raise the roof
on an existing one and one half story home to a full two
story home located at 4809 Rutledge Ave.**

Planner Presentation

Planner Aaker informed the Commission property owners Koren and Andy Nelson are requesting a side yard setback variance to increase the height of their one and one half story home with a footprint of 1,867 square feet on property located at 4809 Rutledge Ave. The property is currently occupied by a one and one half story home with a detached two car garage. The survey indicates that the setback from the home to the

north property line is 4.8 feet. The minimum side yard setback required by ordinance is 10 feet plus 6 inches must be added to the side yard setback for each 12 inches the side wall height exceeds 15 feet. The existing home is a one and one half story home that requires additional setback for height. The home is nonconforming regarding location and height. The property owners are hoping to expand the living spaces on the second floor without expanding the building footprint. The one and one half story home will be increased to be a full two story home. Setbacks of the home will remain the same. Spacing between properties and structures will also remain the same.

The subject property is 10,704 square feet in area. The existing home was built in 1947 and pre-dates the current side yard setback requirements and is closer to the side yard than currently allowed.

Planner Aaker concluded that staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the variance based on the following findings

- 1) With the exception of the variance requested, the proposal would meet the required standards for a variance, because:
 - a. The proposed use of the property is reasonable; as it is consistent with surrounding properties and matches the nonconforming setback that has historically been provided by the existing home.
 - b. The imposed setback limits design opportunity on the second floor. The intent of the ordinance is to provide adequate spacing between properties and structures. Spacing on both sides of the home is generous given that there are detached garages between the north and south side walls.
- 2) The unique circumstance is the original nonconforming placement of the home.

Approval of the variance is also subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Subject to staff approval, the site must be developed and maintained in substantial conformance with the following plans, unless modified by the conditions below:
 - Survey date stamped: September 26, 2011.
 - Building plans and elevations date stamped August 8, 2011

Appearing for the Applicant

Andy & Koran Nelson, property owners.

Applicant Presentation

Mr. Nelson addressed the Commission and explained they studied conforming locations; however, found they wouldn't work within the existing building footprint. Nelson said they have issues with water run-off and ice dams, adding that the requested variance would alleviate those issues. Nelson said he also informed his neighbors of the proposed renovations and they indicated their support.

Discussion/Comments

A brief discussion ensued with Commissioners in agreement that the variance as requested made sense. Commissioners also thanked the applicants for their thorough application and speaking with their neighbors.

Public Comment

No comments.

Motion

Commissioner Scherer moved variance approval based on staff findings and subject to staff conditions. Commissioner Platteter seconded the motion. Commissioner Forrest asked if she could amend the motion to include practical difficulties that the current position of the house and the shape of the lot created practical difficulties.

All voted aye; motion carried. Variance approved.

Commissioner Carpenter said one other fact relative to variance approval was the proximity of the garage to the north from the property line. This distance minimizes any impact the improvements may create.

VI. REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Karen Kurt, Assistant City Manager introduced herself to the Commission; stated she was happy to be in Edina and informed them of two issues she was working on in her capacity as Assistant City Manager – developing standard by-laws for all boards/commissions and developing a survey for all board/commissions members eliciting their input and perspective as Edina boards and commissions members.

Planner Presentation

Planner Teague reported that Ms. Eva May is requesting to shift the existing lot line that divides 5023 and 5025 Nob Hill Drive by 32.5 feet for the purpose of moving the existing lot line away from the existing house at 5023 Nob Hill Drive. The applicant owns both of these properties. The existing lot line is located through a corner of the north end of the existing home. The property at 5025 Nob Hill Drive is vacant. The applicant wishes to sell the property, and would like to eliminate the encroachment of the house on to the adjacent lot. Both lots combined are 73,463 square feet in size. The vacant lot at 5025 Nob Hill is 34,761 square feet in size. The lot at 5023 Nob Hill is 38,702 square feet in size. The resulting lot line shift does not create an additional lot.

Planner Teague concluded that staff recommends that the City Council approve the Lot Division of 5023 and 5025 Nob Hill Drive:

Approval is subject to the following findings:

1. The existing and proposed lots meet all minimum lot size requirements.
2. The lot line shift eliminates the encroachment of the home on to the adjacent lot.

Approval is also subject to the following Conditions:

1. All building activity on either lot must comply with all minimum zoning ordinance standards.
2. Any new curb cuts would be subject to review and approval of the engineering department.

Discussion/Comments

Commissioner Carpenter asked Planner Teague if the existing home would meet all setback requirements after the lot line readjustment. Planner Teague responded in the affirmative.

For clarification Commissioner Scherer asked Planner Teague if the parcels had always been separate and taxed as two separate parcels. Planner Teague responded in the affirmative.

Motion

Commissioner Staunton moved lot division approval based on staff findings and subject to staff conditions. Commissioner Fischer seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS

Chair Grabel acknowledged receipt of Council Connection.

VIII. CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Chair Grabel told the Commission last week he attended the annual meeting of Planning Commissioners for the cities of Edina, Bloomington and Richfield. Grabel said he always enjoys these "get togethers" and last week was no exception. Grabel reported that next year the City of Edina will host the event.

Commissioner Staunton told the Commission they are all invited to attend the Grandview Small Area Plan open house/design charrette. The open house will stretch over three days beginning October 25 through the 27th. The first two days will be all day events and the final day; the 27th will be an evening event.

Chair Grabel thanked Staunton and asked the Commission and audience to note that the Planning Commission will not meet on the 26th of October. The Commission will meet next on November 9th. Chair Grabel asked for a continuance vote.

Commissioner Staunton moved to continue the Planning Commission meeting to November 9, 2011. Commissioner Fischer seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

X. STAFF COMMENTS

Planner Teague apprised the Commission on the status of the sketch plan review proposal for 6996 France Avenue. Teague noted a PUD proposal for the site was scheduled to be heard this evening; however, the increase in building size created issues that were absent from the "sketch plan". Teague said he believes the proposal will come before the Commission sometime in in November.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Platteter moved meeting adjournment. Commission Carpenter seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion to adjourn meeting at Carried.

Jackie Hoogenakker
Respectfully submitted