

CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
Planning Commission
City Hall
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

MINUTES

September 26th, 2023 at 7:00 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 P.M.

B. ROLL CALL:

Scott Wilson <u>X</u>	Laura Paynter ____
Jacob Brooks <u>X</u>	Mike Tracy <u>X</u>
Jim Mogen ____	VACANT
Jake Anderson <u>X</u>	

Council Liaison Gustafson X
Staff Liaison Lynch X

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Brooks makes a motion to approve agenda; approved 4-0.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Regular Meeting - June 27, 2023
2. Workshop - July 25, 2023
3. Workshop - August 22, 2023

Chair Wilson notes one change to June 27, 2023 minutes. Commissioner Anderson makes a motion to approve June 27, 2023 minutes with edit, July 25, 2023 workshop minutes, and August 22, 2023 workshop minutes. Minutes are approved 4-0.

E. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Gibbs Farm Rezoning and Redevelopment - PUD Proposal

Staff Liaison Lynch gives an overview of the Gibbs Farm rezoning and PUD request. The property is located at 2097 Larpenteur Ave W, at the northwest corner of the Larpenteur Avenue and Cleveland Avenue intersection. It is owned by Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS), a 501c3 organization. This organization was previously assumed to be a part of Ramsey County, and was zoned Public Land (P-1) accordingly. As this is not the case, the property needs to be rezoned. The most appropriate zoning designation would be B-2 which permits museums with the issuance of a Conditional Use Permit.

The request is for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) on the site to allow for the existing museum buildings and the addition of two buildings, a 16,000 square foot education building and a 4,000 square foot preservation facility. The addition of these buildings will allow the museum to operate on an annual basis and allow RCHS to store their collection of items on site.

Chad Roberts, President of RCHS, and Sammy Nelson, Director of Gibbs Farm, were in attendance. Chad Roberts gave a brief overview of the programming existing at Gibbs Farm and the benefit of the PUD and adding the two additional buildings. The museum site currently reaches approximately 15,000 students a year through field trips and summer camps. The majority of the site is operated late spring-early fall. The addition of the education building and preservation facility will allow the organization to reach 30,000 students per year with local history education, an after-school program, increase the rental capacity, and support the preservation of the RCHS collection.

Chair Wilson opened the public hearing. Peg Riley, a resident at 1666 Coffman, spoke on behalf of the residents at 1666 Coffman and expressed their interest in city projects. She also voiced their support of the project.

Chair Wilson closed the public hearing.

F. NEW BUSINESS

1. Gibbs Farm Rezoning and Redevelopment – PUD Proposal

Chair Wilson opened the floor for comments and questions from Commissioners. Commissioner Brooks voiced his support of the project.

Commissioner Tracy also voiced his support of the project and asked if the farm animals would be remaining on site. Sammy Nelson responded that the animals would be remaining on site, and would hopefully be able to be kept their year-round.

Commissioner Anderson voiced his support for the project. He asked about if the education would be housing event space. Chad Roberts responded it would have event space for partners and community members, and the space will be able to host around 200 adults at round tables in the Prairie Room. He stated it is their goal to be an affordable solution for events.

Chair Wilson voiced his support for the project. He asked about safety for students and visitors crossing at Larpenteur and Cleveland to go between Gibbs Farm and the Bell Museum. Chad Roberts explained they are incorporating a large plaza with the Gibbs Farm sign at the corner to allow for a larger landing space for those waiting at the corner to cross. He also explained most students take buses between the two sites, so they are anticipating that to continue. Chair Wilson asked about timing for the project. Chad Roberts explained they are hoping to begin working on the collections building in

September 2024 and ideally would be working on the education building at the same time.

Council Liaison Gustafson also expressed his support of the project. He asked several questions about event space, parking for events, and licensing for special events. Chad Roberts explained parking would not be an issue, and the licensing for special events and any permits needed for those would be acquired by the organization holding the event. Chad Roberts also addressed parking stating that, if needed, they can open up grass parking south of the education building and they also partner with the UMN soccer stadium to share overflow parking when needed.

Commissioner Tracy made a motion for a recommendation to City Council of approval for the rezoning and PUD at Gibbs Farm. A vote was taken and all were in favor. The motion passed 4-0.

G. INFORMATION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Staff Liaison Report - None
2. Council Liaison Report

Council Liaison Gustafson gave a brief overview of the upcoming topics on the City Council agenda.

H. ADJOURN 7:30 PM