



CITY OF LAKE ELMO
3800 LAVERNE AVE
LAKE ELMO, MN 55042

Phone: (651) 777-5510

Fax: 777-9615

www.lakeelmo.org

Lake Elmo Planning Commission
ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE
Monday, January 10, 2005, 7:00 p.m.

In Council Chambers
Lake Elmo City Hall
3800 Laverne Ave. N.
Lake Elmo, MN 55042

AGENDA

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Agenda
3. Minutes of December 13, 2004
4. Annual Meeting ~ Election of Officers
5. LB District Allowable Uses ~ Dry Cleaning Plants
6. Neighborhood Conservation Districts
7. Process for Amending the Comprehensive Plan
8. City Council Update
9. Adjourn

**City of Lake Elmo
Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes of January 10, 2005**

Chairman Helwig called to order the meeting of the Lake Elmo Planning Commission at 7:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Armstrong, Deziel, Roth, Sessing, Sedro, and Ptacek. STAFF PRESENT: Planner Dillerud, Administrator Rafferty, Recording Secretary Schaffel. ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Johnston.

AGENDA

M/S/P, Ptacek/Sessing, To accept the Agenda as presented. **VOTE 7:0.**

MINUTES

M/S/P, Deziel/Armstrong, To accept the Minutes of December 13, 2004 and Workshop Minutes of December 13, 2004 as presented. **VOTE 7:0.**

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Commissioner Deziel/Commissioner Sedro, To nominate Bob Helwig as Chairman of the Planning Commission. **M/S/P**, Armstrong/Roth, To accept the nomination of Bob Helwig and to close nominations for Chairman. **VOTE: 7:0.** Bob Helwig was declared elected by unanimous ballot.

Commissioner Sedro/Commissioner Roth, To nominate Rod Sessing as Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission. **M/S/P**, Deziel/Armstrong, To accept the nomination of Rod Sessing; close nominations for Vice Chairman. **VOTE: 7:0.** Rod Sessing was declared elected by unanimous ballot.

Commissioner Sessing/Commissioner Deziel, To nominate Kathy Sedro as Secretary of the Planning Commission. **M/S/P**, Deziel/Sessing, To accept the nomination of Kathy Sedro; close nominations for Secretary. **VOTE: 7:0.** Kathy Sedro was declared elected by unanimous ballot.

LB DISTRICT ALLOWABLE USES – DRY CLEANING PLANTS

The Planner explained that an applicant approached staff to ask if he could have a Dry Cleaning Plant in the Limited Business District. Dry Cleaning would be performed on site as opposed to a drop-off and pick-up facility. The City Engineer is concerned about wastewater treatment for such a plant. The Planner is asking if the Planning Commission would like to, on its initiative, review the uses in Limited Business for the possible addition of a dry cleaning plant as an allowable use. If so, a public hearing will be called in February. If not, the applicant may make a formal application.

Commissioner Sedro said chemicals used in dry cleaning plants in the past were carcinogenic. That would be a concern.

Commissioner Ptacek said wastewater and traffic would be his concerns. He would want to know if this site would be a single station or a hub for other stations. He said this is a very intense use for a Limited Business District. He believes it should be very carefully considered in the General Business Zone.

Commissioner Deziel said that he worked in a dry cleaning plant in college. He noted that with Environmental Level I studies they will find any leaks or leaching into the ground. The chemicals cannot be put into the ground. There may be ways to prevent that but it has concerns for a community wastewater system. He suggested that there is probably good reason dry cleaning plants were left off the list of uses in this zone.

M/S/P, Armstrong/Sessing, To direct the City Planner to write to the inquirer about the Planning Commission's environmental concerns, and that the Commission will not discuss the dry cleaning plant in the Limited

Business Zone further without a formal application.

Chairman Helwig said a holding tank could be designed specifically for that unit. He reported that he has witnessed that traffic for dry cleaning is not that heavy. He said that he would expect a salon/spa to have more traffic. **VOTE: 7:0.**

NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

The Planner disseminated some information with regard to calculations of lot areas within the Old Village. He said there is a great deal of work to go into Neighborhood Conservation Districts. The reason this is being brought up is in the event of catastrophic loss, 97% of the 250 lots reviewed were below the R-1 and GB minimum lot area standards.

The Planner asked how, given the data presented, the City will structure the lot area portion of Neighborhood Conservation District standards to accommodate what exists in those areas today. He suggested that the City may not wish to create new parcels at the lowest standards due to septic treatment difficulties. He questioned what the City would do if faced with a variance to rebuild a house in the Old Village. He said that he thought the cause of these issues was that, in the distant past, a model suburban zoning ordinance was adopted by the City that was structured for a typical suburban community.

Commissioner Ptacek said his thought process is to look at adjacent densities. He suggested that if your neighbors are one-third of an acre, that adjacent density could prevail; and perhaps population goals for the Met Council might be met by allowing some of the density in the Old Village to be expanded.

Commissioner Armstrong said he is concerned today for reconstruction and remodels. The City could change the 50% destroyed threshold in the nonconformity ordinance to address part of the problem. The Planning Commission talked about it a few years ago, and he would like to discuss it again. He said the legislature is addressing the zoning nonconformity issue for existing uses as well.

Commissioner Sessing said that with additions to existing residents, the City should review those by percentages, staying out of setbacks, and then looking at impervious surface coverage.

The City Planner said that as the City looks at the Old Village Plan, we are considering continuing a historic development pattern. He suggested that this is probably a wise idea since Old Villager residents appear to appreciate the character of their neighborhoods.

Commissioner Ptacek said the reduced lot sizes and increased density also help housing affordability.

Chairman Helwig said affordability never came up. The people living in the Old Village are happy with what they have.

The Planner said changing the non-conforming part of the code would be a first step.

Commissioner Sedro said some people were concerned about lot size but we could look at sticking with what is already there. She asked if in the Old Village, one-quarter acre lots are next to each other, one-thirds are next to each other, or is it a hodgepodge?

The Planner said in some cases square footage is the same, and others were inconsistent.

Commissioner Sessing suggested taking an average lot size in the area and gradually increasing it as you move outward.

Commissioner Ptacek said he can envision a bulls-eye kind of zoning. He said he liked Lane Kendig's approach.

Chairman Helwig said we are trying to transition from tight development patterns in the Old Village to open space type development patterns in the balance of the City.

The Planner asked if, assuming we can deal with the wastewater portion of that idea, is that acceptable?

Commissioner Sessing said Old Village residents were happy with their surroundings but they didn't want it to get too dense either.

Chairman Helwig said he has thought about meeting Met Council objectives. We have to sewer the Old Village one way or another. Whether we supply a wetland treatment system or bring in a pipe, we should get credit for those SAC units.

The Planner said that so far it is not an option to do it that way. However, the city is continuing to try to get the Metropolitan Council to accept a REC unit as a REC unit – whether serving new or existing housing.

Mayor Johnston said the Neighborhood Conservation District discussion was rekindled when somebody wanted to rebuild a garage on a property line and faced setback issues with the existing ordinance. He asked if that was where the Commission was going with the present discussion.

The Planner said that the Commission had already looked at a potential solution to the setback issues with a section of the draft new zoning ordinance. The Commission's issue at this meeting is focused on non-conforming lot areas.

Commissioner Sedro asked if we run regional sewer the Old Village, would that spell out our future? Would everything in between the regional sewer access point and the Old Village have to be sewerred too?

The Planner said that when a sewer was done in Plymouth to serve Hamel, there were 1.5 miles of inaccessible sewer that developers repeatedly attempted to tap for unsewered land along the sewer pipe route. Yet, the City and Met Council held firm on intervening access to the sewer. A good part of that intervening distance to the Old Village fronts the Lake Elmo Park Reserve and Tartan Park – making the push for access there less of an issue.

Commissioner Deziel said there are bigger lots in some areas of the Old Village and others tightly packed. He remembered an application on Kraft Circle on a lot of 100 feet by 100 feet and the applicant was acquiring a second parcel. No matter how small in area the City established for zoning purposes, we have to have a valid septic system for it. That would be the reasonable boundary to implement.

PROCESS FOR AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Planner said there are four elements to a Comprehensive Plan. He said Analysis and Physical Characteristics were done in 1999. We spent a good deal of time in 1999 on City development Policy through 2020. The Planner said we must now take the Development Policy and convert it into a Land Use Plan and the resulting System Plans including water resources, wastewater, traffic, parks, trails, and implementation devices such as TDR, mapping, etc. with modifications to incorporate whatever agreement with the Met Council that comes forth.

Commissioner Deziel asked if we are looking at 2030 as a planning horizon.

The Planner said that yes, we will have to.

The Planner said that in the next packet will be the Met Council 2002-30 Resolution and a subsequent Resolution with a list of modifications Met Council demands that the City make to its Plan.

Chairman Helwig said we have the guidelines and the Comprehensive Plan. He said that last time, we quartered the city to make it more manageable until we arrived at the Land Use Plan portion.

The Planner said that once he is positive what the Met Council wants, he will bring it to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Ptacek said that last time, there were only four developers in the Comp Plan public hearing. He would like to see the Planning Commission move forward and get the revised policy out there. He said we have a good idea of what we need to do along with the Met Council mandate and the City Council direction. He said that he does not feel the changes will be that specific, and we can start now.

Commissioner Deziel summarized that we will just go straight to 2030; not put a patch on the 2020.

The Planner said the Comp Plan modifications will be significant, particularly south of 10th Street. Much existing planning policy goes to community character. He suggested that when all is said and done, the City will have different types of character within some of the areas of the community. He observed that this will require a revision in policy for at least a portion of the City.

Commissioner Armstrong said he would like policy language drafted to meet the mandates of the Met Council, and to state that it is being done as a mandate.

Mayor Johnston said he is surprised by the intensity of development being suggested to be placed adjacent to existing neighborhoods. He said we could anticipate much more public input this time.

A straw vote was taken to address the Comprehensive Plan up to Policy, and then stop, and then present that portion to the public. All commissioners agreed.

The Planner suggested that everyone start looking at the current 2000-2020 Comp Plan document very carefully. There will be significant urbanization requirements south of 10th Street. The only question is how much.

Commissioner Deziel said setting out policy as a mandate from the Met Council, is a good idea. That answers questions about consistency.

The Planner suggested a workshop before our next meeting for the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioners expressed a desire for early notification of additional planning meetings.

Commissioner Roth asked when we reach an agreement to modify our Comprehensive Plan, can those Met Council numbers be tweaked and modified.

The Planner said if we don't beat on their numbers too hard, there may be some latitude there.

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

The Planner reported that the first City Council Meeting of the year was their Organizational Meeting. The preliminary plat of CARDINAL VIEW was approved as recommended with conditions. The CDBG Block Grant was approved for the Cimarron Gas Line Project.

The Planner said that on the next agenda will be two complete site plans – one for a credit union facility in Eagle Point Business Park, and a second for an office building in the Brookman Addition.

ADJOURN AT 7:58 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kimberly Schaffel".

Kimberly Schaffel
Recording Secretary