

**MINUTES  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE  
JULY 27, 2020**

The regular monthly meeting of the White Bear Lake Planning Commission was called to order on Monday, July 27, 2020, beginning at 7:00 p.m. via WebEx, pursuant to a statement issued by the Mayor under Minnesota Statutes, section 13D.021 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, by Chair Ken Baltzer.

**1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ken Baltzer, Jim Berry, Pamela Enz, Mark Lynch, Erich Reinhardt (7:02 p.m.) and Peter Reis.

MEMBERS EXCUSED: None.

MEMBERS UNEXCUSED: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Anne Kane, Community Development Director, Samantha Crosby, Planning & Zoning Coordinator, Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist, and Ashton Miller, Planning Technician.

OTHERS PRESENT: Tim Kuhnmuensch, Charles Lowell, Chad Lowell, Warren Peyton, Becky Nelson, and Cheryl Arcand.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE JULY 27, 2020 AGENDA:**

Member Reis moved for approval of the agenda. Member Lynch seconded the motion, and the agenda was approved (6-0).

**3. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 29, 2020 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES:**

Member Berry moved for approval of the minutes. Member Enz seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved (6-0).

**4. CASE ITEMS:**

A. **Case No. 94-6-Sa & 20-9-V:** A request by **Birch Lake Animal Hospital** for an amendment to a Conditional Use Permit, per Code Section 1303.225, Subd.6.a, for site plan approval in the Diversified Business Development District, and a variance from the 30% impervious surface maximum to allow 38% impervious, per Code Section 1303.230, Subd.5.a.5, in order to expand the parking lot by six stalls for the property located at 4830 White Bear Parkway. **(Continued from June 29, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting).**

Crosby explained the changes that were made to accommodate the neighbors' concerns surrounding the case. Staff recommended approval.

Member Lynch wondered if the native plantings along the steep slope would happen naturally or if they would need to be installed as part of the landscaping plan. Crosby confirmed that would need to be part of a planting plan submitted to staff for approval.

Member Berry asked if the residents who attended last month's public hearing had been informed of the proposed changes. Crosby replied that she provided the plans and staff report to Ms. Larey, and has not received any comments back regarding the design change.

Member Baltzer opened the public hearing. As no attendees wished to speak, Member Baltzer closed the public hearing.

Member Lynch moved to recommend approval of Case No. 94-6-Sa & 20-9-V. Member Reis seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

- B. **Case No. 20-3-SHOP:** A request by **Tracy Corcoran** for a Special Home Occupation Permit, per Code Section 1302.120, in order to operate a pet aquamation business out of the detached garage at the property located at 4911 Morehead Avenue. **(WITHDRAWN BY APPLICANT)**.
- C. **Case No. 20-11-V:** A request by **Charles Lowell** for a 19 foot variance from the 80 foot lot width requirement for a duplex in the R-5 zoning district, per Code Section 1303.070, Subd.b.2, and two one foot variances from the ten foot side yard setback from both side property lines, per Code Section 1303.070, Subd.5.c.2, in order to construct a 43 foot wide duplex on a 61 foot wide lot at the property located at 2189 12th Street.

Miller discussed the case. Staff recommended approval.

Member Baltzer opened the public hearing. As no attendees wished to speak, Member Baltzer closed the public hearing.

Member Reis moved to recommend approval of Case No. 20-11-V. Member Berry seconded the motion. Kane asked the Commissioners if they would like to consider the neighbor to the west's request for a privacy fence.

Member Reis amended his motion to recommend approval of Case No. 20-11-V with the condition that a privacy fence be erected along the west property line. Member Berry seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

- D. **Case No. 20-12-V:** A request by **Warren and Amanda Peyton** for a two foot variance from the four foot height limit for a fence in the front yard, per Code Section 1302.030, Subd.6.h.4, in order to construct a six foot tall fence along a portion of the north property line at the property located at 1943 Oak Knoll Drive.

Miller discussed the case. Staff recommended approval.

Member Baltzer opened the public hearing. As no attendees wished to speak, Member Baltzer closed the public hearing.

Member Enz moved to recommend approval of Case No. 20-12-V. Member Berry seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

- E. **Case No. 20-13-V:** A request by **Lakewood Place Apartments** for a 12 stall parking variance, per Code Section 1302.050, Subd.8.c, and a six unit density variance, per Code Section 1303.080, Subd.7.e, in order to convert six apartments from 2 and 3 bedrooms into 12 apartments: nine 1-bedrooms and three studio units, at the property located at 3100 Glen Oaks Avenue.

Crosby discussed the case. Staff recommended approval.

Member Reis commented that this was a unique solution to a conversation the Planning Commission has been having for a while about the City's need and desire for more affordable housing. Three new affordable units are being created without changing the footprint of the building. He wondered if it would be prudent to encourage other apartment complexes to convert several of their two and three bedroom units to one bedroom or studio apartments. He thought, if feasible, this could result in a win-win-win scenario where new affordable units are created, there is an increase in cash flow to apartment owners, and an increase in the tax base for the City.

Kane acknowledged that it is a great strategy in developing more affordable housing and that staff would like to consider the opportunity, while remaining cognizant that two and three bedroom units are highly desirable for larger families.

Member Baltzer opened the public hearing. As no attendees wished to speak, Member Baltzer closed the public hearing.

Member Reis moved to recommend approval of Case No. 20-13-V. Member Enz seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

- F. **Case No. 17-1-CP:** Consideration of comments from adjacent and relevant jurisdictions on the final draft of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and recommendation for submittal to Metropolitan Council for review.

Kane discussed the case, explaining each of the comments from the various jurisdictions.

Member Baltzer opened the public hearing. As no attendees wished to speak, Member Baltzer closed the public hearing.

Member Baltzer complimented staff for all the hard work that has been put into creating the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Member Berry moved to recommend approval of Case No. 17-1-CP. Member Reis seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

- G. Consideration of the conveyance of the property located at 4969 Division Avenue to White Bear Lake School District No. 624 to ensure that it is in keeping with the City's Comprehensive Plan guiding this property for Public/Semi-Public Use.

Kane discussed the case.

Member Berry moved to recommend confirmation that the use at 4969 Division Avenue as educational facilities is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan. Member Enz seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

**5. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**A.** City Council Meeting Minutes of July 14, 2020.

No discussion

**B.** Park Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes of May 21, 2020.

Member Berry explained that the Willow Marsh Park Reserve has a large clump of Japanese Knotweed surrounding the footpath that leads to the park as well as the eventual Bruce Vento Trail. Found along Fair Oaks Drive, the large, invasive species is almost 12 feet tall and about 30 feet deep into the preserve. It takes over everything and kills trees.

Kane noted that one of the comments received on the Comprehensive Plan from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was to let the agency know when invasive species are found within the city, so Member Berry's concerns will be forwarded to the DNR. She agreed that it is important to maintain the connections, so when the Bruce Vento Trail extends north, clearly marked access points are available to residents.

**6. ADJOURNMENT:**

Member Berry moved to adjourn, seconded by Member Enz. The motion passed unanimously (6-0), and the July 27, 2020 Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.