

**Minnetonka Planning Commission
Minutes**

Nov. 1, 2018

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

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

Staff members present: Community Development Director Julie Wischnack, City Planner Loren Gordon, and Assistant City Planner Susan Thomas.

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

4. Approval of Minutes: Oct. 18, 2018

Hanson moved, second by Henry, to approve the Oct. 18, 2018 meeting minutes as submitted.

Sewall, Hanson, Henry, Knight, Luke, and Kirk voted yes. Powers 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 Oct. 22, 2018:

- Adopted a resolution approving a change to the drainage and utility easement for one lot of the Wilson Sixth Addition, a three-lot subdivision with three new houses.

The next planning commission meeting is scheduled for Nov. 15, 2018. The planning commission meeting regularly scheduled for Dec. 13, 2018 has been moved to Dec. 6, 2018.

There will be a comprehensive guide plan steering committee meeting next week and a public hearing on the comprehensive guide plan on Nov. 29, 2018. There have been six out-reach events that gathered feedback from residents.

6. Report from Planning Commission Members: None

A five-minute recess was taken to deal with technical issues.

7. Public Hearings: Consent Agenda

No item was removed from the consent agenda for discussion.

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

A. Resolution approving a front yard setback variance for construction of a garage addition at 4425 Tonkawood Road.

Adopt the attached resolution approving a front yard setback expansion permit to construct an attached garage addition at 4425 Tonkawood Road.

Sewall, Hanson, Henry, Knight, Luke, and Kirk voted yes. Powers was absent. The motion on the consent agenda item 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.

8. Public Hearings

A. Resolution approving rezoning, master development plan, final site and building plans, and preliminary and final plats for The Mariner.

Chair Kirk 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 Sewall's question, Thomas explained that staff referred to the proposed structure as two "buildings," but they are parts of the same building. The property line separates the west wing which would have 194 market-rate units and the east wing made up of 55 units that would meet affordable housing standards. Wischnack explained that the different financing makes it necessary to separate the types of units.

Sewall asked how far into the easement the proposed amenities would extend. Thomas pointed out the boundary. A large watermain is located underground in the easement. The city may need to access the watermain in the future.

Henry asked why some easements are vacated and not others. Thomas explained that an easement may become obsolete when a property is redeveloped and utilities previously located in an easement are removed.

In response to Chair Kirk's question, Thomas explained that the staff recommendation includes a condition of approval that would prohibit a dog run and parking area from being located in the easement. The proposal would still meet parking ordinance requirements with the removal of the proposed parking area located in the easement.

Becky Landon, president of Newport Midwest, applicant, stated that:

- She enjoyed working with staff.
- The building would look and function as one development. There would be affordable and market-rate components.
- The amenities would be equally attractive to all units. There would be a playground, splash pad, common room, game room, and gathering areas geared more toward adults.
- The northwest corner of the building would be about 550 feet from the SWLRT station platform and 70 - 80 feet from the tracks.
- There would be four units of high-priority supportive homeless housing. Hennepin County would refer a family when a unit is open. There would still be a background check and lease. A supportive provider would provide case management services. This would be permanent, supportive housing. These would be families with children.
- The applicant maximized every square inch of the site in order to create the kind of density the area dictates. The applicant is concerned with parking because there is no off-street parking in the area. The 21 stalls would help alleviate that problem. The dog run would not be much different than typical landscaping, but it would be maintained and designated as an area for residents to take their dogs. There are already people walking their dogs on the trail system now, but a lot more dogs would be added with the completion of the proposal.

Jack Immerman, civil engineer with Wenck Associates, stated that:

- There is a 10-inch watermain running through the 50-foot wide drainage and utility easement. The watermain is located directly underneath the existing bituminous trail. A 20-foot wide trench would be needed to repair the watermain. Repairs to the watermain would not encroach on the proposed parking. The dog run and parking area would extend 20 feet into the easement and leave 30 feet of easement for future utilities.
- Cable, electric, and telephone utilities use small cables buried three feet below the surface that fit within a five-foot easement.
- The dog park would consist of landscaping with a fence around it and the parking area would be bituminous with a concrete curb. It would be fairly simple to remove the parking or fence if needed.

Ms. Landon said that connecting residents of the proposed building and surrounding area to the SWLRT is critical. Making sure as many users can get to the SWLRT as safely as possible is a priority. Sidewalks would be located on the south side of the building from a private driveway to the driveway located on Bren Road East. She explained the pedestrian traffic pattern and the concessions made for safety and privacy.

Mr. Immerman stated that:

- Bren Road East has been moved closer to the proposed building. There is a 16-foot grade difference between the top of the road and the pedestrian underpass. A 3:1 grade could be constructed from the top of the road to the building. An additional 10-foot tall retaining wall would be required to build a sidewalk between the road and the building.
- The third concept is a rendering that shows that pedestrians would travel between a building wall and a 10-foot retaining wall. The applicant did not think pedestrians living off site would utilize this corridor and it would not provide a safe environment. There would be better connectivity from the north and east sides of the site.

In response to Chair Kirk's request, Thomas explained the grading plan and existing trail system.

Ms. Landon pointed out that there is no sidewalk along Bren Road East. Most of the pedestrian traffic would come from the existing trails located on the north side of the site.

Wischnack explained that staff supports taking a broader view of the area and adding segments of trails that would link up with future trails.

In response to Henry's question, Thomas stated that the site may be accessed from Bren Road East and the private drive. She pointed out the accesses to the underground parking areas.

Ms. Landon explained other guest parking options that were considered. There would be lifts in the underground parking.

The public hearing was opened.

Ryan Kronzer, assistant director of the SWLRT, stated that:

- He was available for questions.
- He has met with the applicant to coordinate the development proposal and discuss grading and the shifting of Bren Road East. The location of stormwater utility pipes was adjusted to allow the building to be constructed in the proposed location.
- Retaining wall work may be delayed depending on how the road will shift and the type of shoring required.

No additional testimony was submitted and the hearing was closed.

Hanson appreciated staff's long-term view. There is quite a bit of action happening in the area. He agreed with staff's recommendation.

Sewall felt that staff's recommendation is reasonable. There are too many unknowns with the area on the north. The area could still be designated for dogs. As the SWLRT is

developed, the demand on parking may decrease. Having a 10-year vision for sidewalks will be beneficial. He supports the design and affordable housing component. He likes the look and supports staff's recommendation.

Henry noted that this type of housing is needed in the city, especially located near the SWLRT. It would provide a huge benefit to the city. He appreciated the thought the applicant put into the demographics of who would reside in the proposal. It is a strong proposal. He encouraged the applicant to consider providing underground guest parking to provide better access for people with disabilities. He supports approving the proposal with the conditions provided in staff's recommendation.

Luke agreed with commissioners. The building is well thought out. It takes into account a lot of living situations needed in Minnetonka. She agrees with staff's recommendation regarding sidewalks and keeping the easements. She appreciates planning for the future. It is a very good project and it would be good for the city.

Knight liked the appearance of the building. He was a little concerned with not having enough guest parking.

Chair Kirk felt that there would be enough parking on site because renters would not live there unless there would be enough parking for their vehicles. There may need to be a modification to create additional parking. He liked the design of the building and the use. He did not want funding the south trail to eliminate the applicant's ability to provide the same number of affordable and support units. The realignment of Bren Road East encumbered the positioning of the building. He liked the design and articulation of the building. The view of the architecture would be nice. The Opus trails are designed for a campus feel. The addition of the SWLRT would create a demand for pedestrians and bikers to get from one point to another. He supports the condition requiring the south sidewalk. He appreciates the product and the mix of housing.

Henry moved, second by Hanson, to recommend that the city council adopt the following pertaining to The Mariner at 10400, 10500, and 10550 Bren Road East:

- 1. An ordinance rezoning the property from B-2, limited business, to PUD, planned unit residential and adopting a master development plan.**
- 2. A resolution approving final site and building plans.**
- 3. A resolution approving preliminary and final plats.**

Sewall, Hanson, Henry, Knight, Luke, and Kirk voted yes. Powers was absent. Motion carried.

9. Adjournment

Knight moved, second by Henry, to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

By: _____
Lois T. Mason
Planning Secretary