



**City of Lake Elmo
Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes of August 27, 2012**

Chairman Williams called to order the meeting of the Lake Elmo Planning Commission at 7:00pm.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Williams, Bloyer, Obermueller, Haggard, and Fliflet.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Hall and Pelletier.

STAFF PRESENT: City Planner Johnson.

Approve Agenda:

There were no objections to the agenda as presented.

Approve Minutes: *None*

Public Hearing: *Zoning Text Amendment, Shoreland Standards (§150.255)*

Planner Johnson explained the background information behind the request made by Mr. Jim Leonard, 3012 Lake Elmo Ave. N., to amend the Lake Elmo City Code to allow for water-oriented accessory structures used solely for watercraft storage to occupy up to 400 square feet. This standard would be consistent with the state statute regarding the standards for water-oriented accessory structures. In addition to the allowance for structures used for watercraft storage to occupy 400 square feet, the state statute also recommends a setback of 10' from the Ordinary High Water (OHW) Mark for water-oriented accessory structures. The Lake Elmo Shoreland Ordinance currently has a 20' setback from the OHW.

Planner Johnson noted that the DNR did respond for comment regarding the proposed zoning text amendment. The DNR Area Hydrologist, Molly Shodeen, noted that the DNR would not object to such an amendment since it is consistent with the State Statute. In addition, Planner Johnson noted that the allowance for structures used for watercraft storage to occupy 400 square feet only applies to general and recreational development waterbodies. In Lake Elmo, the waterbodies that are classified as recreational development waterbodies are Lake Elmo, Jane, Olson, and DeMontreville.

Commissioner Fliflet asked if water-oriented accessory structures are allowed on natural environment lakes.

Johnson noted that Staff should clarify this fact, but he believes that water-oriented structures up to 250 square feet are allowed on natural environment waterbodies.

Providing more background, Planner Johnson noted that research regarding the adoption of the original Shoreland Ordinance did not reveal why the allowance for 400 square feet structures used for boat storage was not included. IN addition, Staff did some research regarding the standards of other communities in the Metro Area and found that some cities are more restrictive, whereas others follow the Model DNR Shoreland Ordinance to the letter.

Commissioner Fliflet asked whether other types of water-oriented accessory structures would be allowed up to 400 square feet. In addition, what about water-oriented structures that serve dual purposes.

Planner Johnson noted that other types of structures would not be allowed up to the 400 square foot size. In addition, the Planning and Building Department would be responsible to review building permits related to water-oriented accessory structures to ensure that the intent of the Shoreland Ordinance is followed.

Commissioner Bloyer noted that an allowance for better boathouses would beautify the shoreland areas of the recreational development waterbodies.

Commissioner Haggard asked if there are any standards that govern the design of water-oriented accessory structures.

Planner Johnson noted that these structures would be governed by the City Code as it relates to accessory structures, which requires that the structures match the design of the primary structure.

Chairman Williams opened the Public Hearing at 7:14pm.

Jim Leonard, 3012 Lake Elmo Ave., spoke about the reasons for his request. He noted that his boat is of typical size and could not be stored in a structure of only 250 square feet.

Chairman Williams closed the Public Hearing at 7:17pm.

Chairman Williams noted that water-oriented accessory structures are allowed up to 13 feet in height. In addition, Chairman Williams noted that the Commission should not address the setback from the OHW mark if notice was not published for a public hearing regarding this matter.

Commissioner Obermueller noted that a structure height of 13 feet may be too limited in terms of matching the structure to the primary.

Regarding the pursuing the 10 foot setback standard from the DNR Model Ordinance, Chairman Williams recommends publishing a new public hearing notice for the Planning Commission meeting on September 24th at no expense to the applicant.

M/S/P: Fliflet/Haggard, motion to approve the zoning text amendment to come into conformance with the DNR's Model Shoreland Ordinance and allow water-oriented accessory structures used for boat storage and other accessory boat equipment up to 400 square feet. Vote: 4-0, Commissioner Bloyer abstained.

Chairman Williams asked the applicant if he would like the City to pursue a zoning text amendment related to the setback from the OHW mark.

Mr. Leonard confirmed that he would be interested in such a zoning text amendment.

M/S/P: Obermueller/Fliflet, motion to direct Staff to prepare a zoning text amendment and hold a public hearing for a change of the Shoreland Ordinance from a setback of 20 feet from the OHW mark to 10 feet. Vote: 4-0, Commissioner Bloyer abstained.

Business Item: *Design Standards Case Studies and Discussion*

Planner Johnson presented the basics of design guidelines and standards, as well as what attributes are commonly found in effective design standards. He also noted that it is important that the design standards reflect an agreed upon set of community goals that pertain to site and building design.

Planner Johnson went on to describe how design standards are generally applied. These standards typically applied to specific geographic areas, or specific types of land uses, such as commercial or high density residential development. In addition, design guidelines are written in two forms: manuals or straight into the City Code.

Chairman Williams asked about the advantages of creating a design guideline manual vs. writing these standards directly into the code.

Planner Johnson noted that manuals allow the city to use pictures and visual examples of the types of development the City would like to pursue. Regarding codified standards, there may be some advantage in terms of simplicity of inserting the guidelines directly into the Zoning Ordinance.

Moving on, Planner Johnson described the four case studies included in the presentation: Eden Prairie Town Center Design Guidelines, Oak Park Design Guidelines, City of Wayzata Design Standards, and Camp Phillips Business Campus Design Guidelines. Finally, Planner Johnson noted that Staff is looking for direction in terms of defining priorities as they relate to design standards.

Chairman Williams noted that it may be helpful for the Planning Commission to view some videos by Randall Arendt regarding design and site planning. He also noted that we should consider design standards in the context of open field or “blank slate” development.

Commissioner Haggard wanted to ensure that the design standards applied to redevelopment in addition to Greenfield development. Also, she noted that she liked how the Eden Prairie Design Guidelines always began each standard with a goal, thereby communicating the purpose to the development community.

Commissioner Obermueller asked how complete streets programs can be incorporated into design guidelines.

Planner Johnson noted that complete streets programs are intended to be a policy decision for public bodies to incorporate more pedestrian amenities and multi-modal transportation infrastructure into public streets.

Commissioner Williams asked about the difference between using the terms mandatory and encouraged within design guidelines.

Planner Johnson noted that mandatory elements are those which are not negotiable and have more teeth. Typically, the encouraged elements are more architectural and subjective in nature.

Chairman Williams suggested that standards for consistent signage for commercial development in the I-94 Corridor should be implemented. This would prevent negative effects of piecemeal commercial development. In addition, the City should require that larger sites are developed contiguously with a uniformity of building design.

Commissioner Haggard noted that shared parking sounds like a good idea, as well as keeping parking to the rear of structures when possible.

Planner Johnson reiterated that Staff is looking for direction regarding priorities for design guidelines, as well as whether they should be in code or manual form.

Commissioner Bloyer suggested that the priorities for instituting design guidelines should be commercial and high density residential development.

Commissioner Haggard noted that however the design guidelines are constructed, they should be layered so that these different development types relate to one another.

Chairman Williams noted that the City of Lake Elmo should concentrate on commercial and high density residential development. He does not see any utility in applying

detailed design guidelines to single family residential development. There is enough work to be done with the higher impact uses than single family residential.

Commissioner Haggard noted that standards for streets may be helpful.

Planner Johnson noted that the City of Eden Prairie had guidelines for public utilities, such as storm water management systems. This may be an approach that the City should pursue further down the road.

Business Item: *Village Planning Update*

Planner Johnson made a brief presentation highlighting two updates regarding the Village Area planning process. First, the Village Work Group officially endorsed a land use plan to move forward in the planning process. Second, Staff is considering including an amendment to the City's Municipal Urban Service (MUSA) boundary. This boundary indicates where the City intends to provide sewer and water service.

Regarding the Village Land Use Map, there are four major features. First, there is a greenbelt surrounding the Village Area. Staff is working with the Minnesota Land Trust on furthering this project. Second, there is a Village Center- Mixed Use area, intended to serve as the downtown development area. Third, the areas surrounding downtown have been guided for medium and low density residential development. Fourth, the plan shows the City's intention to provide a regional recreation facility in the Village Area to the East of downtown.

Chairman Williams asked about storm water management for the Village Area, as well as working with the railroad on the crossing for the new collector street.

Planner Johnson noted that it would benefit the Village Area to work with developers who are interested in developing on a larger scale because it is easier to construct a regional retention system with one or two partners as opposed to many different developers. Regarding the railroad, the City needs to complete further engagement to work with them on the Village Pkwy crossing.

Commissioner Fliflet noted that this plan needs to incorporate strategies related to safe pedestrian crossings of HWY 5.

Planner Johnson noted that such strategies should be included as a priority in the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Haggard asked what the City needs to do to ensure that the downtown village green concept is accomplished in the best location possible.

Planner Johnson noted that if the City Council decides that this downtown concept is a priority, that it would be wise to acquire the property that would make it a reality.

Moving on, Planner Johnson made an update regarding a potential MUSA boundary amendment. This amendment will proceed with the Village Land Use Comp Plan Amendment process.

Commissioner Boyer noted that some residents south of 30th St. are interested in connecting to sewer.

Chairman Williams noted that if some new parcels are added to MUSA area, the zoning of these properties should not change.

City Council Updates

Authorization of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment for Adjacent Community Review – City Council authorized the distribution of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment related to the I-94 Land Use plan and Housing sections for our adjacent communities and jurisdictions to officially review the City’s proposed plans.

Zoning Ordinance Updates Approved - The City Council did pass the proposed Zoning Ordinance updates for the zoning districts related to the I-94 Corridor. However, the City Council still has to approve a formal ordinance to adopt the proposed changes to the Zoning Code.

Farm School Concept Plan Extension - Finally, Tammy Malmquist submitted a request for an extension on the review of the concept plan for her development proposal.

Commissioner Obermueller noted that this project is currently listed as a City project on the City’s website. She believes that this should not be listed as a City project.

Staff Updates

Commissioner Joan Ziertman Resignation – Commissioner Ziertman submitted a letter of resignation from the Planning Commission. She served for 3.5 years and the City would like to thank her for her service.

Planning Commission Meetings 9/10 and 9/24 – Upcoming meetings for the Planning Commission will include updates to the construction of design standards, as well as the Village Comprehensive Plan Amendment. In addition, the Planning Commission will hold another public hearing related to a zoning text amendment for Shoreland Standards.

Commission Concerns - *None*

Adjournment at 9:16pm

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Johnson
City Planner