

**Minnetonka Planning Commission
Minutes**

March 15, 2018

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Hanson, Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Schack, Sewell, and Kirk were present.

Staff members present: Community Development Director Julie Wischnack, City Planner Loren Gordon, Assistant City Planner Susan Thomas, Senior Planner Ashley Cauley, and Planner Drew Ingvalson.

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

4. Approval of Minutes: March 1, 2018

Schack moved, second by Knight, to approve the March 1, 2018 meeting minutes as submitted.

Hanson, Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Schack, Sewell, and Kirk voted yes. Motion carried.

5. Report from Staff

Gordon briefed the commission on the city council's review of public realm guidelines for the Ridgedale area. The city council will review the guidelines again at the April 2, 2018 city council meeting.

The comprehensive guide plan steering committee will meet March 21, 2018 to discuss parks, trails, and open space.

The next planning commission meeting will be April 12, 2018.

6. Report from Planning Commission Members: None

7. Public Hearings: Consent Agenda

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

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

- A. Aggregate side yard setback variance for a living space addition at 16119 Birch Lane.**

Adopt the resolution that approves an aggregate side yard setback variance for a living-space addition at 16119 Birch Lane.

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

Chair Kirk stated that an appeal of the planning commission's decision must be made in writing to the planning division within 10 days.

8. Public Hearings

A. Conditional use permit and site and building plan review for a concession stand and bathrooms at Hopkins High School at 10901 Hillside Lane West.

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

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

Dan Wagner and Kevin Thueringer of Unesco, and Kevin Newman, Hopkins School District Building and Grounds Assistant Supervisor, applicant, introduced themselves. Mr. Newman stated that Ingvanson did a good job. The applicant met with the neighbors to discuss the project. Removing the port-a-potties would improve the looks of the area.

Schack asked how long the construction would take. Mr. Newman planned for it to be done by this fall.

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

O'Connell moved, second by Schack, to adopt the resolution approving a conditional use permit and final site and building plans for a concession stand and bathroom facilities at Hopkins High School at 10901 Hillside Lane West.

Hanson, Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Schack, Sewell, and Kirk voted yes. Motion carried.

B. Conditional use permit for Creo Arts and Dance Academy at 15100 Minnetonka Industrial Road.

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

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

Christa Anderson, applicant, stated that the proposed space is currently used as a storage area for dental supplies. She would like her dance studio to be part of the Minnetonka community.

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

Powers felt that the dance studio would be a perfect fit for the area.

Powers moved, second by Hanson, to recommend that the city council adopt the resolution approving a conditional use permit with a parking variance for Creo Arts and Dance Academy at 15100 Minnetonka Industrial Road.

Hanson, Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Schack, Sewell, and Kirk voted yes. Motion carried.

C. Conditional use permit for a microbrewery and taproom at 5959 Baker Road.

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

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

John Kraus, a controller for Brass Foundry, applicant, stated that he is excited about the proposed space. The taproom side would have a coffee-shop vibe. Everyone would be welcome to hang out with or without drinking. He was available for questions. Food trucks would park in front by the patio.

Powers visited the site with the applicants. The plan has been very well thought out. It would be a good location. The space is currently wide open. It would bring vitality to Minnetonka.

Hanson agreed that the proposal would bring life to the industrial park.

Chair Kirk noted that the location is a good distance from a residential neighborhood.

Sewall noted that there would be a lot of parking stalls available. There are stalls all along the back of the building. It would be a great addition to the area. He supported staff's recommendation.

Schack agreed. The location would be perfect, the peak hours would be opposite of the surrounding uses, and there would be no parking issue.

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

O'Connell moved, second by Hanson, to recommend that the city council adopt the resolution approving a conditional use permit for a microbrewery and taproom at 5959 Baker Road.

Hanson, Knight, O'Connell, Powers, Schack, Sewell, and Kirk voted yes. Motion carried.

9. Other Business

A. Concept plan review for Morrie's Ford at 13400 Wayzata Blvd. and 13205 Southridge Road.

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

Thomas reported. She recommended that the planning commission provide comments and feedback on the identified key issues and any other issues commissioners deem appropriate. The discussion is intended to assist the applicant with the preparation of more detailed development plans and a formal application.

Lynn Robson, Morrie's Automotive Group facilities director, applicant, stated that:

- She thanked Gordon and Thomas for their direction during the process.
- The intent of the project would be to improve site circulation and traffic flow and create a better experience for customers and staff.
- As part of a buy/sell Morrie's went through in 2016, the manufacturer conditioned the purchase to some improvements to the facility. Ford has reviewed and approved the plans.
- She requested the commissioners' comments and feedback.

Brandon Greize, representing the applicant, explained that:

- Ford wants to put corrugated metal over the brick and EIFS.
- A new pedestrian ramp would be added to increase access.
- There would be a 12,000 square-foot addition on the east side and the addition of service stalls, a three-lane service drive, and two-bay carwash. All of the drying would take place inside the drive-through car wash.
- There would be a place to deliver vehicles to customers on the west side.
- There would be an elevator to the second floor. There would be a display room on the second floor overlooking Interstate 394.
- Fifty parking stalls would be added on the north side for employee parking. The site would look cleaner and have a better appearance.

Chair Kirk invited the public to comment.

Rob Haas, 13224 Southridge Road, stated that:

- The proposal would set a bad precedent. There would be nothing to prevent Sears from tearing down three houses it owns. Sears also has issues with its parking area.
- Salespeople frequently set off vehicle alarms to locate vehicles.

Jan Rivers, 13317 Southridge Road, stated that:

- She lives adjacent to the Sears' owned residential properties.
- She is not a fan of a parking lot being located at the entrance to her neighborhood. It would not fit in the neighborhood.
- The proposal would set a precedent.
- She did not care what would happen with the building. She opposed the parking lot.

In response to Sewall's question, Thomas explained that a residential property does not have a hard-surface maximum unless it is adjacent to a lake. A commercial property is allowed to have up to 85 percent of its surface covered by an impervious surface.

Chair Kirk asked if the residential properties owned by Sears are being used to store vehicles. Thomas answered that staff will be following up with those properties to see if ordinances are being followed.

Schack said that the comprehensive guide plan steering committee meetings have discussed how the changes in the landscape of areas happens over time. Thomas recalled an example of a residential area becoming more commercial when a rezoning and guide plan amendment were approved for the North Memorial clinic. Gordon noted that often commercial areas have become residential uses.

Powers could understand that more parking may be needed for employees. He did not know how restricting the lot to employee parking could be enforced. The applicant knew that the property is zoned R-1 when it was purchased. Changing the zoning from residential to commercial would change the character of the neighborhood.

Chair Kirk confirmed with Thomas that the area is guided for medium-density residential.

Sewall asked for the number of parking stalls the site currently has and how many would be removed due to the addition on the building. Ms. Robson estimated that 50 stalls would be removed due to the addition of the building. Eighty employees are usually on site every day. Employee parking would create fewer trips and less of an impact on the neighbors than vehicle storage for the dealership. Having motion-activated lights is being considered.

Sewall visited the site and it is very tight.

Schack thought that the neighborhood is in favor of refreshing the look of the building. The changes to the car wash would be a big enhancement. She was concerned with a

parking lot changing the character of the neighborhood. Turning a residential area into parking when parking needs would be changing in the future makes it more difficult to support the proposal.

In response to Chair Kirk's question, Thomas answered that changing a residential site to a parking lot would require rezoning and a comprehensive guide plan amendment. Thomas explained the pyramid of discretion.

Chair Kirk felt that the integrity of the neighborhood needs to be protected. All of the vehicle dealerships need to be held to a line with a buffer to provide some degree of separation between the businesses and residential houses.

Powers asked if it would be possible to require a buffer so the surrounding neighbors would not see the vehicles. Thomas explained that if the zoning would be changed, then the city would be bound by the parameters provided in the zoning classification. A buffer could not be a condition of approval for a rezoning request.

Knight likes the idea of refreshing the building. A business owner can do that. The proposal shows that there would be a lot of green space around the perimeter of the proposed parking lot. At the moment, the site is doing a reasonable job of trying to hide the vehicles.

Hanson understood where the neighborhood was coming from. He saw the danger of setting a precedent. He saw no way of guaranteeing that the parking would change its use from employee parking to storage of merchandise.

Sewall thought that storage of new vehicles might have less of an impact than employee parking.

Chair Kirk reviewed that commissioners are apprehensive regarding the proposed change in the use of the residential property. There is a gray area in determining what would be the less obtrusive manner to manage the proposed parking lot. Commissioners support the renovations and freshening up the building, but struggle with the use encroaching on the neighborhood.

10. Adjournment

Sewall moved, second by Powers, to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

By: _____
Lois T. Mason
Planning Secretary