

**MINUTES
CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA
PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
APRIL 11, 2012
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 Scherer, Forrest, Schroeder, Rock, Potts, Platteter, Cherkassky, Fischer, Carpenter, Grabiell

Absent from the roll: Staunton

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Meeting Agenda was approved as submitted.

IV. ADOPTION OF BYLAWS

Discussion

Chair Grabiell reminded the Commission at their last meeting the Commission was asked to review and adopt newly revised Planning Commission Bylaws. Grabiell said Commissioner Carpenter was key in drafting the present bylaws and invited Carpenter to comment on City staff revisions to the bylaws.

Commissioner Carpenter referred to redlines highlighting staff changes to the bylaws adding that in his opinion all changes appeared to be reasonable and "clean up" some language. Carpenter pointed out the revisions to the bylaws. Commissioners also pointed out some minor changes/moves to the document.

A discussion ensued on the revisions with Commissioners questioning Section 11. Minutes and Section 18. Commissioners indicated that they are comfortable with the policy they have followed with "notes" and "minutes". "Notes" are taken at workshop meetings etc. and as another example the GrandView Framework meetings. Continuing, Commissioners indicated they want to differentiate between "notes" (no action) and "minutes"(action taken). It was also pointed out (taking Grandview's 52 member committee as an example) that it would be extremely difficult to have everyone agree on the minutes.

Planner Teague said he believes that staff would allow that flexibility. Staff just wants to ensure "notes" and/or "minutes" are taken and all "posted" meetings.

Commissioners suggested that staff ask Karen Kurt if the policy followed by the Commission on "notes" "minutes" meets the intent of this section(s). Teague responded that he would run this by Ms. Kurt and get back with them on this at their next meeting.

V. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Carpenter moved approval of the March 28, 2012, meeting minutes. Commissioner Scherer seconded the motion. Commissioner Schroeder suggested a change to the minutes on page 8. All voted aye; motion carried.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENT

Art Heiam, 5205 Richwood Drive, addressed the Commission with concerns on the access/egress scenarios depicted on the GrandView District Development Framework for his neighborhood. Heiam said any changes to the access and egress of his neighborhood would have impact. He concluded that any changes to the "Grandview" area would impact their neighborhood.

VII. REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Commission Fischer told the Commission on February 22nd they heard and discussed a presentation on the GrandView District Development Framework, he invited the public to view that presentation on Edina Channel 16. Fischer said action by the Commission on the Framework was continued to allow the "comment period" to expire on March 28th and to provide adequate time for revisions to be made to the Framework.

Commissioner Fischer said what's important to remember is that the Framework is a vision for the future and would provide a guide to property owners who may want to redevelop. Fischer reiterated that this Framework is a vision or guide. Continuing, Fischer said the Steering Committee met numerous times to formulate this Framework, all have been public meetings, including "open houses", etc. to get the word out on this process. Fischer acknowledged that committee members also worked closely with the Richmond Hills neighborhood on their concerns with traffic circulation into and out of their neighborhood. The committee also worked closely with Washburn McReavy on their concerns.

Commissioner Fischer asked the Commission to refer to their copy of the Framework, adding at this time he would be highlighting revisions and asking the Commission to accept the Framework and forward it to the City Council for their April 17th meeting. Fischer noted the following changes to the Framework as follows:

- Page 3 of the Executive Summary. Number 3. The word voluntary was added after "encourage".
- Page 30 Public Realm. Add #5. This addition was extremely important to the Richmond Hills neighborhood.
- Page 35. Note that the road south of the Washburn McReavy site was moved farther south. This was in response to a concern by McReavy.
- Page 51 under Implementation. Add #18 under Public Realm. This addition was also very important to the residents of the Richmond Hills neighborhood.
- Page 52 under Implementation. Numbers were reordered
- Page 65 & page 66 Design Alternatives. Note alternatives.

Commissioner Carpenter said that it's fair to say that the future outcome may not look anything like what's presented in the Framework, adding there's no way a specific outcome can be guaranteed. Redevelopment would occur on a case by case basis. Fischer agreed; however, the final outcome would be closer to what was envisioned in the Framework because of this process.

Chair Grabiell asked if anyone in the audience would like to speak to this topic.

Public Comment

Joe Hoover, 2627 Harriet Avenue, Richfield, MN asked if any low income housing was planned for this area. Hoover said this Framework should be seen as an opportunity to provide affordable housing for the work force.

Chair Grabiell thanked Mr. Hoover for his comments.

Motion

Commissioner Carpenter moved to accept the GrandView District Development Framework and to forward it to the City Council for their action. Commissioner Forrest seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

Chair Grabiell and Commissioners thanked everyone involved for all their hard work on the Framework. Special thanks were given to Commissioners Staunton, Fischer, Schroeder, Potts and Platteter.

B. Sketch Plan Review – 7501 France Avenue – Construction of a freestanding coffee shop with drive-through window

Planner Presentation

Planner Teague informed the Commission they have been asked to consider a sketch plan by Centennial Lakes Shopping Center to add a free standing 1,750 square foot coffee shop with a drive through at the south side of the entrance to the shopping center. This would replace the recently removed drive-through facility used by McDonald's.

Teague explained that the building would be structurally compliment the new Whole Foods Store by matching the brick, stone and metal work. Teague reported that the building would experience the most activity during the morning and noon hours, when the shopping center is not at its busiest time. Teague said a traffic study would need to be completed to determine impacts on adjacent roadways.

Appearing for the Applicant

Bruce Carlson, Mid-American and Kathy Anderson Architectural Consortium

Discussion

Commissioner Schroeder asked Planner Teague if calculations had been done to ensure that "use" ratios established in the development agreement were met. Planner Teague responded that he will have to "run" the numbers; however, believes because the Whole Foods store is smaller than the previous retail space there would be "wiggle room".

Commissioner Platteter said he seems to remember past discussions and concerns raised over drive-through facilities. Planner Teague agreed there had been past discussions; however, he pointed out those discussions focused on a particular project and the PCD-1 zoning district. Teague pointed out that this site is zoned MDD, Mixed Development District and a drive-through facility is a permitted use in this district. Teague also noted the drive-through facility that served McDonalds was removed.

Applicant Presentation

Mr. Carlson addressed the Commission and explained he is very excited with all the new additions to the Centennial Lakes shopping area. He said with the addition of Whole Foods, Jason's Deli and other new tenants interest was expressed in adding a coffee user. Carlson said that a traffic study would be initiated to determine impact on the adjacent roadways and center circulation. Continuing, Carlson said in his opinion the coffee use was a good "fit", pointing out that coffee use peaks in the early AM and the majority of tenants at Centennial Lakes open around 10:00 AM.

Carlson explained that at this time building elevations haven't been prepared; however, the goal is to have the building be compatible with the Whole Foods store.

Kathy Anderson addressed the Commission and explained that the building will be positioned and constructed to ensure unobstructed views of the other tenants in the center. With graphics Anderson said the building is small, roughly 1,750 square feet and would be visible on all four sides.

Discussion

Commissioner Forrest stressed the importance of remaining vigilant for those who don't drive and asked if bike racks were planned. Cathy Anderson agreed, adding that the coffee shop site would include bike racks. She also pointed out that a new sidewalk would be added along France Avenue to aid pedestrian movement. Bruce Carlson reiterated that bike racks would be added to the proposed coffee shop and also to Whole Foods. Carlson reported that cross walks would be clearly delineated as well as implementing additional traffic calming measures to ensure pedestrian and bike safety. Carlson concluded that special care would be taken in the drive-through area.

Chair Grabiell pointed out that to the best of his knowledge there are four coffee shops without drive-through windows in close proximity to the proposed shop, adding he's not a fan of drive-through windows. Anderson acknowledged the close proximity of other coffee shops and explained that 40% of "coffee business" is done via a drive-through window. Carlson interjected that it's highly probable if given the choice the majority of coffee shop owners would say "yes" to a drive-through window if it's feasible. Carlson said that parents with small children are particularly fond of the drive-through window option and many would drive farther to get a cup of coffee at a drive-through window if they don't have to take their children in and out of their car seats. Climate also plays a big factor in the drive-through success.

Commissioner Platteter said his concern is with emission waste, suggesting that a sign be posted in the drive-through aisle area requesting that patrons turn off their vehicles as they wait. (especially if it's a long wait line). Carlson said he would pass that suggestion on to the tenant. Continuing, Platteter added it's important for the crosswalks to be clearly delineated, and that there are adequate cross walks both east west. Concluding Platteter also asked them to pay particular attention to the location of the mechanical equipment and its exposure to other tenants and patrons. Platteter said he doesn't want mechanical components "sticking out". Anderson responded that City ordinances would be followed with regard to mechanical equipment placement. Platteter also suggested that if there's a "back side" to this building the mechanical equipment should be placed there.

Commissioner Carpenter suggested that the applicant consider implementing a cross walk between Whole Foods and the proposed coffee shop. Carpenter said he could envision patrons of Whole Foods leaving Whole Foods on "foot" to get coffee at the new coffee shop.

Mr. Carlson agreed with all suggestions adding that this area is becoming more pedestrian friendly, adding pedestrian walkability is an asset for the coffee shop as well as for the entire center and area. Safety in pedestrian movement is also important to provide and maintain.

Chair Grabiell said he likes the idea of this coffee shop and its location right up to France Avenue; however he doesn't like the drive-through window. Grabiell expressed concern with vehicle movement off France Avenue and stacking for the drive-through. Grabiell questioned if the drive-through could be repositioned. Anderson responded that the location of the drive-through was established by driver placement in the vehicle. Concluding, Grabiell stated he wants a sound traffic study done for this project.

Commissioner Fischer stated if he understands the ordinance correctly a drive-through window is a permitted use in the MDD zoning district and since the proposed project meets all other ordinance requirements (as indicated by staff) the Commission really has no reason to address the drive-through. Planner Teague agreed. Chair Grabiell asked Teague what comes next; what's the discretion of the Commission if the applicant proceeds. Teague explained the next step would be for the applicant to apply for Site Plan Approval; and appear before the Commission and Council. Teague acknowledged that the Site Plan review request isn't something the Commission reviews very often and if all ordinance requirements are met its reasonable for applicant to expect approval.

Commissioners also stressed the importance of connectivity, pointing out that users of this area will be walking from the centers residential properties to the east/south.

Commissioner Schroeder asked the applicant to pay close attention to the centers traffic patterns and study findings. Schroeder pointed out that while the proposed use as a coffee shop meets City standards it doesn't mean those standards would be met if another use were to move into the building. Schroeder suggested that the traffic study also include the maximum use of the site with a building of 1,700 square feet and not only include the least impacted use of the site as a coffee shop. Schroeder noted that another use may have more concurrent peak hours. Planner Teague said that could be added as another layer to the traffic analysis report.

Carlson stated he was a bit concerned with that request; adding that he has no idea what use could go into the building if the coffee shop moves or closes. Anderson pointed out that the size of the building would prohibit a number of uses. Planner Teague reiterated staff would request that the traffic study also reflect a more intense use.

Chair Grabiell thanked Carlson and Anderson for their presentation.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS

Chair Grabiell acknowledged receipt of the Council Connection and attendance.

IX. CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

None.

X. STAFF COMMENTS

Planner Teague informed the Commission that Commissioner Staunton will receive the Mayor's Award at the City's annual recognition dinner on April 23rd. This award honors all the hard work Staunton did on the GrandView District Development Framework. Chair Grabiell stated that Staunton certainly deserves this recognition.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Platteter moved meeting adjournment at 8:30 PM. Commissioner Potts seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

Jackie Hoogenakker
Respectfully submitted