



**City of Lake Elmo
Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes of June 30, 2014**

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

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Williams, Dodson, Larson, Dorschner and Lundgren.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Kreimer, Haggard and Morreale;

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development Director Klatt, City Planner Johnson and City Administrator Zuleger.

Approve Agenda:

The agenda was accepted as presented.

Approve Minutes: June 23, 2014

M/S/P: Williams/Lundgren, move to approve the minutes as amended, **Vote: 5-0, motion carried.**

Public Hearing: Easton Village – Preliminary Plat

Klatt started his presentation of the Preliminary Plat. He noted that the plat includes 217 single family lots and includes a significant portion of the planned Village Parkway minor collector road. He noted that there is also an access proposed to Manning Ave., which staff is recommending be temporary until the collector road connects to 30th Street. Klatt noted that the Minor/Lampert residential home and Northern Natural Gas service station is access by a private driveway that crosses the Union Pacific rail corridor.

Klatt noted that the Planning Commission reviewed the Sketch Plan in January in 2014. The plat has been significantly revised in response to the initial review. The changes included a more grid pattern for the streets, less cul-de-sacs and improved pedestrian facilities. Klatt then discussed the review comments that arose from the Park Commissions review of the Sketch Plan.

Regarding the planned buffers that are guided in the Comprehensive Plan, Klatt noted that the applicants are proposing to use significant portions of the greenbelt for stormwater management. Klatt noted how sewer was expected to be extended as part of the Easton Village Sanitary Sewer project. It should be noted that there is currently a

collaborative effort by multiple private parties to extend sanitary sewer up the eastern side of the Village to the northern portions of the Village.

Klatt mentioned how the AUAR relates to the review of the Preliminary Plat.

Regarding density, Klatt noted that the net density is 2.5 units per acre. Most of the lots are 65' or 75' in width. All of the lots meet the City's minimum size requirements for the Urban Low Density Residential (LDR) zoning.

The most critical aspect of review for the proposed plat is storm water management. Due to the significant drainage issues related to this location, it will be imperative to provide an effective storm water management system. The applicant still needs to get approval from the Valley Branch Watershed District.

Klatt moved on to discuss Village Parkway. He noted that the design of Village Parkway is different than 5th St., as it does not have a center planted median. Klatt shared the reasons why a different design is being considered by the City.

Klatt moved on to highlight important issues surrounding the Lake Elmo Airport. He noted that the Metropolitan Airport Commission has submitted a comment letter to the City. The most important consideration related to the airport relates to the design of the storm water facilities. They will need to be designed in a way that does not attract waterfowl.

To wrap up the key issues of review, Klatt discussed the proposed connection to Manning Ave. He noted that staff is recommending that the access to Manning Ave. be temporary. The reason for this recommendation is that if the connection is permanent, then more traffic will be directed to a portion of the neighborhood that is intended to serve local residential traffic.

Klatt noted that staff is recommending approval of the preliminary plat with 21 conditions of approval. Klatt discussed the proposed findings as shown in the Staff Report. After showing the staff recommendation and proposed findings and conditions, Klatt presented the plat and other preliminary plans to the Planning Commission.

Dodson asked if the staff and the applicants explored aligning Village Parkway along the natural gasline easement. Klatt noted that they did explore the possibility, but the land uses to the south of this area made it difficult to bring the collector road through. Dodson asked about the proposed parkland dedication and Condition #11. Klatt explained why it is difficult at this time to make more firm plans for the site north of the railroad tracks. Dodson asked about Outlot G and the pedestrian crossing of Village Parkway.

Williams asked about Condition #4. Williams asked if there was any trail connections proposed to a potential future trail on Manning Ave., as the County has shown the possibility of trails along this corridor.

Tom Wolter, Easton Village, LLC, introduced himself and welcomed any questions. Williams asked about the mass grading of the site, and asked if all the area will be properly settled after the grading. Wolter noted that all the building pads will be certified by a soils engineer. Williams asked the applicant if making the access to Manning temporary is acceptable. Wolter noted that they would like to discuss the timing of the closure with City and County staff, but they are open to making it temporary.

Dodson asked about the High Water level of one of the ponds. He asked about the trail location along blocks 4 and 5 near outlot B. The applicants noted that they are planning a sledding hill in Outlot B.

Williams asked about the infiltration basin in Outlot B. Todd Erickson, project engineer, explained the design of storm water ponds in Outlot B. Dorschner asked about the safety components of the pond. Erickson stated that there is a safety bench planned, which is typical for a pond of this depth.

Public Hearing opened at 8:17pm.

Susan Dunn, 11018 Upper 33rd St. N., shared some of the guiding principles of the Village Master Plan and noted that she is in opposition to the proposed plat. She shared some thoughts about safety related to the railroad tracks, the airport, and the Manning Ave. corridor. She stated that she does not support the proposed development as proposed.

The City did receive written comments from the Metropolitan Airport Commission. These comments were entered into the record.

Public Hearing closed at 8:22 pm.

Williams asked if the applicant is seeking parkland dedication for Outlot K. The applicants noted that they are seeking credit for Outlot K. Williams asked how staff is calculating dedication for trail areas. Klatt stated that the City requires 30 feet of width for a trail to accommodate for maintenance.

There was a general discussion about railroad noise. Klatt explained the guidance of the AUAR regarding railroad noise.

There was a discussion about the level of parkland dedication and the labeling of the outlots. Staff noted that the outlots and calculations have been consistent.

Lundgren is concerned about the number of conditions of approval. Erickson noted that the number of conditions is fairly typical in his experience. He also noted the importance of the window of opportunity of the construction season. Klatt spoke to the City's recommendation and explained the reason for conditions and approval.

Williams spoke about the design of Village Parkway. Klatt explained that the volume of cars drives how the roadway is designed. In this case, staff is recommending no center median because the cost does not justify it based on many factors.

Williams spoke about the draft findings. He noted that finding #3 is not accurate. Williams stated that he is in favor of recommending approval of the plat with conditions, but not based on finding number 3. Condition # 9 shall include "for the storm water management system". Combine findings 4 and 6 and include the language "with the conditions noted in the Engineer's report dated 6/26/14".

There was a discussion about the design of Village Parkway. Initially the Commission was inclined to add a landscaped center median as a condition of approval. After hearing from staff regarding the design, costs and the right-of-way width needed, the Planning Commission decided not to include the planted median.

M/S/P: Dorschner/Dodson, move to recommend approval of the Preliminary Plat of Easton Village with the amendments to condition 9 and combining findings 3 and 5.
Vote: 5-0, motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing: Village Preserve – Preliminary Plat

Johnson presented an overview of a preliminary plat to be called Village Preserve, located in the northern portion of the Village Planning Area. He discussed the future land use plan for this area and reviewed the overall lot layout and street configuration. Johnson reviewed a summary of the specific comments from staff, and presented the critical issues that were identified, which included stormwater management, park land dedication, and sanitary sewer. He stated that staff is recommending approval of the preliminary plat with 12 conditions of approval.

Dodson questioned how much of the storm water was currently being directed downstream and how this would change with the proposed development. Johnson noted that the developer cannot increase the volume of water leaving the site post development under City and watershed district reviews. Johnson also stated that the City will be working with developers and the watershed district to identify options for diverting water to other watershed basins.

The Commission asked general questions about the future road connections, the density of the subdivision, the proposed trail connections and the ownership of the storm water ponds.

Dave Gonyea commented that there is only a very small portion of the existing overall storm water being directed north to another watershed basin. He noted that the Park Commission asked that the trails around Outlot D allow for the maximum potential use of the land until a final plan for the park can be implemented.

Public Hearing opened at 10:07pm.

No one spoke

Public Hearing closed at 10:08 pm.

Williams asked that condition number 5 be revised to specify that the condition apply to the storm water management plan. He also asked that condition 13 be added to require that all storm water outlots be dedicated to the City. Williams requested that findings 4 and 5 note that the plat meets the City's requirements with the exceptions noted in the staff report and the comments made.

M/S/P: Lundgren/Larson, move to recommend approval of the Preliminary Plat of Village Preserve with the 12 conditions drafted by staff with the findings of fact listed in the staff report with modifications to finding 4 and adding condition 13. **Vote: 5-0, motion carried unanimously.**

Public Hearing: Comprehensive Plan – Holliday Property

Johnson stated that the City has received an application for a Comprehensive Plan amendment to change the future land use designation of property located at the intersection of CSAH 15 and 30th Street from RAD-Rural Area Development to V-LDR-Village Urban Low Density Residential. He reviewed an aerial image showing the current site conditions and reviewed other details concerning the existing and proposed land use for the property. Johnson described the land use designations that the Comprehensive Plan guide the subject site and the property to the north.

Johnson summarized the Staff review comments, focusing on the Staff findings that support approval of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment. He noted that the amendment would facilitate the construction of the Village Parkway across a property that would otherwise have very limited development potential. The staff recommendation includes a condition that the parcel to the west of the subject property be screened with year-round plantings.

Dave Gonyea stated that the amendment is critical for moving their proposed sketch plan forward on this property and the adjacent property to the north.

Public Hearing opened at 10:32 pm.

Public Hearing closed at 10:32 pm.

M/S/P: Dodson/Dorschner, move to recommend approval of the request to amend the City's future land use map and to change the future land use dedication from RAD to V-LDR with the conditions recommended by staff. **Vote: 5-0, motion carried.**

Business Item: Village Preserve South – Sketch Plan Review

Johnson presented an overview of a proposed sketch plan for a residential subdivision to be called Village Preserve South. The site is located within the southern portion of the Village Planning area and is within an area guided for future sewer service. Johnson discussed the existing site conditions and reviewed the proposed subdivision layout with the Commission and other details concerning the proposed subdivision. He reviewed the key issues with the sketch plan that have been identified by Staff and summarize the review comments identified in the staff report to the Commission.

Dorschner commented that the proposed bump out/cul-de-sac with direct access to the parkway may be problematic. Johnson noted that this connection will be subject to further review and comment by the City Engineer and will need to work within the overall geometrics of the Village Parkway. Williams noted that the first intersection north of 30th Street may be too close to 30th Street. Johnson replied that the City Engineer has found the proposed spacing to be acceptable given the design parameters of the parkway.

Williams questioned why the parkway was intersecting 30th Street at a one-way no entrance road to the South. Johnson stated that there are advantages to lining up intersections even if one of the roads is a very low volume roadway, and would be considered a safer alternative to off-setting intersections. Dodson asked if the City could take a look at whether or not there would be advantages to having the parkway follow a more rigid North/South alignment. Johnson replied that the City could look into this.

Williams questioned whether or not the City's ordinances would allow the crediting of park land dedication for a remote site. Johnson stated that staff would look into this with the City Attorney. Williams expressed concerns about the reduction in the green belt buffer along 30th Street, the need for watershed district review of the storm water system, the location of the intersection of the parkway with 30th Street, and the screening the McLeod property to the west.

Dodson stated that he liked that most of the lots do not abut another residential lot in the rear yard, but would like to see modifications to the bump-out lots.

Larson questioned whether or not the proposed trails could eventually connect to a trail or sidewalk system on 30th Street. Johnson noted that the City has looked into the possibility of placing trails along 30th Street, but cited limited right-of-way as a potential barrier to this occurring.

Updates and Concerns

Council Updates – None

Staff Updates

1. Upcoming Meetings
 - a. July 14, 2014
 - b. July 28, 2014

Commission Concerns –

Dodson questioned how legally binding the proposed findings would be in cases where there are conditions of approval. Staff noted that the findings should line up with the conditions of approval and the staff needs to be clear about them. Klatt noted that the findings need to support the decision made and the information distributed.

Dorschner suggested an ordinance to deal with railroad setbacks and safety issues and possibly require some berms based on feedback from professionals.

Dorschner asked about site visits, done like a workshop. Lundgren supported. There was a general discussion concerning the best manner for Planning Commissioners to visit development sites. Johnson stated that staff has name badges and that might be an option.

Meeting adjourned at 11:16 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Ziertman
Planning Program Assistant