

**Minnetonka
Planning Commission
Virtual Meeting
Minutes**

Feb. 4, 2021

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Powers, Waterman, Banks, Henry, Maxwell and Hanson were present. Sewall was absent.

Staff members present: City Planner Loren Gordon, Assistant City Planner Susan Thomas, and Information Technology Technicians Gary Wicks and Joona Sundstrom.

3. Approval of Agenda

Waterman moved, second by Powers, to approve the agenda as submitted with the addition of public comments received after the agenda was created and the removal of item 9B, concept plan for Bren Road Development at 10701 Bren Road East, in response to the applicant's request.

Powers, Waterman, Banks, Henry, Maxwell and Hanson voted yes. Sewall was absent. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes: Jan. 21, 2021

Henry moved, second by Powers, to approve the Jan. 21, 2021 meeting minutes as submitted.

Powers, Waterman, Henry, Maxwell and Hanson voted yes. Banks abstained. Sewall was absent. Motion carried.

5. Report from Staff

Gordon briefed the commission on land use applications considered by the city council at its meeting on Jan. 25, 2021:

- Adopted an ordinance repealing and replacing City Code 310.03, Telecommunications Facilities Regulations.
- Introduced an ordinance for items related to Minnetonka Station at 10400, 10500 and 10550 Bren Road East.
- Review of items concerning Dick's Sporting Goods was moved to the city council meeting on Feb. 8, 2021.
- Adopted a resolution approving the 2040 Comprehensive Guide Plan and Comprehensive Sewer Plan that was approved by the Metropolitan Council in

December 2020.

The next planning commission meeting is scheduled to be held Feb. 18, 2021.

6. Report from Planning Commission Members

Acting Chair Hanson asked for a good source to receive updates on the SWLRT. Gordon recommends the Metropolitan Council project page on the SWLRT Green Line Extension at metro council.org/transportation/projects/Light-Rail-Projects/Southwest-LRT. Gordon provided a brief update. The project is on track and fully funded, but has dealt with a few construction delays.

7. Public Hearings: Consent Agenda: None

8. Public Hearings: None

9. Other Business

A. Concept plan for Wooddale Builders at 16509 McGinty Road West.

Acting Chair Hanson introduced the proposal and called for the staff report.

Thomas reported. Staff recommends planning commissioners provide feedback on the key topics identified by staff and any other land-use-related items that commissioners deem appropriate. This discussion is intended to assist the applicant in preparation of more detailed development plans.

Paul Robinson, Bancor Group Vice President of Development, introduced Mike Steadman of Coldwell Banker and Steve Schwieters, owner of Wooddale Builders.

Mr. Schwieters gave a presentation with examples of past villa developments completed by Wooddale Builders.

Audrey Ice, representing the owners of the property, provided a history of the property. She supports the proposed plan, PUD rezoning request, and access to Lake Minnetonka. The surrounding properties have been rezoned to PUD.

Mr. Robinson reviewed the proposal. He stated that:

- The site is 13 acres in total. The development would be located on the upland portion. A wetland delineation was completed. The topography and drainage has been studied.
- All high priority and significant trees were identified.
- The proposal would have eight villa home sites. The average lot size would be 16,500 square feet with houses generally 3,200 square feet to 4,000 square feet in size.
- Access for a private road is being proposed from Bantas Point Road.

Locust Hills neighbors expressed opposition for a different connection that would access Locus Hills.

- Standard and innovative stormwater treatment methods would be utilized to protect 25 percent of the northeast corner of the property.
- The perimeter of the site would look similar to what it does now due to the trees that would be saved and planting of additional trees to increase the buffer around the perimeter along Bantas Point Road and McGinty Road West.
- A buffer would be created between the proposed homes and Locust Hills.
- The public benefits to justify planned unit development (PUD) zoning include saving more trees and allowing greater preservation of natural resources by protecting open space.
- There is a demand for and lack of empty-nest, single-family-villa units in Minnetonka. The density of two units per acre would be a public benefit to the city.
- The proposal would be similar to the area. Surrounding properties have PUD zoning. Locust Hills to the west utilized PUD zoning to gain flexibility with lot size and setback requirements. The Bantas Point neighborhood has lots averaging 15,000 square feet in size and have a variety of setbacks. The exception is the Grays Bay Landing neighborhood on the east which has mostly large lots.
- The proposal would like to maintain the existing channel access to Lake Minnetonka similar to maintenance completed for the Grays Bay Landing and channel to Crosby Cove. The proposal would be for eight docks. An environmental assessment worksheet would need to be approved to dredge the channel. A dock license would need to be granted by the LMCD.
- He provided a list of concerns expressed by neighbors.

Acting Chair Hanson invited members of the public to speak.

John Hinnenthal, 2401 Bantas Point Road, stated that:

- He urged commissioners to not change the zoning from R-1 to PUD. He saw no benefit for higher density on the roads and in the area.
- He opposed dredging of the channel. He did not want the wetland disturbed.
- The bridge is curved, humped, and the sight line is terrible. A docking area would create a safety concern.
- The second plan with the dock boarding the east side of the channel would be better from a safety standpoint.
- He appreciated the commission's time and attention.

Don Amorosi, 2368 Grays Landing Road, Wayzata, stated that:

- He is part of the Grays Landing Homeowners Association. Three

townhouses border the proposed property. He wants the nature to stay as it is now.

- He opposed the proposal.
- He has seen nothing larger than a kayak or canoe travel the channel.
- The road is dangerous. He heard that Bantas Point Road had an accident with a fatality.
- The docks would create a heightened opportunity for crime. The boat docks would be visible from McGinty Road and could be vandalized and looted.
- There would be no benefit except profit.
- Dredging would set a bad precedent. He was told he could not put a bubbler on the north side of his house. Dredging would cause more of an impact.
- The proposal would be an “attack on wildlife.” He is concerned for the fox, owls and deer.
- The channel has not been maintained in years and narrows to 15 feet in width in some parts.
- The proposal would cause overuse of the area.
- Dredging would destroy a beaver dam. The area is already over fished.
- Anyone could use the eight docks. A marina on the south side of Gray’s Landing is used by people from all over the city. The proposal would open up more access to them.
- The marina is less than a mile away and could be used to put boats in instead of dredging the channel.
- He was concerned with additional boats causing erosion and impacting groundwater quality.
- The PUD with villas valued at \$1 million would not create affordable housing.
- The property does not meet any of the requirements for dredging. The DNR and watershed district are designed to prevent “these types of activities” from happening.
- The proposal would exceed reasonable use of the property and would not meet environmental standards.
- He recommended commissioners vote to deny the proposal.

Ron Frick, 2511 Bantas Point Lane, stated that:

- He appreciated being able to meet with the developer in January and for the chance to speak today.
- He appreciated the comments regarding the wetland. Sandhill cranes nest in the area.
- He was concerned with safety on Bantas Point Road. The bridge curves and goes up. The proposal would make it worse.
- He was concerned with access to fire hydrants and fire safety.
- He looked forward to a more detailed plan to address the existing safety

issues of the road that would become worse with the addition of eight houses. It is difficult to see to the left when turning from Bantas Point Road to McGinty Road.

- A turn lane and sidewalk would be a big improvement.

Janine Flynn, 2533 Bantas Point Road, stated that:

- She attended the previous two meetings.
- She objects to the channel being dredged. It would create an environmental impact that would hurt the marsh ecosystem, destroy a beaver house, and have no positive effect. It would set a precedent. Dredging has not been allowed in 30 years.
- The vast majority of the property is not located in a public waterway, but is plotted land owned by the city of Minnetonka and Grays Landing Homeowners Association. She asked if the property owners have the right to reject the proposal.
- She requested the dredging not be allowed. It would be done at the expense of the neighbors and be a detriment to the environment.
- She appreciated the commission's time.

JoAnn Hinnenthal, 2401 Bantas Point Road, stated that:

- The number of deliveries made to the neighborhood has increased lately and caused an increase in traffic. She questioned if delivery drivers would travel on a private road.
- The road is narrow now. She is concerned with traffic safety when vehicles park on both sides of the existing street.
- She appreciates the commission's time.

Henry asked how the residents would reach the proposed docks. Mr. Robinson explained that has not yet been determined, but it looks like the safest option would be to create a boardwalk that would access the docks directly across from the access road. That would prevent the use of golf carts or the need for an access down by the bridge for which neighbors have expressed safety concerns.

Waterman asked for the differences between a villa and a typical single-family residence. Mr. Robinson explained that the proposed villas would be similar to those found in Locust Hills with a main floor that would provide everything needed to live. The master bedroom, office, kitchen, livingroom, bathroom, and laundry would be on the main floor. It would have a smaller footprint with bedrooms downstairs for when the kids visit.

Banks asked if there would be any other amenities. Mr. Robinson answered that the only amenity would be the docks and there would be open, green space in the corner that would have native vegetation.

Powers asked where vehicles would park during large gatherings. Mr. Robinson stated that parking would be allowed on one side of the street. The street would be the same size as the one in Locust Hills.

Maxwell asked what size of boats the docks would be designed to accommodate. Mr. Robinson understood the concerns of neighbors. The original intent was to accommodate boats up to 32 feet, but it would probably be limited to a boat of 24 feet to 26 feet.

Powers asked what the public benefit would be to change the zoning to PUD. Mr. Robinson answered preservation of high-priority trees and open space and providing villa-type housing which is a type that is lacking and in demand in Minnetonka.

Henry asked Mr. Robinson what would be the intended use of the open space. Mr. Robinson responded that the homeowners may choose to make it a picnic or recreation area. The open space would help maintain the natural feel of the area.

Maxwell stated that:

- She supports rezoning the site to a PUD. R-1 zoning requirements would prohibit preservation of the open space and many high-priority trees that would be saved by utilizing PUD zoning.
- She is comfortable with the number of houses and lot sizes. The buildable area ratio of the house to the lot size and the amount of impervious surface on the individual lots adjacent to the wetland need to be provided and reviewed in an application for a PUD.
- The proposal would not increase traffic significantly on the bridge, since the site is located north of the bridge.
- She supports the access being located on Bantas Point Road instead of McGinty Road West or Locust Hills.
- She appreciates the developer working with the topography of the site and designing the units with walkout basements to fit the elevation and leaving the undeveloped green space on the northeast corner. That is important.
- She would be fine with Plan B creating a green, native-vegetation space with no designated use. That would be detailed enough to show the public benefit.
- She appreciates the tree plan and mitigation plan which would provide a buffer between the street and the houses.
- She disliked the environmental impact that could be caused by dredging and the increase in impervious surface.
- She suggested adding a description of how the plan would address the neighbors' primary concerns in the next presentation.

Waterman stated that:

- He agrees with Maxwell in regard to site design and road considerations.
- He thinks he supports the PUD. The proposed housing type is desirable to the city and is a reason to rezone a property to a PUD.
- The developer would be able to save more high-priority trees with the PUD. It appears that the proposal works with the spirit of the PUD to improve a development rather than circumvent ordinance requirements.
- Many of the neighbors' concerns deal with dredging the channel and the developer is already working with the neighbors to address those concerns.

Powers stated that:

- He did not see a strong case to support a PUD.
- This area of Minnetonka is all about environment. It has a character all its own. Locust Hills does not blend in well. He thought maintaining the R-1 zoning would be suitable for the area.
- He would rather see two to five additional trees removed than more of the site covered by impervious surface.

Henry stated that:

- He appreciated commissioners' and the applicants' comments.
- He understood that adding to the diversity of housing stock and saving trees are a public benefit.
- He thought more trees could be saved with R-1 zoning.
- R-1 zoning would fit in better with the neighborhood.
- The private street design for the eight houses would be fine, but the eight families walking across the road to the docks would alter the character of the neighborhood and have an environmental impact.
- Eight houses would be too many.
- He did not see a compelling case to change the zoning to PUD.
- He appreciated that there would be a separate road into the houses. He would like the number of houses that R-1 zoning would allow.

Banks stated that:

- He agreed with Maxwell and Powers. He was on the fence. The concept has a lot of good aspects, but needs work.
- He questioned how the proposal benefits the public and surrounding community.
- The site looks like it could support eight houses.
- The proposal would not significantly increase the traffic in the area. The access point would not cause the proposed residences' traffic to cross the bridge.

- He looks forward to an application that would address the neighbors' concerns and feedback from commissioners. The proposal could be made more conducive to deserving a PUD.

Acting Chair Hanson stated that:

- He commends Mr. Robinson and the development team for hosting a virtual meeting with the neighbors.
- He felt eight houses would look tight for the site. He suggested removing houses one and four to allow more room on the south side.
- Trees are important to Minnetonka.
- He was fine with the road as proposed.
- He would love to see the applicant address neighbors' concerns half way. He was not sold that this type of housing stock, of expensive single-family houses, is in great need.

Acting Chair Hanson thanked Mr. Robinson and his team for their time.

B. Concept plan for Bren Road Development at 10701 Bren Road East.

This item was removed from the agenda at the applicant's request.

9. Adjournment

Powers moved, second by Banks, to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

By: _____
Lois T. Mason
Planning Secretary