

**Minnetonka Planning Commission
Minutes**

February 18, 2016

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Calvert, Hanson, and Odland were present. Kirk was absent.

Staff members present: Community Development Director Julie Wischnack, City Planner Loren Gordon, Assistant City Planner Susan Thomas, Senior Planner Ashley Cauley, and Natural Resource Manager Jo Colleran.

Also present: former planning commissioner Mark Magney.

3. Approval of Agenda

Powers moved, second by Knight, to approve the agenda as submitted with a modification provided in the change memo dated February 18, 2016.

Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Calvert, Hanson, and Odland voted yes. Kirk was absent. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes: February 4, 2016

Powers moved, second by Knight, to approve the February 4, 2016 meeting minutes as submitted.

Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Calvert, Hanson, and Odland voted yes. Kirk was absent. Motion carried.

5. Report from Staff

Gordon briefed the commission on land use applications considered by the city council at its meeting of February 8, 2016:

- Adopted a resolution approving items for the Bren Road Daycare.
- Adopted a resolution approving items for Wilson Ridge 5th Addition plat.
- Reviewed concept plans for Highview Villas and Villa West.

The next planning commission meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2016.

6. Report from Planning Commission Members

Former commissioner Magney approached the commission and expressed his appreciation for working with thoughtful commissioners and awesome staff.

Calvert encouraged everyone to participate in the next citizens' academy. She enjoyed it and learned a lot.

Powers was impressed with how Wischnack conducted the Shady Oak Redevelopment meeting. Wischnack stated that there will be another meeting regarding potential redevelopment April 7, 2016. A reminder will be sent.

7. Public Hearings: Consent Agenda: None

8. Public Hearings

A. Items concerning Williston Woods West, a five-lot subdivision at 5431 and 5439 Williston Road.

Acting Chair Odland introduced the proposal and called for the staff report.

Thomas reported. She recommended approval of the application based on the findings and subject to the conditions listed in the staff report.

In response to Acting Chair Odland's question, Thomas explained that the January proposal would have impacted 30 percent of the high priority trees and the current proposal would impact 29 percent.

Curt Fretham, of Lakewest Development, applicant, stated that he was available for questions.

Powers asked why the plan was changed. Mr. Fretham stated that some issues were worked through.

Calvert asked how access to Williston Road would be handled. Mr. Fretham stated that each residence would have a turnaround or be able to back into a neighbor's driveway to exit.

Powers asked if there would be easements for each property to be allowed to back into a neighbor's driveway. Mr. Fretham answered that there would be a common driveway easement and maintenance agreement that would be

recorded with each property. Thomas added that there is a condition that would require a common access easement for each residence that would include a "non-blockage clause."

The public hearing was opened.

Sharon Gibbons, 5402 Williston Road, stated that she and her neighbors support the proposal. This proposal makes sense. It has been hard to watch the property deteriorate for 12 years. She is glad the south piece of property was added to the project. She asked if construction would be done for the five houses individually or if all of the houses would be done at once. She would like them to be done quickly. The rendering makes the site look more level than it is. The proposal is a good solution. It would provide housing needed in Minnetonka.

No additional testimony was submitted and the hearing was closed.

Thomas explained that the site would be platted as individual lots with common easements for access to the lots. Construction must substantially conform to the elevations in the approved site and building plan to provide general consistency. The city does have a deadline for when construction must be completed after issuance of a building permit, but there is no deadline when a developer must apply for a building permit. The residences may be constructed one at a time.

Mr. Fretham explained that he is working with a builder, but does not have a timeframe of when the houses would be constructed.

In response to Powers' question regarding runoff, Mr. Fretham stated that his engineers have included features and worked with the grades to provide control measures.

Powers asked for the proposed houses' selling price. Mr. Fretham estimated from \$400,000 to \$600,000.

Acting Chair Odland asked if there would be one or multiple builders. Mr. Fretham said that it would be likely that there would be one builder for all of the lots.

Calvert agreed that the proposed houses are desirable for the area and would provide a transition from a dense area to a low-density, residential area. She liked the proposal and agreed with the PUD zoning. She was a little concerned with the timeline. She liked the concept.

Powers said that including the second small lot made sense to him. Solving the problem so drivers would not have to back onto Williston Road is significant.

Acting Chair Odland gave Mr. Fretham kudos for responding to the feedback.

Calvert moved, second by Powers, to recommend that the city council adopt the following with an address correction provided in the change memo dated February 18, 2016:

- 1) Ordinance rezoning the property from R-1 to PUD and adopting a master development plan for Williston Woods West (see pages A38-A41 of the staff report).***
- 2) Resolution approving a preliminary plat of Williston Woods West (see pages A42-A46 of the staff report).***
- 3) Resolution approving final site and building plans for Williston Woods West (see pages A47-A57 off the staff report).***

Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Calvert, Hanson, and Odland voted yes. Kirk was absent. Motion carried.

9. Other Business

A. Concept plan review for a 350-unit apartment building at 10101 Bren Road East.

Acting Chair Odland introduced the proposal and called for the staff report.

Thomas and Cauley reported. They requested commissioners provide comments, feedback, and direction that may lead to the preparation of more detailed development plans.

O'Connell asked if the green space is being incorporated into the project. Thomas explained that it is part of the large lot.

Tom Hayden, development director for LeCesse Development, applicant, introduced the civil engineer, Nick Mannel, and the architect, Martin Cook, for the project. Mr. Hayden stated that:

- The proposal is for 350 luxury apartments.
- The plan addresses concerns regarding height, mass, and green space.
- The building would be 5 stories tall.

- He would appreciate feedback to create a design that would work for everyone.
- The proposal is not comparable to the project in Maple Grove. This design would be more urban.

Wischnack clarified that residential development is exempt from the trip generation ordinance because it does not create peak-hour traffic.

O'Connell confirmed with Mr. Hayden that the cost would be \$1.75 per square foot. He asked what the market study showed in relation to the location. Mr. Hayden stated that the number and mix of units was determined by the market study. The demographic would be a young, millennial office worker.

Wischnack stated that the SWLRT housing gaps analysis found no housing product in the rental category that is over 80 percent AMI in the area. There will be a presentation next month with all of the details which are also available on the SWLRT website.

Powers thought more than seven stories would be suitable for the site. He asked what would make the units qualify to be luxury. Mr. Cook explained that the construction costs would raise dramatically if the project would go higher than 5 stories. The upgrades in each unit and an amenity package that includes roof-top amenities with an outdoor pool, 24-hour fitness area, coffee bar, golf simulator, and dog-washing station would make the apartment building on the luxury level. The trend is to decrease the size of the unit and increase the amount of amenities.

Hanson asked what would happen with the green space on the west side. Mr. Hayden answered that has not been determined.

Calvert asked for the square footage of a proposed apartment. Mr. Hayden estimated 900 to 1,000 square-feet. A studio would be 650 square feet with a sliding wall. The small, one-bedroom units are the first to go in an urban setting like this. Forty percent of the units would have two bedrooms. The remainder would be studio or one bedroom units.

O'Connell asked if the proposal would work without the SWLRT. Mr. Hayden is appreciative of the light rail, but the demographics in the area would support the project without the light rail.

Calvert asked what the building would look like. Mr. Cook explained that the massing plan shows the mass, but does not represent the architecture. The first rendering would work in this area. As the proposal moves forward, he would work

closely with staff to create the direction of the aesthetics, massing, and design of the materials and so on.

Calvert asked why the courtyard would be closed off rather than having an open view. Mr. Hayden found that residents enjoy enclosed, quiet, courtyards with amenities. Mass would be located as high as possible and spread out. The plan would be to relocate the path to a location that would work for everyone.

Hanson likes the courtyard and pool. He would look for privacy. He asked if the pool would be in shade. Mr. Hayden stated that would be a good thing to consider.

Calvert asked if the water table level would cause a problem for the two underground levels of parking. Mr. Mannel stated that soil borings did not find water down to 21 feet. The groundwater table should not be an issue.

Hanson asked if there could be a green area in the courtyard that would collect water from the roofs. Mr. Mannel stated that the city and watershed district stormwater requirements would be met. There would probably be underground stormwater collection features. The deck in the courtyard would be located over the parking.

Acting Chair Odland asked how the urban building would be made to fit in with the city's value of natural surroundings. Mr. Hayden stated that there would be a natural buffer from Bren Road to the entrance. The mass would go up and the building would use as little green space as possible. There would be landscaping and open, green space. He was open to suggestions regarding how to create more natural features.

Hanson suggested using colors that would blend in.

Calvert asked what amenities would be located on the roof. Mr. Cook answered soft-seating areas, landscaping, and fire pits.

Powers likes the roof-top amenities very much. There are areas for groups to gather all around the property. He asked if the applicant has built a similar project. Mr. Hayden agreed that residents would need to drive to a grocery store and movie theater. That is not unusual. As the light rail is operational, the surrounding office park may transform to include retail and restaurants. Wischnack noted that there are 789 units of housing in the area already. The 1970 Opus plan includes mixed uses and residential housing.

O'Connell asked how fast the leasing went for the Carlson Project. Wischnack said that the market is strong and vacancies are still very low, less than two percent.

Calvert favored keeping the green space and keeping the natural setting running along the path.

Acting Chair Odland asked what green features would be incorporated. Mr. Hayden said that he would work with staff to create an energy-efficient building that would include green elements.

Knight liked what he saw. He is a fan of rooftop amenities. He asked if a raingarden could be located on a roof. Mr. Hayden said that would be very difficult. There are systems that use plastic containers that link together. A raingarden would add a tremendous amount of weight and the price would increase to a point where it would not be feasible.

Knight noted that there are a lot of single-family houses that are not surrounded by amenities and many existing homes within a short walk from the site. He did not think it would be a problem. He likes the proposal.

Calvert likes the proposal. She supports it being a green building.

Powers likes the idea overall. He appreciates his questions being answered so well.

Hanson agreed with saving trees and keeping the path.

10. Adjournment

***Calvert moved, second by Powers, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m.
Motion carried unanimously.***

By: _____
Lois T. Mason
Planning Secretary