

**Minnetonka Planning Commission  
Minutes**

**Dec. 14, 2017**

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Roll Call**

Commissioners Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Schack, Sewall, Calvert, and Kirk were present.

Staff members present: City Planner Loren Gordon and Assistant City Planner Susan Thomas.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

***Sewall moved, second by Calvert, to approve the agenda as submitted with additional comments provided in the change memo dated December 14, 2017.***

***Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Schack, Sewall, Calvert, and Kirk voted yes. Motion carried.***

**4. Approval of Minutes: November 30, 2017**

***Calvert moved, second by Schack, to approve the November 30, 2017 meeting minutes as submitted with corrections in the spelling of two names.***

***Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Schack, Sewall, Calvert, and Kirk voted yes. Motion carried.***

**5. Report from Staff**

Gordon briefed the commission on land use applications considered by the city council at its meeting of December 4, 2017:

- Adopted a resolution approving a 12-month extension of the preliminary plat approval for Tonkawoods Farm First Addition.
- Adopted a resolution approving a 12-month extension for the approval of the canopy of the Bauer's gas and U-Haul site.
- Directed staff to provide a resolution approving a conditional use permit for an eight-person residential care facility on Baker Road. The item will be reviewed by the city council December 18, 2017.
- Reviewed the concept plan for Ridgedale Executive Apartments on Ridgedale Drive.

- Reviewed a concept plan for Dominion apartments that would be located in Opus. The use and density was found to be appropriate. Integrating parks and trails in Opus was discussed.

There was a comprehensive guide plan meeting December 11, 2017 and the next one will be in January 2018. Please check the city's website, *eminnetonka.com*, to confirm the date.

The next planning commission meeting will be January 4, 2017.

## 6. Report from Planning Commission Members

Schack reported on how the comprehensive guide plan meeting focused on economic development. She encouraged everyone to watch the presentation and discussion on line. Powers agreed that it is good to get involved and learn how a city operates.

Calvert attended the mountain bike meeting that had over 200 interested parties in attendance. There is a lot of education needed to learn about mountain-bike trails.

## 7. Public Hearings: Consent Agenda

No item was removed from the consent agenda for discussion or separate action.

***Calvert moved, second by Powers, to approve the item listed on the consent agenda as recommended in the staff report as follows:***

- A. Time extension for a parking lot setback variance from 20 feet to 5 feet at 11311 K-Tel Drive.**

Approve a 12-month time extension.

***Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Schack, Sewall, Calvert, and Kirk voted yes. Motion carried and the item on the consent agenda was approved as submitted.***

Chair Kirk stated that this motion may be appealed to the city council if requested in writing within 10 days to planning staff.

## 8. Public Hearings: None

## 9. Other Business

- A. Concept plan review for The Villas of Glen Lake at 5517 and 5525 Eden Prairie Road.**

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

Thomas reported. Staff recommends that the planning commission provide comments and feedback on the identified key issues and other issues the planning commission deems appropriate. The discussion is intended to assist the applicant with future direction that may lead to the preparation of more detailed development plans.

Blaine Waters, Quest Development, applicant, stated that:

- He lives in the Glen Lake community.
- There is a desire for this type of housing priced below the \$800,000s.
- The intent is for the area to be walkable and this type of housing would fit with that vision.
- He welcomed comments and questions.

Powers asked for the price point. Mr. Waters was hoping for \$550,000 to \$650,000. It would be difficult to have the price any lower due to land and building costs. There would be 1,450 square feet on the main level and another 1,000 square feet in the basement. Mr. Waters was still researching if a second-story option would be offered. He predicted that most of the houses would be rambler style.

Chair Kirk confirmed with Mr. Waters that the houses would have walk-out basements.

In response to Powers' question, Mr. Waters said that the backyards would be minimal and geared toward empty nesters. There would be small areas to congregate and entertain. The steep-slope, wooded area would not be able to be developed.

Chair Kirk invited those present to provide comments.

Greg Olson, owner of the office building at 5509 Eden Prairie Road, stated that:

- He would like a buffer between his lot and the proposed site. He would like a fence and landscaping.
- A five-foot setback seems too small.
- He invited commissioners to walk the property. He marked the property line. The corner of his office building is 17 feet from the property line.
- He is worried about water flooding his basement and parking lot on the east side.
- He thought five houses would be considered high-density residential. He was concerned with the amount of hard cover surface.
- He was worried about losing trees located on the property line.
- Neighbors have walked through his property for years with dogs and people have dumped garbage in his dumpster. Neighbors have dumped grass clippings on his property. He has had people sleep in their vehicles in the parking lot or leave their vehicles in the lot overnight.
- He takes pride in the parking lot. The plan upset him.
- He was worried about people walking through his parking lot.

- When Highway 169 was closed, traffic was backed up along Eden Prairie Road.
- He was concerned that the proposal's snow would be dumped in his parking lot.
- The vehicle lights would shine in his windows.

Thomas appreciated the drainage, buffering, and setback questions which would be looked at if a formal application would be submitted. The concept plan may fit zoning for a PUD or R-3, low or medium density residential district.

Sewall stated that there should be an increase in buffering that corresponds with a decrease in the size of setbacks. As much natural buffering as possible would be the best option. He did not think empty nesters would walk around a parking lot too much.

Calvert suggested maintaining the mature trees between the properties to maintain the buffer and natural feel.

Chair Kirk stated that new townhomes at an affordable price are needed in the city. However, the proposal would sacrifice too much in terms of the volume of space that would be covered by hard surface. The root zones of the neighbors' trees should be protected. That would require a little more than the five-foot setback. He struggled with the density. He was not as concerned with the hydrology, but the trees on the north and south would have to be protected. There could be a problem if the street would be widened or a sidewalk or trail added.

Calvert agreed that new, single-level housing stock is in desperate need. The natural buffer and preserving the root zones of the mature trees located between the site and neighbor are important. The houses would be located close to Eden Prairie Road which could become problematic if the street would be expanded or a sidewalk or trail added.

Schack concurred. The tree ordinance provides specific requirements that could be met by preserving the trees on the steep slope, but clear-cutting trees adjacent to the neighbor is not appealing. She encouraged incorporating the wooded areas into the plan.

Powers said that if the villas already existed and a commercial building would be proposed where it is now, then the commercial building would not be allowed to have such a small setback to the property line.

O'Connell asked if the city would have the ability to build a sidewalk north of the site. The trees located between the properties are important. He asked for the amount of buildable area and setbacks for an office building on the property zoned for an office building. He supports this type of housing. The proposal would provide a transition from an office building to single-family residential housing.

Calvert asked if there would be sustainable aspects to the proposal. Mr. Waters explained that the building code now requires many sustainable practices. The proposal

would meet or exceed code requirements. It would be cost prohibitive to utilize geothermal or solar power for five villas.

Chair Kirk thought that the Groveland Pond villas are too large for the setbacks. The volume of the houses in The Sanctuary creates a more aesthetically pleasing development.

Calvert liked that the proposal would provide a transition from commercial to single-family housing.

Knight did not have a problem with the setbacks between the proposed houses, but he did not like the north side yard setback. That would be too tight. He asked how the private drive would be regulated. Thomas answered that the city must approve a private street, it was not a given. A private street must be able to support the weight and turning radius of the largest fire truck. There is a minimum private drive/street width requirement of 20 feet and 14-foot vertical requirement.

Calvert noted the issues of guest parking and snow removal.

Knight noted the large setback on the south side. He suggested moving the houses further south.

The city council is tentatively scheduled to review the concept plan on January 8, 2018.

## 10. Adjournment

***Calvert moved, second by Powers, to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.***

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lois T. Mason  
Planning Secretary