

**Unapproved
Minnetonka Planning Commission
Minutes**

Sept. 19, 2019

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

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

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

3. Approval of Agenda

Knight moved, second by Sewall, to approve the agenda as submitted with a modification provided in the change memo dated Sept. 19, 2019.

Henry, Knight, Luke, Sewell, and Kirk voted yes. Hanson and Powers were absent. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes: Sept. 5, 2019

Sewall moved, second by Henry, to approve the Sept. 5, 2019 meeting minutes as submitted.

Henry, Knight, Luke, Sewell, and Kirk voted yes. Hanson and Powers were absent. Motion carried.

5. Report from Staff

Gordon briefed the commission on land use applications considered by the city council at its meeting of Sept. 16, 2019:

- Adopted a resolution approving an accessory apartment on Stanton Drive.
- Adopted a resolution approving the final plat for Highwood Ridge.
- Adopted a resolution approving an accessory apartment on Westmill Road.
- Adopted a resolution approving a medical clinic on Whitewater Drive.
- Adopted a resolution approving the final plat for the Bird Song residential development.
- Introduced an ordinance amendment regarding lot-behind-lots.

- Introduced an ordinance amendment regarding items for the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office.
- Reviewed a concept plan for Villas at Woodhill.
- Reviewed a concept plan for Solbekken.
- Authorized design work for Ridgedale Park.

The second of four meetings is being held tonight to discuss ideas for city-owned property on Co. Rd. 101 and Covington Road. There will be two more meetings held in Oct.

The next planning commission meeting is scheduled to be held Oct. 3, 2019.

6. Report from Planning Commission Members

Henry noted that the house located on the Bird Song development site and designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr. will be preserved and moved to a new location in PA.

7. Public Hearings: Consent Agenda

No items were removed from the consent agenda for discussion or separate action.

Luke moved, second by Henry, to approve the items listed on the consent agenda as recommended in the respective staff reports as follows:

A. Front yard setback variance for a roof addition to the existing detached garage at 3910 Baker Road.

Adopt the resolution approving a front yard setback variance for a roof addition to the existing detached garage at 3910 Baker Road.

B. Front yard setback variance and expansion permit for a garage and living space addition at 16708 Seymour Drive.

Adopt the resolution approving the variance and expansion permit for a covered front stoop and home addition at 16708 Seymour Drive.

C. Expansion permit for an addition within the rear yard setback at 5208 Woodhill Road.

Adopt the resolution approving a rear yard setback expansion permit to construct a home addition at 5208 Woodhill Road.

D. Side setback variance for a living space addition at 16030 Woodland Curve.

Adopt the resolution approving an aggregate side yard setback variance for an addition onto the existing home at 16030 Woodland Curve.

E. Ordinance amending City Code 400.300, Subd. 6(3) pertaining to lot-behind-lot standards.

Recommend that the city council adopt the ordinance amendment.

Henry, Knight, Luke, Sewell, and Kirk voted yes. Hanson and Powers were absent. Motion carried and the items on the consent agenda were approved as submitted.

Chair Kirk stated that an appeal of the planning commission's decision regarding Items 7A, 7B, 7C, and 7D must be made in writing to the planning division within 10 days. Item 7E is scheduled to be reviewed by the city council Oct. 7, 2019.

8. Public Hearings

A. Amendment to the Minnetonka Corporate Center sign plan at 6050 Clearwater Drive.

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.

Rick Ferraro, Spectrum Sign Systems, applicant, stated that Thomas did an excellent job covering the main points of the request. The business has thousands of patients and visitors who travel to the site every year, so identifying the facility from the major roadways is extremely important. He was available for questions.

Henry asked if the sign design was done with way-finding in mind. Mr. Ferraro answered that a rebranding is occurring system wide to make the sign more readable.

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

Chair Kirk noted that it would be easier to read the proposed sign.

Sewall moved, second by Knight, to adopt the resolution amending the Minnetonka Corporate Center sign plan as it pertains to the building at 6050 Clearwater Drive.

Henry, Knight, Luke, Sewell, and Kirk voted yes. Hanson and Powers were absent. Motion carried.

B. Variances to expand the parking lot at 5400 Opportunity Court.

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.

Bill Marceau, owner of 5400 Opportunity Court, stated that more office space has replaced warehouse space in the building. He thanked staff for their support and help putting in the right number of parking stalls on the north side. He appreciated the commissioners' consideration. He was available for questions.

Henry was curious if the creek waters encroached on the property during the storm in 1987. Mr. Marceau answered in the negative. He recalled 17 inches of rain fell in one day and 10 inches the next day, but the property and parking area did not flood.

Luke asked if the expanded parking area is necessary or if it was done just to comply with ordinance requirements. Mr. Marceau did not think the additional parking would be needed. The number of tenants in the building has been reduced from eight tenants to two tenants. The net effect has resulted in more parking spaces, but fewer employees to park there. The renovation would make the property look very nice when it is done.

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

Knight noted that Hwy 169 is different now than it was in 1987 and there is only one culvert traveling under Hwy 169. He questioned if the existing culvert would be able to handle the amount of water that fell in 1987. Cauley explained that the extension of Opportunity Court and the remaindering of the creek to the east were done after 1987 and would help handle water runoff. New water modeling will be done in Feb. of 2020.

Luke moved, second by Henry, to adopt the attached resolution approving variances to the setbacks and floodplain for a parking lot expansion at 5400 Opportunity Court with the modification provided in the change memo dated Sept. 19, 2019.

Henry, Knight, Luke, Sewell, and Kirk voted yes. Hanson and Powers were absent. Motion carried.

C. Items concerning the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office at 14300 Co. Rd. 62.

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

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

Tim Powers, project manager and architect, stated that:

- The new location and orientation of the building offers many advantages to the old site. He is happy with this alternative.

- The existing gate would be moved north.
- The current circulation would be utilized including the light on Hwy 62.
- The first right into the site would be for visitor parking.
- The traffic going east on the access road would be limited to Hennepin County Home School employees and deliveries to the home school and be designated as a fire lane.
- The existing access road would lead to staff parking. All of the parking areas would be secured with a six-foot-tall fence. There would be 21 visitor parking stalls.
- There is a 16-foot drop on the east side.
- Wetland buffer setback requirements would be met.

Jesse Symnykywica, landscape architect with Damon Farber, provided a presentation on landscape materials. He stated that:

- The fences and walls would appear as natural as possible. Wood would be used on the north side for a residential feel.
- The slope is being used as a natural barrier.
- He selected Minnesota-friendly trees including maple, birch, cottonwoods and white oak.
- The north side would have a lot of plants and trees including evergreens that would create a natural buffer.
- The vegetation would be sustainable. No irrigation would be needed.
- There would be more prairie grass and rain garden plantings than grass that would have to be mowed. The city hall campus has the same feel with sumac, dogwood and honeysuckle.
- A lot more trees would be preserved with this plan than the last one.

Luke asked how far it would be from the cottage to the back side of the building. Mr. Powers answered approximately 250 feet from the building to the south wall of the cottage. The south wall of the cottage would be significantly higher due to the topography. Landscaping and topography would create a buffer and prevent the need for a fence in that area. The cottage is one story. The building footprint would be about 58,000 square feet.

In response to Henry's questions, Mr. Powers stated that:

- There would be two retention ponds on each side of the visitor parking area. Those would end up being filters that would feed into the retention pond on the southeast side which has enough capacity for the entire site.
- The plants would be drought tolerant, so no irrigation would be needed.
- Light would not extend onto the home school site.
- The county forester helped select trees that would be drought tolerant.

In response to Chair Kirk's questions, Mr. Powers described the floor plan and courtyard area.

Yetka explained the city's pollinator ordinance that requires 25 percent of plantings to be pollinator friendly. She did not foresee a problem with the landscape plan.

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

Henry likes the relocation. It would be nice to keep the east side natural. He suggested reducing the carbon footprint of the building with a solar garden or other option.

Chair Kirk likes the new location. It fits well on the site.

Wischnack reviewed Hennepin County's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint on its website. Gordon noted that the county is committed to its buildings meeting B3 requirements which are a level higher than typical practices of sustainability and energy efficiency.

Sewall thought this would be a much better location for the building. It looks great. He supports staff's recommendation.

Henry moved, second by Knight, to recommend that the city council adopt the ordinance and resolutions approving the medical examiner's office located at 14300 Co. Rd. 62.

Henry, Knight, Luke, Sewell, and Kirk voted yes. Hanson and Powers were absent. Motion carried.

9. Adjournment

Sewall moved, second by Luke, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

By: _____
Lois T. Mason
Planning Secretary