

**Minnetonka Planning Commission  
Minutes**

**Aug. 2, 2018**

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Roll Call**

Commissioners Powers, Schack, Sewall, Hanson, and Kirk were present. Knight was absent.

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

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

**4. Approval of Minutes:** July 19, 2018

***Schack moved, second by Powers, to approve the July 19, 2018 meeting minutes as submitted with the changes from the change memo.***

***Powers, Schack, Sewall, and Hanson voted yes. Kirk abstained. Knight 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 July 23, 2018:

- Adopted a resolution approving a three-lot subdivision for Arundel Addition.
- Introduced a concept plan for a multi-family residential development on Bren Road East for The Mariner.
- Adopted a resolution approving items for a multi-family residential development on Bren Road East for Dominion.
- Hennepin County removed review of its application for a medical examiner's office on County Road 62 from the agenda. It will be reviewed in September.

A joint planning commission and economic development authority commission tour is scheduled for Aug. 9, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

The next planning commission meeting will be Aug. 16, 2018.

**6. Report from Planning Commission Members**

Schack thanked commissioners and staff for working with her during her time on the planning commission. She was selected to serve as the Ward 2 councilmember beginning Monday.

**7. Public Hearings: Consent Agenda: None**

**8. Public Hearings**

**A. Amendment to the Crest Ridge Corporate Center sign plan for Orchards of Minnetonka at 10955 Wayzata Blvd.**

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.

Sewall asked if a sign is located on a retaining wall anywhere else in the city. Cauley answered that Burwell Park has a sign on a retaining wall.

Marty McCarthy, with Opus Development Company, the applicant, stated that staff did a great job summarizing the application. The sign would dress up the retaining wall nicely and be a great way to provide way-finding to the entrance of the building.

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

Chair Kirk thought the proposal would be less intrusive than a monument sign.

Sewall liked wall Sign One. He did not like wall Sign Two as much because it would be located near the sidewalk. He asked if it would be illuminated. Cauley stated that staff advised the applicant that uplighting would not be allowed to encroach onto the sidewalk or be located within the right-of-way.

***Powers moved, second by Hanson, to adopt the resolution which approves a sign plan amendment for Orchards of Minnetonka at 10995 Wayzata Blvd.***

***Powers, Schack, Sewall, Hanson, and Kirk voted yes. Knight was absent. Motion carried.***

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

**B. Variance and expansion permit to construct a single-family home at 5500 Mayview Road.**

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

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

In response to Hanson's question, Ingvalson answered that the height and mass of the proposal would be similar to the surrounding houses.

In response to Chair Kirk's question, Ingvalson responded that the city would not allow a second curb cut.

Kelly Laughlin, 15230 Knob Hill, applicant, stated that he and his wife want to build an energy-efficient house. He reviewed the proposed floor plan. His architect worked to create a footprint similar to the surrounding houses.

Gina Laughlin, 15230 Knob Hill, applicant, stated that she wants to build an energy-efficient house. She loves the location and the lake view. The architect did a great job making the floor plan modern, but it would only be a subtle change from the street view.

Mr. Laughlin said that there would not be another curb cut.

Schack was a fan of the energy efficiencies included in the proposal. The proposal would be an improvement. It would be a good addition.

Chair Kirk supports the proposal. It would be a beautiful, modern house with sustainability.

Sewall liked that the expansion would occur on the north and south sides rather than the east and west sides. He supports the proposal.

Powers agreed that the proposal is a smart idea. He liked the design. It is inspiring. It would be an improvement to the area. He complemented the architect and homeowners on the design.

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

***Schack moved, second by Sewall, to adopt the resolution approving the variance and expansion permit to construct a new single-family home at 5500 Mayview Road.***

***Powers, Schack, Sewall, Hanson, and Kirk voted yes. Knight was absent. Motion carried.***

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

## 9. Other Business

**A. Concept plan review for Minnetonka Fire and Police facility project at 14500 and 14550 Minnetonka Blvd.**

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

Gordon reported. He recommended commissioners provide comments and feedback on the identified key issues and others 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.

Perry Vetter, Minnetonka Assistant City Manager and Administrative Services Director, representing the applicant, stated that:

- A new fire department would be constructed on the city hall campus and the existing areas would be repurposed.
- No existing square footage would be torn down and rebuilt in another location.
- He explained the history of the city's buildings, personnel, and population.
- He reviewed the needs and efficiency of the fire and police departments.
- The proposal would include a decontamination center and exercise area for firefighters to reduce their risk of cancer.
- The basic project needs and goals include improving safety and response times to the community, accommodating the growth and change in the work force, and protecting the investment in the equipment.

John McNamara, project lead from Wold Architects and Engineers, stated that:

- The site was selected to allow the proposed building to blend in harmoniously with the existing campus.
- A surveyor determined the impacts to the wetland protection area.
- He explained the benefit of the use of small retaining walls.
- The footprint of the building was shrunk as much as possible.
- A traffic study concluded that six ladder trucks and six vehicles returning from each fire call would have a small impact on Williston Road.
- Police vehicles would exit and enter from Minnetonka Blvd.
- He provided views from surrounding neighborhoods.
- The natural resources would be preserved as much as possible.
- Wood and stone would be used on the exterior to highlight the entries.
- The police and fire department lobbies would be increased in size.

In response to Chair Kirk's question, Minnetonka Fire Chief John Vance explained the fire vehicles' traffic pattern. A system is in place to give emergency vehicles a green light on Williston Road when activated. The bays would not be occupied if an emergency vehicle would drive into the site and need to exit quickly.

Chair Kirk noted the glass entryways and asked what security precautions would be taken to deal with a large crowd or protest. Mr. McNamara answered that each entry would have lockdown capability. Landscape features could also be used.

Minnetonka Police Chief Scott Boerboom explained that housing the vehicles would protect them from tampering or vandalism as well as damage from the weather. There would be indoor parking space for 41 vehicles. Currently, the police department has 37 vehicles.

In response to Schack's question, Vance explained that most of the surrounding comparable cities upgraded their police and fire departments within the last 10 to 15 years. He stated that the separate entrance would prevent the need for emergency fire vehicles to back up which would eliminate a large safety hazard.

Powers supports providing the fire and police departments with everything they need to keep the residents safe. Powers asked if there is anything else the chiefs would like to add to the proposal. Vance said that it would be ideal to have a training facility on site, but that would not be realistic. The proposal was developed to meet the departments' needs for the next 50 years.

Boerboom added that the proposal would offer flexibility for the future. The locker rooms would be gender neutral to allow for future growth. The training room and wellness area would be shared by the police and fire staff to allow the departments to accomplish much more together than the departments would be able to individually.

Chair Kirk invited those present to comment.

Joanna Troy, 14852 Timberhill Road, stated that:

- She was thankful that Site One would not be used.
- She thought a long fire truck would have trouble navigating Williston Road. She asked if Williston Road would have to be straightened.

No one else chose to speak.

Hanson stated that there are limited opportunities to make large-scale investments in the community. This is one opportunity. He thought four additional parking stalls would not be enough. The community will be growing. Applications for four large apartment buildings have been approved by the city council in the last six months.

Chair Kirk asked staff for the projected growth of the city. Gordon explained that the 2040 comprehensive guide plan anticipates the population to increase to 62,500.

Wischnack explained that the proposal takes into account the location of the projected growth areas.

Vetter explained the ratio of population growth related to service calls and the number of parking stalls. Police and fire personnel are analyzing the impact of population growth in specific areas. Ridgedale and Opus are large growth areas.

Boerboom provided that four officers share one squad car, so two additional squad cars would be sufficient for eight new officers. He foresaw satellite stations staffed by officers and their own parking areas for the next expansion. It would be fantastic to increase the proposal's number of stalls, but 41 stalls would allow flexibility up to the projected population increase to 62,500.

Vance added that satellite fire stations are currently not staffed, but could accommodate 24-hour staffing with minor interior modifications.

Vance stated that all of the fire vehicles are able to navigate Williston Road now.

Vetter explained that the site lines near the community center access to Williston Road would be looked at along with options for traffic safety features on Minnetonka Boulevard.

Sewall felt that the land use would be appropriate. The entrance on the north would impact the neighbors, but would make the best use of the land possible. He was comfortable with that change.

Schack felt the proposal was thoughtfully done and makes the most of what already exists. It would be an appropriate land use. She liked how the surroundings were taken into account to minimize the impact to the well and woodland area. She supports the concept plan.

Chair Kirk felt the proposal would minimize the impact on the woodland preservation area. The site would be tight and not allow much expansion in the future. He supports the proposal. The city council will review this item at its meeting on August 27, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

10. Adjournment

*Sewall moved, second by Hanson, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.*

By:

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Lois T. Mason  
Planning Secretary