



**City of Lake Elmo Planning Commission Meeting
City Council Chambers – 3800 Laverne Avenue North
Minutes of Regular Meeting of
April 10, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER: Commission Chair Risner called to order the meeting of the Lake Elmo Planning Commission at 7:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Risner, Bohlig, Geffre, Rehkamp, Steil, Williams, Vrieze

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: City Planner Sophia Jensen, Jenni Faulkner- Bolton & Menk

Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 PM

Approve Agenda:

M/S/P: Steil / Vrieze: made a motion to approve the agenda. **Vote: 7-0, motion carried unanimously**

Approve Minutes:

M/S/P: Vrieze / Geffre made a motion to approve the 3-27-23 meeting minutes with the correction that the meeting was opened by Risner, not Steil. **Vote: 7-0, motion carried unanimously.**

Public Hearing:

- a) **Variance.** 8695 Eagle Point Blvd. (PID 3302921440009) United Properties has submitted a variance for deviations from the Shoreland Overlay District standards.

Jenni Falkner, Bolton & Menk, gave presentation and answered questions.

Applicant Alex Hall with United Properties spoke and answered questions.

DRAFT FINDINGS:

An applicant must establish and demonstrate compliance with the variance criteria set forth in Lake Elmo City Code Section 105.12.320 set forth by the MN Stat. 462.357 subd.6 before the City may grant an exception or modification to city code requirements.

1) Practical Difficulties.

FINDINGS: *The strict interpretation of the City's standards would preclude a use which has been approved by the City for this property, at a density consistent with the City's adopted plans and standards. Practical difficulties arise from strict application of lot coverage and height standards due to circumstances unique to this lot and proposal. The multifamily residential use proposed on this property is a more efficient use of the property than other permitted uses which would require more land area.*

2) Unique Circumstances.

FINDINGS: *The property is bound on two sides by sensitive natural areas which are proposed to be protected. The preservation of the wetland area on the west side of the property requires the building to be located within the area of the property that is considered to be Shoreland. These are unique circumstances to this property and the proposed variances would not circumvent the intent of either zoning bulk or shoreland standards*

3) **Character of Locality.**

FINDINGS: *If granted, the variances will not alter the character of the surrounding area. Site design proposed on this property is consistent with surrounding properties and the City's adopted design standards. Any impacts created by building height will be mitigated through distance to other properties and landscaping installed with the development. Stormwater impacts are proposed to be managed through stormwater facilities proposed in the developable area of this site.*

4) **Adjacent Properties and Traffic.**

FINDINGS: *If granted, the variances would not create environmental impacts such as traffic or noise beyond those created on surrounding properties or permitted by right in the area. The proposed location of the building and parking areas, in the center of the property, help to screen or mitigate any noticeable impacts to neighboring properties.*

M/S/P: Bohlig / Geffre moved to open the public hearing at 7:11 PM. **Vote: 7-0, motion carried unanimously.**

Public Comments: None

M/S/P: Rehkamp / Steil moved to close the public hearing at 7:11 PM. **Vote: 7-0, motion carried unanimously.**

M/S/P: Steil / Vrieze moved to recommend approval of the shoreland variance requests by United Properties for maximum lot coverage and building height on the subject property based on the findings of fact and recommended conditions of approval listed in the staff report. **Vote: 7-0, motion carried unanimously.**

New/Unfinished Business

N/A

Communications/Updates - City Council Updates

- i. 2621 Innsdale Avenue Variance - approved
- ii. PUD Text Amendment - approved
- iii. SAC Text Amendment - approved
- iv. CEF Solar Farm Conditional Use Permit - approved

Upcoming Meetings

- a) April 24, 2023 - cancelled
- b) May 8, 2023

Meeting adjourned at 7:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Wendt
Permit Technician