

**Minutes  
Minnetonka City Council  
Monday, February 28, 2022**

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Brad Wiersum called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

All joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Roll Call**

Council Members Kimberly Wilburn, Deb Calvert, Bradley Schaeppi, Kissy Coakley, Brian Kirk, Rebecca Shack and Brad Wiersum were present.

**4. Approval of Agenda**

Calvert moved, Kirk seconded a motion to accept the agenda with addenda to Item 14.A. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**5. Approval of Minutes:**

**A. February 7, 2022 regular meeting minutes**

Calvert noted she had spoken to staff regarding a typo in the minutes.

Calvert moved, Schack seconded a motion to approve the minutes, as amended. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**B. February 17, 2022 special meeting minutes**

Calvert moved, Schack seconded a motion to approve the minutes, as presented. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**6. Special Matters: None.**

**7. Reports from City Manager & Council Members**

Acting City Manager Mike Funk reported on upcoming city events and council meetings.

Coakley reported she would be a panelist on the MCI Climate Action Event on March 6 at 4:00 p.m. In addition, she noted she would be speaking at the Capitol

through a Zoom link on March 1 in regard to a Second Chance to Heal for the Clean Slate Act, a juvenile justice package, and amending the DHS disqualifying youth for offenses.

Calvert stated she served on the Minnetonka Family Collaborative which was administered through Minnetonka schools that serves children and families at risk. She noted this group met last week for the first time this year.

Calvert reported her heart went out to the people of Ukraine.

Schaeppi commended the Minnetonka High School boys and girls alpine teams for winning state. In addition, he noted the girls hockey team took second place. He congratulated Hopkins High School student Sydney Drevlo for winning the girls Nordic. He commended the Wayzata High School boys Nordic team for finishing third in state.

Schack reported the Wayzata High School girls dance team took second in state.

Wiersum reported he wore yellow and blue in solidarity with Ukraine. He stated the people of Ukraine were in his thoughts and prayers. He noted freedom was not free and democracy was at risk in this country. He encouraged Americans to appreciate the freedoms they have in this country and to defend democracy always. He noted he received a call from the public asking what they can do to help the people of Ukraine. He referred the public to an article from the *Star Tribune* on ways Minnesotans can help the people from Ukraine.

#### **8. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Matters not on the Agenda:**

Bob Fallen, 2204 Totem Trail, noted he uses the ice rinks in Minnetonka with his grandchildren and he appreciated the city's efforts to maintain these rinks. He then clarified several matters regarding the emergency ordinance. He discussed the press release from last week noted the Council's decision was linked to the decline of COVID infections as reported by the CDC and not the feedback that was provided by Minnetonka citizens or small business owners. He found this curious because on January 14 the city manager noted this issue had more input from the public than any other matter in the history of the city. He understood there were over 300 emails that were sent to the city and were posted on the council's website. He reported he summarized the comments in the emails into a spreadsheet and shared this spreadsheet with the council. He stated 4 out of 5 of the responses opposed the mask mandate and questioned why it was put in place. He encouraged the city council to hear residents when they take the time to speak. He was pleased the mask mandate was no longer in place. He encouraged residents and small business owners to continue to find ways to be heard. He stated he respected the work of the city council but recommended they take the time to hear from the people who elected them. He suggested that

those people who were letter writers to use their words carefully, in order to not be disrespectful.

Carl Nelson, 5541 Nantucket Place, provided the council with a handout. He noted he spoke with City Manager Funk today along with Public Works Director Manchester. He reviewed the packet of information he presented to staff stating he would like the city to use less salt in the community. He discussed how an operator error or equipment malfunction was leading to excessive salt on Nantucket Road/Place. He reported the pond in his neighborhood had a high saline level, which was impacting the reptiles in the community. He encouraged the city to do its part to not poison the communities reptiles by oversalting.

Heather Holm, 15327 Lakeshore Avenue, stated she supported her neighbor Carl Nelson and her friends on Nantucket Place. She discussed a salting event that occurred on her cul-de-sac. She noted a "No Salt Sign" has been posted on her street and she appreciated the fact that the city was respecting this request. She encouraged the city to use less salt in the community and suggested the sustainability commission consider addressing this topic in further detail.

Bob Resner, 3615 Westmark Drive, discussed the amount of buckthorn in the community. He reported it was a difficult task to remove buckthorn and then haul it to public works unless a resident owns a truck. He discussed a photo from his neighbor who had hired a contractor to remove the buckthorn from their property. He estimated three acres of land was cleared of buckthorn. He discussed how this work would assist in creating a more parklike setting for the neighborhood. He noted the best time to trim the buckthorn plant was in the fall. He requested the city consider creating a collection program for buckthorn and that it be collected on an annual basis. He stated several other cities have created such a program and encouraged the city to speak with Maplewood or Burnsville. He commented further on how the proposed program would benefit the community.

**9. Bids and Purchases: None.**

**10. Consent Agenda – Items Requiring a Majority Vote:**

Coakley requested Item 10.A be pulled from the consent agenda for further discussion.

**A. Resolution supporting Habitat for Humanity for an Affordable Housing Incentive Fund (AHIF) grant through Hennepin County**

This item was removed from the consent agenda for further discussion.

**B. City Manager Recruitment Brochure**

Schack moved, Calvert seconded a motion to approve the recruitment brochure. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**A. Resolution supporting Habitat for Humanity for an Affordable Housing Incentive Fund (AHIF) grant through Hennepin County**

Coakley requested further information regarding this grant. She indicated she was at a standstill regarding this matter because she wants to see more affordable housing in the community, but was uncertain what type of housing would be provided in Minnetonka. Community Development Director Julie Wischnack explained this was a resolution of support but and noted if the resolution were not approved, Hennepin County would not issue this money. She reported the Habitat for Humanity organization can purchase any home within the city in order to make it a Habitat for Humanity home. She stated if the council does not support this activity, the resolution of support could be denied.

Coakley asked if the grant were approved, could Habitat for Humanity do whatever they wanted in the community. Wischnack explained without the grant in place, the council does not get involved in Habitat for Humanity transactions, unless a building permit was requested. She reported if the council supported Habitat for Humanity in the community then the resolution of support should be approved.

Wiersum commented the way he read this resolution was the grant enables Habitat for Humanity to qualify them for the grant dollars, but does not obligate the city to approve a proposal. He explained if the council did not support this resolution of support, Habitat for Humanity would not be able to pursue this grant funding. Wischnack stated this was correct. She indicated if there was a larger proposal from Habitat (more than two single family homes) a bigger land use approval process would come before the city.

Coakley moved, Kirk seconded a motion to approve Resolution 2022-013. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**11. Consent Agenda – Items requiring Five Votes:**

Wilburn requested item 11.A be removed from the consent agenda for further discussion.

**A. Items concerning Unmapped Brewing at 14625 Excelsior Boulevard**

This item was removed from the consent agenda for further discussion.

**B. Conditional use permit, with variance, for a detached accessory dwelling unit at 17503 Bridgewater Circle**

Schack moved, Calvert seconded a motion to approve Resolution 2022-017. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**A. Items concerning Unmapped Brewing at 14625 Excelsior Boulevard**

Wilburn asked if vehicles turning onto Eden Prairie Road from Unmapped Brewing had obstructed views. She understood comments and concerns had been raised by the public regarding this matter and asked if the city would be addressing this concern. City Planner Loren Gordon reported the city was aware of the concern at this intersection and traffic studies have been done on this property for many years. He stated at this time there was not a significant issue that needed correction. He indicated the wall was constructed by Hennepin County many years ago and was a known condition. Community Development Director Julie Wischnack reported a solid double yellow line would have to be painted from Eden Prairie Access into the first row of the Unmapped parking lot.

Wilburn commented there were noise concerns with the rooftop amenity that was being proposed. She questioned if there was a process in place to allow residents to bring their concerns to the city if the rooftop became too noisy for the surrounding neighborhood. Gordon explained staff has quite a bit of experience with noise in Glen Lake over the years. He discussed how the Dairy Queen menu board had to be addressed. He commented on how this business has evolved over time and has worked to mitigate noise for the neighbors. He understood the business owner was very willing to address these concerns, should the need arise.

Coakley noted she received several calls from neighbors in her ward. She indicated one resident was concerned with how people with disabilities would have access to the rooftop. She commented she also received calls regarding the noise and number of people that would be allowed on the rooftop. She reported she spoke with Megan at Unmapped and understood they were reaching out to the neighbors to address the noise concerns.

Wiersum indicated he reviewed the plan and read the letters from residents. He stated the majority of the letters were in support and appreciate the vitality Unmapped has brought to the community. However, he also understood this was a meaningful expansion to the business and there was some cause for concern because parking was already tight in Glen Lake. He commented how patrons walk, bike and drive to this property and he feared that the proposed expansion would exacerbate the parking concerns in Glen Lake. Gordon reported staff has been addressing the parking concerns in Glen Lake for several years. He stated the vitality of the area has drawn customers and new businesses to this area. Over the years staff has provided the council with

updates on this area, detailing how the site has evolved and noted staff has found there were always spaces available. He indicated the concern at times, has been where these spaces were available. He reminded the council that the rooftop deck would only be used for half the year and noted 29 overflow parking spaces would be provided from Prestige Academy. He stated without the parking agreement in place, this request would not have come forward.

Schaeppi commented he was excited to see Unmapped Brewing pushing the envelope for the parking issue. He anticipated a lot of residents were looking for places to spend their money locally and supported walking, biking or taking an Uber to this location. He believed this expansion was a positive step forward and he was happy to see Unmapped Brewing expanding in the community.

Coakley asked if there was a lift within the building. Gordon reported the rooftop patio requires full accessibility. He stated the lift or elevator would be located on the east side of the building.

Kirk commented the city has made a substantial investment in the sidewalks that connects this property all the way to Hopkins. He believed this may assist in promoting the rooftop amenity/walkability of the community. He asked if this item did not have five votes in favor, if the council could circle back at a future meeting in order to allow the applicant to be present. Wischnack reported the applicant was in attendance.

Wilburn moved, Calvert seconded a motion to approve Resolutions 2022-014, 2022-015 and 2022-016. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

## **12. Introduction of Ordinances:**

### **A. Ordinance amending the existing Minnetonka Corporate Center master development plan as it pertains to 6000 Clearwater Drive**

City Planner Loren Gordon gave the staff report.

Schaeppi stated he was excited to see new businesses and investment in the community. He indicated he would still like to see a tree canopy or some level of trees planted on this property. He looked forward to reviewing these plans further as these plans move along.

Calvert commented she was very intrigued by these plans because they were very creative. She asked if the parking spaces that were being converted into office could be converted back to parking in the future. Gordon stated this would be allowed.

Schack moved, Calvert seconded a motion to introduce the ordinance and refer the matter to the Planning Commission. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**13. Public Hearings:**

**A. 2022-23 Community Development Block Grant Funds – Urban Hennepin County Allocation**

Community Development Director Julie Wischnack gave the staff report.

Schaeppi asked what the city could do to assist more people with the Home Rehabilitation Loan Program, as there were currently 79 people on the wait list. Wischnack stated with the HR levy program, the city could forgive that money. She indicated the intent was for these dollars to be recycled over time with 1% interest.

Wiersum stated there were 79 people on the wait list and the city could help 9 people a year. He questioned what happened to the people on the wait list over time. Wischnack commented most of the people who do not get funded right away were patient and would wait. However, some residents flip to another program depending on the circumstances that they were in.

Schack inquired if a reset could be made to the waiting list. Wischnack stated this would be nice, but noted the county manages the list and commented the challenge would be to manage all of the projects at one time.

Wiersum opened the public hearing.

There being no further comments from the public, Wiersum closed the public hearing.

Kirk moved, Calvert seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-018. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**14. Other Business:**

**A. Concept plan review for residential redevelopment of the properties at 3928 and 3930 Shady Oak Road**

City Planner Loren Gordon gave the staff report.

Jonathan Bladvik, landscape architect for the project, he reported the one level living was desirable and work well on this property. He discussed the approach for development noting he was doing all he could to make it as beautiful as

possible. He thanked the council for their consideration and stated he looked forward to seeing what type of feedback the council had on this project.

John Hink, Solution Blue, explained he was the civil engineer for the project. He stated in developing this project he took into consideration how the project would work with respect to the amount of useable land, while also taking into consideration the city's tree preservation, stormwater management, and setback requirements.

Wiersum opened the meeting for public comments at this time.

Craig Hedberg, 3902 Willmatt Hill, stated he understood there was a need for affordable housing in Minnetonka as well as one level living. He understood one level living was attractive for those in retirement. He indicated he had three areas of concern with this project, the first being the project density. He noted the nine buildings that were proposed seemed to be too much. He explained this was a heavily wooded lot and this development would hollow out the trees on the property. He recommended the letter of the law be applied to with respect to tree preservation. He commented there were also concerns for safety as there was difficulty with getting vehicles out onto Highway 7. He indicated he also had concerns for wildlife in the area and how they would be impacted by the proposed project.

Sharon O'Brien, 3829 Willmatt Hill, thanked the mayor and council for allowing her to speak. She indicated she sent a letter to Councilmember Kirk and copied Councilmember Calvert and Councilmember Wilburn. She reviewed the key points from this letter stating she has lived on Willmatt Hill for the past 35 years. She explained after looking into the concept plan she had concerns with the density, how the natural resources would be impacted and if there would be runoff from this site onto adjacent properties. She expressed concern with how wildlife and wildlife habitat would be impacted. She believed the proposed development did not fit the site, but was too dense. She feared how the neighborhood would be impacted once the ponds and canopy were lost. She discussed the eight year climate assessment and commented on what was happening to the planet. She encouraged the city to protect the natural resources within the community. She recommended the footprint of this project be made smaller for the 3.6 acre site.

Mr. Hink noted Dave Carlson was on the line but was muted at this time. He clarified for the record that the two properties together were 6 acres in size. He reported Solution Blue would be doing its best to tread lightly on the property.

John Hobday, 3917 Willmatt Hill, explained he lived closest to the proposed development. He requested clarification on the size of the project area because he believed it was closer to 3.5 acres than 6 acres due to the amount of



wetlands/ponds. He discussed the property lines on the subject property and noted an adjustment had been made. He was of the opinion Mr. Carlson had brought forward a very attractive housing project. He reported the neighborhood supported replacing the two homes with four homes instead of nine homes or 18 units. He indicated his biggest concern was traffic safety. He feared how the new 18 units would be able to enter and exit the development on a blind curve. He discussed an accident he was in on this curve where he hit a flock of geese. He encouraged the council to drive this curve and to recognize the danger in this area. He then reviewed a video of himself driving down the curve with the council. He suggested the entrance into the neighborhood be reconsidered for safety purposes and that it be moved away from the blind curve. He commended the city for its tree preservation efforts. He discussed how the property could probably be clear cut so long as the rear of the site remained untouched, noting this would greatly impact the neighbors. He encouraged the developer to consider meeting with the neighbors prior to this item moving forward in order to address the concerns the neighbors have with the project.

John Walker, 4001 Auburn Drive, stated he was concerned with the size of the plan because this impacts density. He noted the developer is claiming one of the lots is .61 acres while the other is 2.95 acres, which was roughly 3.5 acres. He questioned why the right information was not available to the public. He stated he moved to Minnetonka because the lots sizes were bigger and he questioned why the developer was proposing to place 18 units on 3.5 acres. He asked what the developer has done with the feedback that was provided at the last meeting regarding density. He recommended the developer work to keep this project more in line with the adjacent neighborhood.

Wiersum closed the meeting for public comments.

Dave Carlson, Gate House Properties and representative for the applicant, thanked the council for considering his concept plan. He stated some of the benefits of this project was the one level living and was very forward thinking. He indicated he would be willing to discuss the density further with the neighbors. He reported the affordability would go away if the number of units were decreased.

Wiersum asked for comments from the council.

Kirk reported the Peterson property was .61 acres and the Vanderholt property was 2.95 acres which totals 3.85 acres which meant the density was roughly four units per acre. He indicated the engineer has stated this property was closer to 6 acres. He requested staff speak to this further. Gordon explained the north property is .64 acres and the south property was 2.95 acres including the pond.

Kirk clarified that stormwater management has to be completed on the property and could not be done using the pond. Gordon reported this was correct.

Schack commented in order to get different housing stock, different types of houses have to be built in Minnetonka. She understood this created tension in the community. But as the population increases, people have to go somewhere. She stated she struggled with this request, because she understood the density concerns of the neighbors. However, the city needed to have pockets with increased density, whether this was in apartment buildings or townhomes/condos. She believed this development was moving in the right direction and was close to arterial roadways. She was of the opinion nine was too many, but anticipated the number of units would be more than four. She indicated there was more work to do, but stated the development as on the right track.

Schaeppi thanked the residents who were in attendance and took the time to voice their concerns. He reported the council learned a lot about the safety concerns and dangerous curves in this neighborhood. He stated he struggled with concept plan reviews because not all the details were in place. He supported the community having a conversation about allowing modest density housing along major thoroughfares in the city. He stated he was open to seeing more density on properties like this. He noted Minnetonka was predominantly single family homes, the new ones being very expensive and large. The other option in the city was apartments. He believed the city needed more housing options and types to meet the needs of Minnetonka residents. He stated he was generally open to allowing a project like this with the proposed density. He encouraged the city and the county to look into the access point for the proposed development to ensure the curve was not too dangerous.

Calvert thanked the neighbors for their feedback. She stated she sent all of the emails to the city manager to share with the city council. She noted she watched the planning commission meeting and read the notes. She indicated there were a lot of places where developments are shoehorned in and they work out. She understood that change was hard and she heard the concerns regarding density. She commented she often thought about a project that was constructed on the corner of Highway 7 and I-494, and the need for a tree buffer. She reported the proposed density concerned her because it would impact the tree canopy. She indicated the city needs one level housing and she appreciated the fact the developer was proposing to construct affordable units. She understood that as the density went down the price for the units would increase. She questioned if the development would have adequate visitor parking or proper places for snow storage. She noted she was concerned about the placement of two units because one on the northwest corner was close to the steep slope and the northeast unit was close to the roadway.

Kirk commented Dave Carlson reached out to him six to eight weeks ago to talk about this project. He believed Mr. Carlson was a reputable developer and he was of the opinion the engineers would provide all the answers the council

needed. He stated he was concerned with the degradation of the city's residential neighborhoods. He has learned over the years that these definitions are defined by the people that live in the neighborhood. He indicated the people who live in this area find it to be a special neighborhood. He explained if this project were to move forward, he would want to understand if the housing type was isolated enough from the other things going on around it. He discussed how these nine duplexes would impact the adjacent properties. He commented on how the two existing lots could be subdivided to allow for more homes which would create some degree of tree removal. He stated he was sensitive to the tree cover and wildlife and he did not want to see this go away. However, he also understood that the property owner had some rights to develop their property. He explained he was concerned with the proposed density on this site but noted he did not understand what was the right number. He encouraged the neighbors to visit the Solbekken development because it was very much like the housing type that was being proposed. He recommended the developer reconsider the density when this item comes back for consideration.

Wiersum stated he agreed with much of what has been said but he understood the developer would bring forward a good product. He explained he has never seen a concept plan come forward where the council has asked for more density, but rather has asked for less density. He commented he was not certain what this number would be, but he anticipated the density would have to be lowered. He reported the city needed affordable housing and noted the city was also working to diversify its housing. He indicated the population of the community was growing and the city has to figure out how to meet this need. He explained all members of the community had to get comfortable with growth and change. He believed this was an intriguing proposal so long as the density was adjusted, the units were reconfigured with the developer assuring that the ponds will be protected.

Mayor Wiersum recessed the city council meeting.

Mayor Wiersum reconvened the city council meeting.

## **B. 2022 Assessment Report**

Principle Appraiser Melanie Putz gave the staff report.

Kirk stated he was shocked by the inflation value that was being seen in single family residential homes. He asked if the value of a home increases by 15% does the tax burden also increase by 15%. Putz reported it was too soon to tell what the percentage increase would be for single family homes. Finance Director Darin Nelson discussed how the tax levy had an impact on property taxes and how the dollars collected were distributed. He explained the tax capacity for

residential homes was increasing while it was decreasing for commercial properties.

Wiersum commented if someone's property value goes up 15% and the overall value of property in the city goes up 15% there will be little change to taxes.

Calvert explained residential rates were also going up slightly because commercial property rates were going down. She asked if this was something the city would be grappling with long term. Putz stated it was too soon to tell, but noted staff was looking at sales data for the past year. She indicated there was a strong trend in industrial/warehouse space.

Wiersum thanked Ms. Putz for her detailed report to the council.

Calvert moved, Kirk seconded a motion to accept the assessment report for 2022. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**C. Items concerning Minnetonka Public Schools Vantage/Momentum facility at 5735 County Road 101**

City Planner Loren Gordon gave the staff report.

Calvert requested further information regarding the staggering of hours and how this would impact traffic. Gordon reported there was capacity along Highway 101, and at the intersection at Hanus Rd. He explained the Vantage students would come to the site before parent drop off traffic starts to build at the elementary school. He noted the staggered hours would help this site in the afternoon as well. He commented further on the intersection at Excelsior Boulevard and Highway 101. It was his understanding this intersection was mostly a concern when events were scheduled and not on a daily basis. He reported the city would continue to monitor this intersection.

Coakley applauded the new traffic flow within this project. She appreciated the fact that the city would continue to monitor these intersections because this area does back up.

Paul Bourgeois, Executive Director of Finance and Operations, thanked the council for considering the school district's request. He stated he was looking forward to building a landmark building for this part of the city. He offered to give the council a tour of the facility in August when the site was open for students.

Schaepfi thanked the applicant for thinking outside of the box for students and helping to prepare them for their future. He appreciated how the Minnetonka School District has been proactively working with the city to collaborate on safer walking and biking. He stated this project was great and he hoped a conversation

would continue with the district regarding pedestrian safety. He encouraged the school district to continue to work with the city and to apply for grants for sidewalks or crossings.

Kirk reported he was a Minnetonka grad. He stated he was happy to see the aesthetics of this building in that it looked like and mimicked the high school building. He commended the school district for coming up with a proper site circulation and for working with a tight site.

Calvert agreed this was a really great building and would be a great addition to the Minnetonka School District.

Wiersum indicated the programs that would be housed here would be really exciting. He commended the school district for mimicking the design of the high school. He stated this was a great look. He encouraged the school district to continue to enhance pedestrian safety and to encourage pedestrians walk to school facilities. He anticipated the new building would draw people to it from within the district and perhaps outside of the district.

Kirk moved, Coakley seconded a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-019 and Resolution 2022-020. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**15. Appointments and Reappointments:**

**A. Appointments to Minnetonka boards and commissions**

Wiersum gave the staff report.

Wiersum moved, Calvert seconded a motion to approve the appointments. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

**16. Adjournment**

Wilburn moved, Schack seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:48 p.m. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Becky Koosman  
City Clerk