

**Addenda
Minnetonka City Council Meeting
Meeting of February 28, 2022**

**ITEM 14A – Concept plan review for residential development of the properties at 3928
and 3930 Shady Oak Road**

The attached correspondence was received after distribution of the packet.



14600 Minnetonka Blvd. | Minnetonka, MN 55345 | 952-939-8200 | minnetonkamn.gov

TO: City Council
FROM: Julie Wischnack, AICP, Community Development Director
DATE: Feb. 28, 2022
SUBJECT: Change Memo for Feb. 28, 2022, City Council Meeting

Item 14A – Carlson / Gatehouse Concept Plan for 3928 and 3930 Shady Oak Road

The attached comments were received after the packet was distributed.

From: mary jo brouillard
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2022 10:40 AM
To: Brian Kirk
Subject: Carlson/Gateway Proposal

Good Morning Brian,
I am resending this email to you in PDF which I think you will be able receive.
Also I just took a hard copy to the City Hall they put in your mailbox. It looks like this Monday, Feb. 28th the City Council will be meeting regarding this development proposal.

Thank You,

Mary Jo Brouillard

Brian Kirk, Mayor and Ward 1 Representative Minnetonka

Feb.21, 2022

My name is Mary Jo Brouillard and I've lived at 3818 Willmatt Hill since 1986. I am writing regarding the proposed Carlson/Gateway Development.

My husband and I moved here because of the quietness and beauty of Minnetonka. I am very saddened to hear of the proposal to add multiple housing units at Shady Oak and Hwy 7.

I guess I should mention when things started changing from a quiet residential area for me. There is already a business with vans parked outside at the brick house closest to Hwy 7. Then there is the house around the corner on Minnetonka Mills Rd that must have some type of rehab. going on which I am not opposed to if they maintain the property. They had a dumpster parked right at the street for over 2 years and have an old non working car sitting in the driveway for longer than that and then daily there are 2 large vehicles parked on the road where no parking is allowed.

Last year the council agreed to allow "Spirit Care Home" to reside at 3727 Shady Oak. This home was allowed by the council to be a TWELVE bed facility. They admitted at the meeting this was way too many beds and they would not allow any more than SIX beds in the future. So with their short driveway where do the owners, who plan to live there, the caregivers and visitors plan to park...on the street?? on a dangerous curve that meets Minnetonka Mills Rd.? Where is their waste dumpster going to be located? To me it seems our quiet residential area is going through some undesirable changes.

These issues just add to the feeling that soon, if this passes, we are headed to no longer being a quiet residential area.

I worry about property values. The removal of large trees at this sight is heart breaking. I worry this project is just opening us up to more development. It's the beginning. Will they next buy out the east side of Shady Oak and the house on the west side of Dimple lake? Would they like to add more Apartments etc. up and down Hwy 7?

Another issue is their entrance onto Shady Oak. Very bad idea. Way too dangerous. I certainly don't want the County coming in after doing such a great job redoing the Hwy 7 intersection and having to redesign our road due to increased traffic by widening it or adding more Stop signs. It is a pretty drive up the hill on Shady Oak and should remain so. The only entrance MUST be on the frontage road if this goes through.

The increased traffic really bothers me for 2 reasons. We're talking potentially 36 owner cars on the property. This will be a huge increase of people coming up the hill to get to Minnetonka Mills Rd. for easy access to Lunds and other shops at that City 73 intersection. Or like some of us do we cut through Cottage Lane to Minnetonka Mills Rd. That is going to create some very unhappy homeowners on Cottage Lane.

Also Minnetonka Mills Rd. is very dangerous especially in winter with it being windy and hilly and with the walking path crossing it. There have been 2 deaths at the walking path location since I've lived here. These people will want to access Lunds and County Rd 73 using this route. To go to Hwy 7, which is closest to them, they would have to go through 3 Stop Lights to get to Country Village.

The other issue with traffic has to do with walkability. These people would need to cross Shady Oak should they want to walk to the walking path. I can tell you from my own experience that is not an easy feat.

Last but not least, I rarely turn to the right when leaving Willmatt Hill. I turn to the left going North which I'm sure many others do when leaving Willmatt Hill. Increased traffic will only increase the difficulty of doing this. In Winter snow makes visibility to your right very difficult. If salt hasn't yet been put down you can slide into the intersection. In Summer it's the tall grass.

So I am completely opposed to this project. It only makes quality of life poor for those of us on Willmatt.

Sincerely,

Mary Jo Brouillard
3818 Willmatt Hill

From: [Fiona Golden](#)
To: [Fiona Golden](#)
Subject: Comment re: Shady Oak Road Development
Date: Friday, February 25, 2022 11:50:45 AM

From: tom foty
Date: February 24, 2022 at 4:11:10 PM CST
To: Deborah Calvert <dcalvert@minnetonkamn.gov>
Subject: Shady oak rd proposal
Hello Deb,

Thank you for taking the time to consider us who live here on Shady oak rd.

This is Tom and Wendy Foty, We've lived in Minnetonka 40 years and 35 years at 3836 Shady oak rd. We live just on the north side of the pond. We raised our four children here. It has been hard creating a neighborhood feel when living on a busy county road. Let me start by saying we are NOT flat out apposed to this idea. But with that said, we do have concerns:

#1 Density, We believe 9 buildings is excessive! That is a lot of people, pets, and cars. We believe 4 is reasonable.

#2 Construction time 2-3 years. (We just went thru a 2 years road construction project)

#3 The loss of the 50-60 foot trees replaced with 12 foot trees

#4 Safety, There is no sidewalk on Shady Oak, so people walk and bike on the shoulder every day. Shady oak rd. is a artery roadway, we have Semi trucks, Minnetonka emergency vehicles, Delivery trucks, and all the cars coming and going out of the nearby neighborhoods. And this proposal spot is on a blind curve. (I do take my dog on a walk on that curve by the pond and I watch closely as cars come fast. I sometimes walk on the neighbors lawn instead of walking on the shoulder.)

Unknown hypothetical by us, Is would they buy the lot next to us, that is the pond, and somehow fill it in and expand more toward us at a later date.

Anyway Deb thank you again for listening to us.

Sincerely,
Tom and Wendy Foty

February 22, 2022

Ms. Susan Thomas, Asst City Planner
14600 Minnetonka Blvd
Minnetonka MN 55345

Re: Carlson/Gatehouse Properties

Dear Ms. Thomas:

My wife and I have resided at 3744 Shady Oak Rd. since 2016. We are very happy in our location and are opposed to the proposed development. Shady Oak Rd is already a busy road and more traffic would be dangerous to everyone, especially walkers and bikers who use this road.

The proposed project is way too big for the property and would increase traffic immensely. We are totally opposed to this project.

I want to refer you to a letter you have received from our neighbor, Mary Jo Brouillard dated 2/21/22. She outlines our thoughts perfectly, so I won't restate all her excellent points.

Sincerely,




William and Patricia Haeg

Susan Thomas

From: minnetonkamn@minnetonkamn.gov on behalf of City of Minnetonka, MN
<minnetonkamn@minnetonkamn.gov>
Sent: Thursday, February 24, 2022 2:47 PM
To: Susan Thomas
Subject: Carlson/Gatehouse proposal

Message submitted from the <City of Minnetonka, MN> website.

Site Visitor Name: Mark Johnson
Site Visitor Email:

We, Mark & Sofia Johnson at 3923 Willmatt Hill, are concerned about the redevelopment of lots 3928 and 3930 Shady Oak Road. When we built, the dense oak forest and steep slopes between us and Dimple lake constituted a wonderful buffer (visual and aural) against the traffic of Highway 7 and Shady Oak. Since the realignment of that intersection, and the removal of the homes and mature wooded lots that previously occupied the lake's eastern shore, this remaining buffer is even more appreciated. As such, we are pleased that the proposal does not involve these forested slopes.

We view the proposed nine-fold increase in density as extreme, however, with a profoundly negative impact on existing property values and livability. Packing 9 2-unit buildings into the buildable area will require abandonment of standards in our neighborhood. Hoping that the plan can be understood as an aggressive opening position for negotiations to come, we call for substantial reduction of the project size in order to enable reasonable solutions to serious problems with grade and tree cover in the buildable area, traffic (circulation, intensity, and safety), and runoff and encroachment on Dimple Lake and the pond to the North.

It was encouraging to hear the general level of skepticism expressed by our planning commissioners on the 17th with a consensus that the project might work with 6 or 7 rather than 9 2-unit buildings. We would respectfully suggest that a 3 or 4 building arrangement could ameliorate these many problems and actually afford the possibility of achieving a fitting and harmonious complement to our neighborhood and city.

Susan Thomas

From: John V. Hobday
Sent: Friday, February 25, 2022 4:28 PM
To: Loren Gordon; Brian Kirk; Deborah Calvert; Kimberly Wilburn; Joshua Sewall; Alex Hanson; Susan Thomas
Cc:
Subject: 3928/3930 Shady Oak Road Condo Proposal (Gatehouse Properties, LTD/David Carlson)

Dear City Council Members and City Planners:

My name is John Hobday, and I am writing to express my concerns over the 3928/3930 Shady Oak Condo proposal by Gatehouse Properties. I have been a Minnetonka resident for over 10 years and live at 3917 Willmatt Hill, directly west of the proposed development. Gatehouse/David Carlson have proposed a very attractive development, and while I am not absolutely opposed to the development, but I do have the following concerns.

Density: Other neighbors have expressed concerns over the density and suggested the proposed 9 buildings be reduced to between 3 and 4. I would just like to add that even at 3 to 4 buildings, we are still talking about replacing 2 current residences with 6 to 8 new residences (a large increase in density). I would add my voice to my neighbors' opposition to 9 buildings/18 new residences being **way too many** for this neighborhood.

Safety (cars): As mentioned at the planning commission last week, my primary personal concern is one of safety. For cars, the proposed entrance to the development is right on a blind curve on Shady Oak as cars come down the hill. Shady Oak is posted at 30 MPH, but it is not uncommon to see people flying down the hill at 35 or 40+. It is my personal believe that it will take 2 seconds before a resident trying to turn left onto Shady is sideswiped from a south-bound car traveling at excessive speeds. The planning commission stated that Shady is a county road and will require a traffic study, and I understand there is a process for safety to be considered, but I want to be on record that this creates a huge safety issue. I know this because about 5 years ago, I was driving right around this exact blind curve (paying attention to driving, not on phone, etc.) and hit a flock of geese. That could easily have been a car or a person. At the planning meeting, I proposed an alternative development access entry off of North Service Drive (the new 7/Shady Oak realignment that was done a few years ago). One of the commissioners said that because North Service Drive curves, it would not be suitable as an entrance. But assessing the curve personally after last Thursday's meeting, it appears that it would be reasonably possible create a right turn into the development without much effort. It would not be the only spot in the county where there is an access road or driveway on a curve. In fact, there are even graphical traffic signs indicating just this. The advantages of this entrance site would be 1) no left turns onto Shady Oak; 2) a dedicated left-turn lane on to North Service Drive that was constructed during the realignment; and 3) SUBSTANTIALLY less traffic than on Shady Oak. As I sat in my car off of North Service Road, zero cars turned onto North Service, but 20+ cars drove by on Shady Oak.

Safety (pedestrians): The other major safety concern is that there is for pedestrians walking on Shady Oak Road. Why would anyone do that since it's so busy and since there is the blind curve? Well, there is one very good reason, and that is the Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail that with an access point only blocks away from the proposed condos, as well as all of the shops at 7 & Hopkins Crossroads (Lunds, Walgreens, Perkins, Starbucks, gas station, etc.). Speaking just about the trail, the natural "cut-through" is via Cottage Road

(directly north of Willmatt Hill). It is reasonable to expect that residents would want to make use of the trail. I know it was a HUGE selling points for me when I moved into the neighborhood 10 years ago. While the shopping area is further, Lunds is directly accessible via the trail and I have walked there personally many times during the warmer months as well as seen my neighbors do the same. It's reasonable to think the residents of the new condos would also do this. My safety suggestion, as stated at the planning commission meeting, is to extend the sidewalk on the west side of Shady Oak from North Service Drive up to Willmatt/Cottage (at a minimum) or slightly further to Minnetonka Mills Road where you can clearly see traffic coming from both directions. Since the proposed condos are negatively impacting safety in our neighborhood, this sidewalk extension is not a big ask in return.

Environment/Clear Cutting of Trees: My other concern personally is impact on the environment, and specifically tree removal. I was very pleased to learn that Minnetonka has a new tree management process for new development (I was completely unaware and commend the city for putting this in place). I just want to point out that on these lots, a good portion of the west-bound property is heavily wooded and too steep to build on, so there is a possibility that the rest of the buildable area will simply be clear-cut (even while meeting the policy). The renderings seem to visualize just this scenario, in fact. While the renderings show mature trees growing in the development, that amount of growth is at least 20 years off. I would encourage the city to require that mature trees be retained even if the development technically meets the new tree policy numbers.

Engagement: Finally, in the planning commission meeting last week, one of the other projects discussed was the proposed Minnetonka Public Schools VANTAGE building. The commissioners commended school leadership for activity working with the neighborhood to address concerns and come up with alternatives. I would encourage the City Council to request that Gatehouse Properties do the same.

Sincerely,

John

John Hobday
3917 Willmatt Hill
Minnetonka, MN 55305

Letter to Minnetonka City Leaders and Staff Regarding Carlson/Gatehouse Development

February 25, 2022

We are writing with concerns about several aspects of the Carlson/Gatehouse Development Plan. We participated in the virtual meeting held with neighbors, and we listened to the developers' presentation to the Planning Commission. We have a good understanding of the preliminary plans and would like city leaders and staff to know our concerns.

Density of development- The two properties proposed for the nine building, 18- unit development total 3.55 acres according to Hennepin County property records. During the Planning Commission virtual meeting last week, a member of the Carlson/Gatehouse team said they determined the property was 6 acres, but it is not clear how this could be true. The property includes a steep bluff abutting Willmatt Hill that is not buildable. Part of the property is in a pond. The buildable portion is certainly less than 3 acres. Putting nine structures on that amount of space seems to create a density that is not consistent with "low density" as defined in Minnetonka's Comprehensive Guide Plan, nor will it preserve "the integrity of existing single-family neighborhoods." It also adds significant impervious surfaces to a wetland area.

Safety- Shady Oak Road has seen more traffic, and faster traffic, since it was widened south of Highway 7. Additionally, the new housing built along Shady Oak Rd in the past few years (Koch Hills Estates, Aspen Ridge Drive, Regal Oak, apartments at Excelsior/Main and at the Music Barn location) have added more traffic. During rush hour on bad weather days, or during periods of road construction on alternate routes, traffic can be backed up to Willmatt Hill all the way from Highway 7. It has become more difficult to turn left from Willmatt Hill onto Shady Oak even on good days. Shady Oak Rd. goes downhill and around a corner at the proposed driveway to the new development. Pedestrians and bikers are common on this stretch of Shady Oak. Visibility will be poor pulling onto Shady Oak Road from the development in either direction. We are concerned about additional traffic accidents related to adding yet another 25-35 vehicles to the mix.

Additionally, residents of this development would add to the neighborhood traffic on Cottage Lane/Hilltop Road/Pheasant Lane since it will be the quickest driving route to the Lund's Country Village and Walgreens shopping area. This also happens to be the walking route for residents of several neighborhoods to access the Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail for biking, walking, running. We walk this route almost daily. These neighborhood streets are not designed for more traffic, and I fear for the safety of pedestrians and bikers.

A final safety concern relates to emergency vehicle access and turn-around in the new development. While it doesn't affect us directly, the developer's plan does not appear to provide adequate space for a fire truck to maneuver in the development to respond effectively to an emergency.

Loss of Green Space/ Wildlife Habitat

Although our neighborhood is adjacent to the busy Shady Oak/Hwy 7 intersection, it has remained quiet and peaceful due to the green space below us. This was impacted in a major way by the removal of many trees and reconstruction of the intersection a few years ago. The proposed 9-building development on this property would further deteriorate wildlife habitat in the area.

Thank you for the opportunity for input on this project. Feel free to contact us with questions.

Craig Hedberg and Dottie Jung
3902 Willmatt Hill, Minnetonka, MN 55305

From: [F. H.](#)
To: [Loren Gordon](#)
Subject: Highway 7 and Shady Oak Proposal
Date: Monday, February 28, 2022 9:08:04 AM

Hello Loren,

My name is Frank Hanzlik and I live at 3905 Shady Oak Rd. in Minnetonka.

I appreciate your time and consideration for the neighbors of the proposed project at Highway 7 and Shady Oak Road.

My grandparents are the original owners of this property. They bought it 68 years ago back in 1954 when it was built. They raised my father and his three brothers at this house. I was fortunate enough to buy the house from my grandmother's estate in 2014, but I have been coming to 3905 since I was born in 1984. I plan to raise my family here as well.

The proposed plan for 9 buildings consisting of 18 condo/townhomes is hard for me to wrap my head around. The proposed site is currently home to two families. This proposal will multiply that by 9! The increase in people and vehicles is a concern for me. I like the idea of these condo/townhomes but the sheer number of them is another factor.

This project will mean cutting down many mature trees. I am concerned about the increase of traffic noise from highway 7 that is currently buffered by these trees. The driveway for this project is on a blind curve that also poses an increased danger with the number of vehicles that will be entering and exiting during any given day. Shady Oak Rd does not have a sidewalk north of highway 7. Many people use the shoulder to ride their bikes and for going on walks. Most drivers do not obey the speed limit here as they approach highway 7.

Pulling out of my driveway is an already tough chore with how busy Shady Oak is. Even stepping on the shoulder to access my mailbox can be dangerous. Just last week someone hit my mailbox, ruining it. I attached a few photos. The additional buildings, kids, pets, and cars will all increase the already busy stretch of road.

We just wrapped up a 2 year road construction project here and another 2-3 year project nearby would be a detriment to the area.

I am not opposed to this project, but I think the current proposed plan of 9 buildings with 18 units is excessive. A smaller number of buildings and units would be a much better fit for the proposed site.

Again, I really appreciate your time and consideration from all that will be directly impacted by the project.

Sincerely,
Frank Hanzlik and the rest of the Hanzlik family



From: [Fiona Golden](#)
To: [Fiona Golden](#)
Subject: FW: Carlson/Gatehouse project
Date: Monday, February 28, 2022 11:41:50 AM

From: Patricia Haeg
Sent: Monday, February 28, 2022 8:07 AM
To: Brian Kirk
Subject: Carlson/Gatehouse project

We live at 3744 Shady Oak Rd., just north of the above mentioned project. We are firmly against this development, primarily because it is way too large for a residential neighborhood. The increased traffic on Shady Oak would be a safety issue, to say the least. Traffic already backs up blocking our driveway during rush hours as it is. It certainly would not be good for bikers/walkers.

The city already approved the care home across the street for 12 residents and we were opposed to that. What happened to zoning laws?

Sincerely,
William and Patricia Haeg

From:
To: sgordon@minnetonkamn.gov; [Susan Thomas](#); [Brian Kirk](#); [Deborah Calvert](#); [Kimberly Wilburn](#); [Joshua Sewall](#); [Alex Hanson](#)
Subject: RE:Carlson/Gatehouse properties 3928/3930 Shady Oak Road Development proposal
Date: Monday, February 28, 2022 3:40:07 PM

Planning Commission and City Council:

My concerns regarding this proposed development are:

1. The many huge oaks on these properties are currently providing habitat for eagles, owls, pilated woodpeckers and other wildlife, and would be impossible to replace given their age and size. I would like to see extreme care in maintaining these precious trees if development is to go forward- no clear cutting of an area, and no removal of heritage trees.
2. the number of units proposed is much too dense for the properties. I would like to see the number of units reduced to four double units, at a maximum.
3. I am extremely concerned that higher density housing will open the floodgates to even more development around the intersection of Shady Oak/Highway 7. Our home has already lost much privacy and wooded beauty with the removal of homes and large trees to put in the new frontage road. The natural surroundings, woods, wildlife and privacy were the main appeal when we purchased our home, and are what make Minnetonka unique and pleasant as a place to live. In general, I am highly concerned about the push for higher density at the expense of the environment in our city, and would like to see measures put in place to protect the wooded area at the intersection of Shady Oak/Highway 7 from further development.

If these concerns are fully addressed, I would support the development, but not otherwise. Thank you for your attention to our concerns as neighbors to this proposed development.

Bonnie Thomas
3936 Willmatt Hill