

14600 Minnetonka Blvd. | Minnetonka, MN 55345 | 952-939-8200 | eminnetonka.com

To: Planning Commission

From: Loren Gordon, AICP, City Planner

Date: March 3, 2022

Subject: Change Memo for the March 3rd Planning Commission Agenda

ITEM 9A – CONCEPT PLAN FOR MINNETONKA WOODLAND PRESERVE, 2511 and 2615 Plymouth Road

The following comments were received after the distribution of the packet.

ITEMS 10 OTHER BUSINESS AND 11 ADJOURNMENT

- Staff is requesting the addition of Item 10 Other Business to provide a presentation of the 2021 Community Development annual report.
- Item 11 Adjournment

February 24, 2022

Minnetonka Planning Commission Attn: Mr. Loren Gordon, City Planner 14600 Minnetonka Blvd. Minnetonka, MN 55345

Dear Planning Commission and Mr. Gordon,

Rachel Development has proposed a development ("Minnetonka Woodland Preserve") at 2615 Plymouth Road for 18 single family homes on 9.5 acres designed and built by Charles Cudd. The project is just east of Plymouth Road, south of Amy Lane, and directly to the west of Crescent Ridge Road. The current concept proposal is to build the 18 single family homes on 4.1 of those acres (~.23 acres/lot).

We have several concerns about the development as currently proposed and would like to share our perspective with the Minnetonka Planning Commission and City Council. Our concerns relate to the negative impact the proposed development may have on the local community and environment, not only on the immediate land to be developed but in our local surroundings as a whole, including but not limited to:

- 1. **Destruction of mature trees.** While the proposal ultimately must meet the City of Minnetonka Tree Ordinance, it would inevitably result in removal of a high volume of mature growth trees.
- 2. **Destruction of wildlife habitat.** One of the things that makes our area so remarkable is the tremendous wildlife, including but not limited to bald eagles, great horned owls, multitude of birds, coyotes, deer, foxes, ducks, and more. This development would substantially and adversely impact this unique ecosystem.
- 3. **Environmental impact.** The impact on water supply, soil erosion, surrounding ponds, drainage, and runoff are unknown and are yet to be quantified and understood.
- 4. **Consistency with surrounding area.** The proposed concept design does not match the R-1 low density residential zoning for housing and development of the surrounding neighborhoods, including Amy Lane and Bent Tree.
- 5. **Quality of life.** Long-term, the current concept would undoubtedly impact privacy, noise, and traffic for those adjacent to and surrounding the proposed development. In the short term, construction would impact noise and traffic and impede access to local walking and biking paths.

We respectfully request the following:

- 1. We request that this project receive a comprehensive environmental review to assess the impact to plants, trees, wildlife, water, soil, and air quality as well as traffic, drainage, and runoff before the proposal is formally reviewed or approved.
- 2. We request that the proposal to rezone to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) district in the midst of an R-1 low density residential area be denied due to lack of material public benefit. There are no PUD zoning districts surrounding this development proposal. Moreover, the proposal does not meet the requirements for public benefits set forth in Section 300.22 of the City ordinances, especially with respect to preservation of existing natural resources, provision of affordable housing, or compatibility with surrounding development types.

In support of our concerns outlined above, we attach a petition signed by members of the surrounding and affected neighborhoods for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Citizens of Minnetonka

Timestamp	First Name	Last Name	Street Address	City	Zip Code Pho	one E-mail
2-24-2022 21:	09:44 Steve	Borowsky	2630 Crescent Ridge Rd	Minnetonka	55305-280	
2-25-2022 9:	56:52 Jesse	Kibort	2531 Abbey Hill Drive	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 9:	57:24 Yalda	Olcott	11705 Meadow Ln W	Hopkins	55305	
2-25-2022 9:	58:15 Cally	Prunty	2741 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 9:	58:44 Katie	Stern	2830 Danbury Way	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 10:	00:35 Andrew	Prunty	2741 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305-280	
2-25-2022 10:0	01:53 Jamie	Heiligman	11829 meadow In	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 10:	01:57 Cody	Berra	2325 Rivendell Ln	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 10:	05:45 Emily	Anthony	12610 Bent Tree Road	Minnetonka	55035	
2-25-2022 10:0	06:28 Greg	Anthony	12610 Bent Tree Road	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 10:	07:36 Elissa	Light				
2-25-2022 10:	11:12 Elizabeth	L'Heureux	2610 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 10:	12:08 Andre	L'Heureux	2610 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 10:	17:12 Jacey	Siedband	2621 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 10:	19:13 Dennis	Mulvey	2620 Sylvan Rd S	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 10:	19:40 James	Pedersen	2500 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka, M	55305	
2-25-2022 10:	30:34 Derek	Dorr	2641 Plymouth Road	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 10:	31:30 Shana	Melendez	11658 Meadow Lane W	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 10:	33:01 Iris	Borowsky	2630 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 10:4	47:49 Richard	Bloomfield	9908 St. Johns Road	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 10:4	49:01 Ross	Paskoff	2485 Emerald Trail	Hopkins	55305-191	
2-25-2022 11:0	03:34 Margaret Jane	Weissenborn	2740 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 11:	17:23 Joshua	Weiser	2607 Sylvan Rd S	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 11:	18:58 Abby	Badzin	2515 Mayflower Ave.,	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 11:	19:53 Marnie	Marmet	12111 Golden Acre Drive	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 11:	23:55 Lucinda	Cummings	2633 Plymouth Rd	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 11:	25:18 Robert	Segal	2633 Plymouth Rd	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 11:	38:47 Wendy	Ringer	2711 Bent Tree Circle	Mtka	55305	
2-25-2022 11:	39:23 Jeff	Ringer	2711 Bent Tree Circle	Mtka	55305	
2-25-2022 11:4	43:18 Michelle	Goldstein	2510 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 12:	11:28 Jason	Marx	2651 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305	
2-25-2022 12:	14:25 Julie	Engle	12212 Westridge Lane	Minnetonka	55305	

2-25-2022 12:37:19 Lauren	Weiser	2607 Sylvan Rd S	Minnetonka M	MN
2-25-2022 12:55:01 Julie	Burton	11482 Cedar Pass	Minnetonka	55305
2-25-2022 12:58:38 Nina	Badzin	2600 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305
2-25-2022 15:19:28 Jonathan	Eisenberg	2721 Bent Tree Circle	Minnetonka 5	55305-3804
2-25-2022 15:40:40 Judy	Mulvey	2620 Sylvan Road S	Minnetonka	55305
2-25-2022 19:56:24 John	Drewitz	2600 Sylvan Road S	Minnetonka	55305
2-25-2022 22:45:12 Elizabeth	Isaacson	12711 Bent Tree Road	Minnetonka	55305
2-26-2022 7:06:54 Steven	Tuschman	12620 Bent Tree Road	Minnetonka	55305
2-26-2022 8:01:49 Bard	Borkon	12212 Orchard Ave W	Minnetonka	55305
2-26-2022 9:27:40 Pamela	Rients Tuschman	12620 Bent Tree Road	Minnetonka	55305
2-26-2022 12:17:23 Sara	Memmen	4779 Coventry Rd W	Minnetonka	55345
2-26-2022 12:19:39 Robert	Memmen	4779 Coventry Rd W	Minnetonka	55345
2-26-2022 13:06:38 Maureen	Drewitz	2600 Sylvan Rd S	Minnetonka	55305
2-26-2022 18:27:34 Carrie	Bloomfield	9908 st. Johns Road	Minnetonka	55305
2-27-2022 14:41:25 Patty	Chodosh	2520 crescent ridge rd	Minnetonka	55305
2-27-2022 15:05:20 Margareth	Pierre-Louis	2731 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305
2-27-2022 15:06:08 Mark	Chodosh	2520, Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305
2-27-2022 15:06:26 Graham	Gaya	2731 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305
2-27-2022 16:00:48 Jessica	May	2620 crescent ridge rd	Minnetonka	55305
2-27-2022 16:31:27 Restor	Johnson	2700 CRESCENT RIDGE ROAD	MINNETONKA	55305
2-27-2022 16:32:05 Sally	Johnson	2700 CRESCENT RIDGE ROAD	MINNETONKA	55305
2-27-2022 16:40:55 Bob	Cohen	2640 Sylvan Rd S	Mtka	55305
2-27-2022 16:52:57 Matt	May	2620 Crescent Ridge Rd	Minnetonka	55305
2-27-2022 18:44:53 Allison	Gelfman	12420 Bent Tree Lane	Minnetonka	55305
2-27-2022 19:37:05 Emily	Pickar	2530 Crescent Ridge Road	Minnetonka	55305
2-27-2022 19:37:54 Taylor	Pickar	2530 Crescent Ridge road	Minnetonka	55305
2-27-2022 19:38:47 Jill	Schwab			
2-27-2022 19:46:54 Robin	Engelso	2720 Crescent Ridge Rd	Minnetonka	55305
2-27-2022 20:00:00 Nancy	Fink	11530 Cedar Pass	Hopkins	55305
2-28-2022 8:08:50 Sarah	Norsted	2640 SYLVAN RD S	Minnetonka	55305
2-28-2022 10:24:15 Samantha	Tuschman	12620 Bent Tree Rd	Minnetonka	55305
2-28-2022 10:52:00 McKenna	Ahlm	9610 Sandra La	Minnetonka	55305
2-28-2022 19:34:57 Emma	Nigon	12401 Bent Tree Ln.	Minnetonka	55305

2-28-2022 20:01:33 Deb	Stein	2461 Emerald Trail	Minnetonka	55305
2-28-2022 20:02:06 Michael	Stein	2461 Emerald Trail	Minnetonka	55305
2-28-2022 22:51:27 Kay	Goldstein	2110 Austrian Pine Lanr	Minnetonka	55305
3-1-2022 8:35:14 Lorraine	LaRoy	2701 Crescent Ridge Rd	Minnetonka	55305
3-1-2022 8:36:17 James	LaRoy	2701 Crescent Ridge Rd	Minnetonka	55305
3-1-2022 9:59:15 Gary	Ahlm	9610 Sandra lane	Minnetonka	55305
3-1-2022 13:35:05 Mary	ldzik	2710 Bent Tree Cir	Minnetonka	55305
3-1-2022 19:56:19 Samuel	Segal	2633 Plymouth Rd	Minnetonka	55305
3-2-2022 15:50:49 Paul	ldzik	2710, Bent Tree Circle	Minnetonka	55305
3-2-2022 18:16:56 Gaven	Dorr	2647 Plymouth Road	Minnetonka	55305
3-2-2022 18:17:41 Aydin	Dorr	2647 Plymouth Road	Minnetonka	55305
3-3-2022 7:59:56 John	Bonczyk	2550 Crescent Ridge Rd	Minnetonka	55305
3-3-2022 8:01:05 Cynthia	Bonczyk	2550 Crescent Ridge Rd	Minnetonka	55305



Outline

- **1** Executive Summary
- 2 Minnetonka Strategic Priorities
- **3** Community Perspectives
- 4 Petition for Neighborhood Requests
- **5** Beyond the Petition: Creative Alternative

Executive Summary

- Rachel Development has proposed a development ("Minnetonka Woodland Preserve") at 2615 Plymouth Road for 18 single family homes on 9.5 acres designed and built by Charles Cudd. The current concept proposal is to build the 18 homes on 4.1 of those acres (~0.23 acres/lot).
- The City of Minnetonka Strategic Priorities emphasize the importance of community, sustainability, environment, and trust. We believe the current concept plan contradicts those priorities.
- Community members and Minnetonka citizens in surrounding neighborhoods (n=78 petition signatures) have concerns about the current concept plan and proposal related to preservation of trees, potential for adverse environmental impact and disruption of the local ecosystem, as well as implications quality of life for the surrounding area.
- We argue that the concept plan is inconsistent with the Strategic Priorities of the City, and we are requesting the following:
 - We request a comprehensive environmental review to the development concept plan;
 - We request that the proposal to rezone to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) district in the midst of an R-1 low density residential area be denied due to lack of material public benefit.
- Alternatively, we would like to put forward a creative alternative: connecting the property at 2615 to the Minnetonka Trail system from Plymouth Road and Minnetonka Boulevard, which would amplify public good and city planning to make the area more walkable and pedestrian friendly, consistent with the City Strategic Plan.

Minnetonka Strategic Priorities

Minnetonka Strategic Priorities





Focus on community, inclusion, sustainability

Minnetonka Strategic Priorities

	_	Sustainability and I	Natural Environment		
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	KEY STRATEGIES	Support long-term a	and short-term initiatives		
Financial Strength and Operational Excellence Maintain a long-term positive financial position by balancing revenues and expenditures for operations, debt management and capital investments. Provide innovative, responsive, quality city services at a level that reflects community values and is supported by available resources.	Maintain the city's AAA bond rating. Develop an annual budget that meets common with the strategic plan and financial policies Provide excellent, meaningful programs and our community.	that lead to the protection and enhancement of our unique and natural environment while mitigating climate change impacts.			
Safe and Healthy Community	Identify and adapt to public safety service n	Livable and Well-Planned Development			
Develop programs, policies and procedures that enhance the community's well-being and partner with the community to provide engagement opportunities and build trust. Sustain focus on prevention programs, education, hazard mitigation and rapid emergency response.	in service delivery expectations. Identify safety strategies and practices that Collaboratively review current integrated pi protocols and implement appropriate chan Provide a full range of recreational program	Balance community-wide interests and respect Minnetonka's unique neighborhoods while continuing community reinvestment.			
Sustainability and Natural Environment Support long-term and short-term initiatives that lead to the protection and enhancement of our unique and natural environment while mitigating climate change impacts.	Carefully balance growth and development the highly valued water and woodland resor Develop and implement long-term plans to ecosystems, urban forests and the unique ni Take an active role in promoting energy and operations and infrastructure, recycling and	Infrastructure and Asset Management Provide safe, efficient, sustainable,			
Livable and Well-Planned Development Balance community-wide interests and respect Minnetonka's unique neighborhoods while continuing community reinvestment.	Implement programs and policies to diversi housing options. Support business retention and expansion a Manage and promote the Opus area as a ur development reinvestment.	cost-effective and well-maintained infrastructure and transportation systems. Build, maintain and manage capital assets			
Provide safe, efficient, sustainable, cost-effective and well-maintained infrastructure and transportation systems. Build, maintain and manage capital assets to preserve long-term investment and ensure reliable services.	Provide and preserve a quality local street at Ensure connectivity through increased accetransportation (new mobility options). Develop an annual capital improvement pla maintenance and replacement of assets. Expand and maintain a trail system to improve throughout the community.	to preserve long-term investment and ensure reliable services.			
Community Inclusiveness Create a community that is engaged,	Develop and implement inclusive recruiting, application, hiring and retention practices to attract excellent, qualified and diverse candidates from all backgrounds.		Key		
tolerant and compassionate about everyone. Embrace and respect diversity, and create a community that uses different perspectives and experiences to build an inclusive and	 Foster an inclusive boards and commissions in to increase diversity. Actively engage the community by working co outcomes and respond to community's needs 	pres			
equitable city for all.	 Remove identifiable barriers to create equal or programs and services. 	pportunity for accessing			

- Carefully balance growth and development with preservation efforts that protect the highly valued water and woodland resources of our community.
- Develop and implement long-term plans to mitigate threats to water quality, ecosystems, urban forests and the unique natural character of Minnetonka.
- Take an active role in promoting energy and water conservation, sustainable operations and infrastructure, recycling and environmental stewardship.
- Implement programs and policies to diversify housing and increase affordable housing options.
- Support business retention and expansion and attract new businesses.
- Manage and promote the Opus area as a unique mix of uses and increased development reinvestment.
- Provide and preserve a quality local street and trail system.
- . Ensure connectivity through increased access to local and regional means of transportation (new mobility options).
- Develop an annual capital improvement plan that supports the sustainable maintenance and replacement of assets.
- · Expand and maintain a trail system to improve safe connectivity and walkability throughout the community.

Key strategies highlight sustainability, preservation, unique neighborhoods, trails and connectivity

Community Perspectives

4 Areas of Community Concern

We believe that the current concept plan proposed by Rachel Development at 2615 Plymouth Road for Minnetonka Woodland Preserve is inconsistent with the Strategic Priorities set forth by the city. Seventy-eight citizens of Minnetonka signed a petition expressing concerns about the following:

Tree Preservation

Ecosystem Disruption

Environmental Impact

Quality of Life

Tree Preservation

Current Proposal would require removal of significant mature growth trees, even with compliance with City of Minnetonka Tree Ordinance

While "Preserved Woodland" would maintain some trees, 18 houses on 4.1 acres would require clear cutting trees on area under construction



- One thing that distinguishes Minnetonka from surrounding suburbs is the prominence of old growth, mature trees.
- Our family picked this neighborhood and community in part because of the beautiful canopy oaks, our neighborhood plan placed a high value on trees.
- Minnetonka has taken a strong stance with its renewed Tree Ordinance and has an opportunity to lead in sustainability.

Wildlife Ecosystem Disruption

Woods and ponds surrounding proposed development are home to the following:

- Bald eagles, mature and adolescent
- Great horned owls
- Multiple species of ducks
- Coyote
- Foxes
- Deer
- Rabbits
- And more!





- Last week I was working from home on a Zoom call and saw an adolescent bald eagle coming from the direction of the development!
- We often enjoy the company of a beautiful great horned owl with breakfast who clearly lives in the woods surrounding this development concept
- Has Rachel Development fully evaluated the impact of ecosystem disruption in their proposal? I am concerned this is not well-understood.

Environmental Impact

0.71 Density of surrounding lots

0.23 Density of current concept plan proposal (4.1 acres / 18 homes)



- Soil erosion and runoff are some of our greatest concerns. Are these potential risks clearly understood?
- Branding this as a "woodland preserve" is disingenuous. The density does not match the R-1 low density area surrounding the proposal.

Quality of Life





Highcroft Meadows Case Study





- Has anyone evaluated the traffic, noise, and impact to privacy of this concept plan?
- We have seen the Charles Cudd development on Orchard Road, and we are concerned about the similarities in the concept plan. Yet this a forest, not a horse farm and pastures.
- Looking at Highcroft Meadows, it's undeniable that the current concept plan will adversely impact quality of life, both in the short term and the long term.

Petition for Neighborhood Requests

Neighborhood Requests

Our requests to the Planning Commission and City Council are simple. Our neighbors and citizens of Minnetonka (n=78) kindly request the following:

- We request a comprehensive environmental review to the development concept plan **before** formal review
- We request that the proposal to rezone to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) district in the midst of an R-1 low density residential area be denied due to lack of material public benefit.

Beyond the Petition: Alternative Proposal

Ridgedale Redevelopment Principles

Ridgedale Southwest Sector Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles were developed to further inform potential redevelopment that may occur in the southwest sector of the Ridgedale village center area. These guiding principles are the result of community engagement meetings during the winter of 2015, serving as supplemental information to the Ridgedale Vision 2012 document. As redevelopment occurs in the southwest sector, these principles, along with the vision document, will be used to help evaluate projects. Although not requirements for project approval, the principles are intended to provide guidance to the city's decision makers.

- 1. All development should follow the Planned I-394 District zoning regulations.
- Create a sense of place for the entire Ridgedale Village that would make it a distinctive destination and instill pride.
- Reinforce the identity of Minnetonka using signage and other markings to highlight key values such as commitment to natural resources, livable community, and not "intense" like places that are in the urban core.
- Building height should transition from taller closer to the mall to shorter closer to neighborhoods. Establish a building height limit.
- Provide a good separation and transition between commercial uses and residential areas.
- Modify, if necessary, the current vision to keep space available that is on street front and visible
 for local and small businesses that make living in the area more convenient and add to the
 overall livability of the neighborhood.
- If additional green space, public spaces etc. are made available when/if redevelopment occurs make sure there is good access for neighborhood people to benefit.
- Don't design something that would "overuse" the natural areas. Keep preservation and care of the environment as a key factor in planning and development.
- 9. Dampen road traffic in and around the residential areas.
- Improve access and safety for pedestrians and bikers. Incorporate best practices into the design of these improvements.
- 11. Increase family friendly/youth opportunities as feasible.
- Listen to the community input and use it for decision-making. Involve people proactively in things that impact them.
- 3. Evaluate and address parking needs when considering redevelopment proposals.

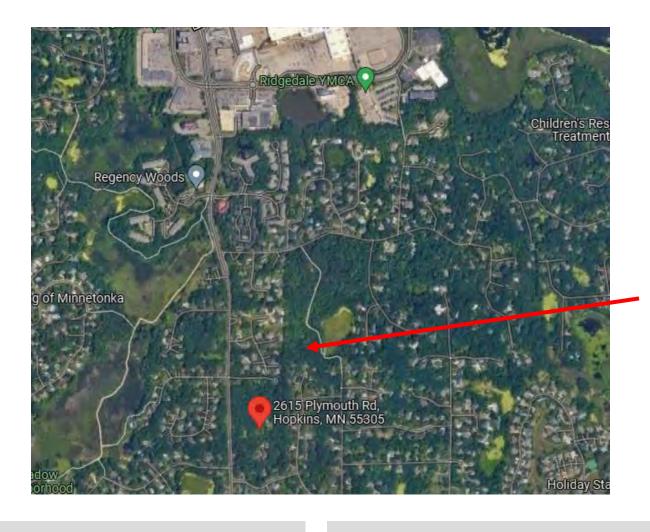
Ridgedale Commons Concept



Alternative Proposal

How might the City of Minnetonka leverage the property at 2615 Plymouth Road to extend the vision of Ridgedale Commons and further connect trails and pedestrian routes through the city?

City of Minnetonka could purchase 2615 **Plymouth Road and** connect from **Minnetonka Boulevard to** Ridgedale and **Hilloway Park**



These amazing new trails are right in our backyard. How could the City leverage this land to extend the evolving trail system?

Is there an opportunity to connect this land to Hilloway Park and the new sidewalk system on Plymouth Road from Minnetonka Boulevard to Ridgedale?

Neighborhood Requests

Our requests to the Planning Commission and City Council are simple. Our neighbors and citizens of Minnetonka (n=78) kindly request the following:

- We request a comprehensive environmental review to the development concept plan **before** formal review
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Thank You