

**Minnetonka Planning Commission
Minutes**

Nov. 9, 2023

1. Call to Order

Chair Sewall called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Henry, Maxwell, Powers, Hanson and Sewall were present. Banks and Waterman were absent.

Staff members present: City Planner Loren Gordon and Planner Drew Ingvalson.

3. Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved as submitted.

4. Approval of Minutes: Oct. 26, 2023

Powers moved, second by Hanson, to approve the Oct. 26, 2023 meeting minutes as submitted.

Henry, Maxwell, Powers, Hanson and Sewall voted yes. Banks and Waterman were absent. Motion carried.

5. Report from Staff

Gordon reported that the next planning commission meeting is scheduled to be held Nov. 30, 2023.

6. Report from Planning Commission Members: None

7. Public Hearings: Consent Agenda

No item was removed from the consent agenda for discussion.

Hanson moved, second by Henry, to approve the item listed on the consent agenda as recommended in the staff report as follows:

A. Amendment to the Ridgheaven sign plan as it pertains to the property at 13101 Ridgedale Drive.

Adopt the resolution amending the sign plan for Ridgheaven Mall at 13145 Ridgedale Drive.

Henry, Maxwell, Powers, Hanson and Sewall voted yes. Banks and Waterman were absent. Motion carried and the item on the consent agenda was approved as submitted.

Chair Sewall stated that an appeal of the planning commission's decision to the city council must be made in writing to the planning division within ten days.

8. Public Hearings

A. Front yard setback variance for a garage addition at 3345 Honeywood Lane.

Chair Sewall introduced the proposal and called for the staff report.

Ingvalson reported. He recommended denial of the application based on the findings listed in the staff report.

Daniel Anderson, an architect representing the applicant, stated that:

- He appreciated Ingvalson being easy to work with.
- A road constructed from the cul-de-sac would probably be a private drive that would not have to be the required width for a public street. Due to the constraints and grades, this site is a perfect candidate for a private drive without curbs to feed probably one to three houses.
- The previous builder positioned the garage grossly over the property line.
- The proposal would improve the sight-line and usage.
- The owner wants to "get things back in compliance."
- The driveway extending to the 138.67 line is critical to use the driveway.
- The proposal would not look obtrusive.
- The neighbors he spoke to did not have a problem with the proposal.
- The proposal would orient the three stalls from the north side to the east side.
- The proposal could remove over 70 square feet of hardcover.
- The grade would go down naturally and look more natural.
- The proposal would be reasonable.
- There are two garages larger than the proposed garage located further down the street.
- The proposal would provide more options for the development of the adjacent property.

Powers confirmed with Mr. Anderson that it is possible for a vehicle to enter the existing garage. Mr. Anderson stated that it is difficult for a sports utility vehicle to enter the garage without making a five-point turn. He wants to find a solution that works for the owner and the city.

In response to Henry's question, Mr. Anderson stated that the driveway would not work coming straight out from the garage because of the slope. The driveway would have to serpentine down to reach an appropriate grade.

The public hearing was opened. No testimony was submitted and the hearing was closed.

Ingvolson noted that the right-of-way extends to the middle of Honeywood Lane.

Powers stated that:

- He loves the name Honeywood Lane.
- He is torn because he understands that a build-out could become problematic for the property owner to turn a sport-utility vehicle into the garage.
- He does not want to speculate on hypothetical situations.
- He supports staff's recommendation to deny the application because there is no practical problem.
- The site has been functioning since 2002. He understands that vehicles have gotten larger, but that is not a hardship.

Henry stated that:

- The application does not meet variance standards.
- He supports staff's recommendation to deny the application.
- The city would not approve a street improvement project that would prevent a homeowner from driving to their garage.

Maxwell stated that:

- It is frustrating to consider a hypothetical future development that may or may not happen.
- She felt that the proposal would meet the intent of the ordinance and be similar enough to the houses in the neighborhood to maintain the character of the neighborhood.
- She struggled to find a practical difficulty with the property. The practical difficulty is the size of vehicles. She felt that the proposal would benefit the property overall. It would benefit the city to remove the impervious surface currently located in the right-of-way as it is now.
- The proposal would provide a better traffic flow for the homeowner.
- She supports the proposal.

Chair Sewall stated that:

- Staff's recommendation correctly applies ordinance requirements, but he sees a chance to solve a problem created by the previous builder.
- The site is a challenge.
- He disagrees that the proposal would change the character of the neighborhood even if the road would be constructed.

Powers moved, second by Henry, to adopt the resolution denying a front yard setback variance to enlarge an existing three-stall-attached garage at 3345 Honeywood Lane.

Henry, Powers and Hanson voted yes. Maxwell and Sewall voted no. Banks and Waterman were absent. Motion passed.

Chair Sewall stated that an appeal of the planning commission's decision to the city council must be made in writing to the planning division within ten days.

9. Adjournment

Hanson moved, second by Powers, to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

By: _____
Lois T. Mason
Planning Secretary