

**MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE
November 27, 2017**

The regular monthly meeting of the White Bear Lake Planning Commission was called to order on Monday, November 27, 2017, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the White Bear Lake City Hall Council Chambers, 4701 Highway 61, White Bear Lake, Minnesota by Chair Jim Berry.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Jim Berry, Erich Reinhardt, Mary Alice Divine, Ken Baltzer and Mark Lynch.

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Marvin Reed and Peter Reis.

MEMBERS UNEXCUSED: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Anne Kane, Community Development Director, Samantha Crosby, Planning & Zoning Coordinator and Amy Varani, Recording Secretary.

OTHERS PRESENT: Emily Shubitz, Meggan Burak, Linda Henry, Ross Carter, John Moriarty, Kim Schwietz, Mike Oase, John Johansson, Mitch Avery, Jason Stiefel, Mike Edgett and Wally Lindemann.

2. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 27, 2017 AGENDA:

Member Lynch moved for approval of the agenda. Member Baltzer seconded the motion, and the revised agenda was approved (5-0).

3. APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 30, 2017 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES:

Member Baltzer moved for approval of the minutes. Member Reinhardt seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved (5-0).

4. CASE ITEMS:

A. Case No. 17-2-PUD, 17-4-CUP and 17-23-V: A request by **Violet Montessori** for a Conditional Use Permit for a day care facility; a 30-foot variance from the 30-foot front yard setback requirement along Murray Avenue to allow the fence and play area in a front yard; and, "General Concept" & "Development Plan" stage approval of a Planned Unit Development for signage to allow projecting signs; all in order to allow the establishment and operation of a Montessori School and Parent Resource Center for the property located at 2025 4th Street.

Crosby discussed the case. The day care would have a maximum of 20 children – 8 infants and 12 toddlers; the parent resource center would have a maximum of 10 students. Staff recommends approval of all the aspects of the request, all subject to the conditions listed in the staff report.

Crosby stated that the code defines all sides which abut a public street as a front yard. She also indicated that there would be only two lights that would shine down from the projecting signs.

Lynch encouraged the use of bike racks.

Berry opened the public hearing.

Emily Shubitz and Meggan Burak came up to speak. Shubitz stated that they are the two that want to open the Montessori with the hope that it will bring the community together. She likes the idea of the bike racks. The Montessori will be environmentally friendly. They're excited to get to know everybody in the community a little more. She has lived here for many years and has three daughters that go to school at White Bear Montessori.

As no one else came up to speak, Berry closed the public hearing.

Member Lynch moved to recommend approval of Case No. 17-2-PUD, 17-4-CUP and 17-23-V. Member Divine seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

- B. Case No. 17-5-CUP:** A request by **Division 25, LLC** on behalf of **Lund's and Byerly's** for Development Stage Planned Unit Development (PUD) approval for Tower Crossing – Phase II to permit a 47,000 square foot grocery store for the property located at 4630 Centerville Road.

Kane discussed the case. She stated that the site was zoned PZ-Performance Zone. It is an 8.4 acre mixed-use Planned Unit Development ("PUD") under development by Division 25 LLC for a 47,000 square foot Lund's & Byerly's grocery store. She gave a history of the PUD designation for both Phase I and Phase II. The applicant is here this evening seeking Final PUD approval for Phase II of the Tower Crossings PUD.

Kane explained that the City's Comprehensive Plan guides this property for "High Density Residential". As proposed, Tower Crossings is a two-phase mixed-use PUD comprised of residential in Phase I to the north and retail commercial in this final phase.

Kane stated that the Internal Service Drive plays a critical role in accommodating and funneling the traffic of other surrounding businesses. The drive is maintained on the site plan for Phase II and incorporates the 90 degree turns depicted in the original concept intended to calm traffic as it moves through the site. Reduced setbacks are consistent with the zoning flexibility afforded through the PUD process

and results in a more unified and efficient land use pattern.

Regarding building elevations, Kane stated that the new building will incorporate strong architectural features.

For parking and circulation, Kane stated that at 42,500 NFA this use is required to provide 212 stalls, including 8 handicap accessible spaces. A total of 192 including 8 accessible spaces are provided. The second deviation that the applicant is requesting is 10 x 18 foot parking stalls, which many municipalities permit by right.

In relation to the landscaping, Kane indicated that with the increased building size and parking, there is a reduced area to incorporate the required landscaping on site. However, staff worked with the applicant to make adjustments to increase the material sizes and quantities.

Kane addressed enhancing the pedestrian connection to the south. Staff's desire has been to strengthen the pedestrian connection internal to the site, and there is a condition 4.a towards such end. However, there are some concerns about the existing grade and making sure that's a safe transition. She believes the developer may prefer to bring the sidewalk back out to Centerville Road so that pedestrians are utilizing that frontage to access retail properties to the south, including Tires Plus, Walgreens and McDonald's. There will probably be some pedestrians that will take a shortcut, but if they can be accommodated in the public right-of-way, that is a desirable result.

Kane explained the plans depict a right turn to access the parking lot immediately upon entering the shared internal drive from Centerville Road. Lund's & Byerly's cite this as an opportunity to relieve some of the traffic that otherwise would need to travel in front of their store. Customers can access parking spaces upon entering the site or utilize a secondary route to adjoining businesses. A signage and striping plan will be necessary for this right turn and it may be necessary to provide an additional entry aisle to accommodate this.

Kane discussed the truck turning template, as well as the Easement Encroachment and Vacation Exhibits.

Regarding signage, the sign plan for the east elevation is contingent on MnDOT permitting removal of plant growth to the east of the store. The overall sign package is sophisticated and subtle and staff has no objections with the increased square footage proposed.

Kane discussed the 2016 Traffic Impact Study. Given the floor area reduction of the current applicant's proposal, staff requested the Traffic Impact Study be updated to reflect its impact on the area roadway network over the previous proposal. The current development proposal projects 470 PM peak hour trips (a 31% reduction) and 5,100 daily trips (a 32% reduction) on the surrounding roadway network over the previous proposed. The increased traffic can be safely accommodated with modifications to both Highway 96 and Centerville Road. One modification is a new northbound travel lane to the entry drive. Second is installation of a traffic signal at

the new intersection, which is warranted based on existing volumes and the addition of the increased traffic associated with the development of Mrs. Lande's property. Third is the timing of the signals along Highway 96 to optimize their operation. Staff understands Ramsey County intends to do so in the next couple of years.

Kane stated that a fourth modification includes changes to the median on Centerville Road. Ramsey County has full jurisdiction on any modifications to the roadway, and the site plan for the Tower Crossings PUD is not impacted one way or the other if a full/modified/no median is approved by the County. This long-anticipated development of Mrs. Lande's property offers the opportunity to provide relief for traffic generated by the commercial users on the east side, within the City's jurisdiction.

Kane stated that staff recommends approval of the Development Phase Approval for Phase II of the Tower Crossings PUD when subject to the conditions outlined in the draft Resolution of Approval.

Divine asked about the green highlighted area on the median exhibit – was that there for the last proposal? Kane stated no. She explained that when it got to the Planning Commission last time, the Ramsey County traffic engineer had not made a determination on the median. Cub expressed a lot of concerns about having traffic from Meadowlands Drive cut through in front of their building. Kane believes Ramsey County heard that message. They accommodated another business request to maintain that left turn out onto northbound Centerville Road. Divine is glad to see that.

Divine asked about the left turn lane that currently goes into Meadowlands Drive. Kane stated if traveling northbound on Centerville Road, or coming from the east on Highway 96, one would either stay on Highway 96 or turn left onto 96 to access Meadowlands Drive from an internal side drive, between Arby's and Auto Zone. Medians can't be changed without changing traffic patterns.

Divine questioned if there'll be a left turn lane into Cub at the stop light. Kane answered yes. Divine asked if there's been any discussion about evening that out, because it isn't aligned right now. Kane replied that Ramsey County will identify if any curbs need to be modified.

Divine questioned who pays for the traffic light and the median. Kane stated that Ramsey County has agreed to pay for the median modifications. They indicated that they won't pay anything for the traffic light, as it serves private businesses. Staff is trying to find a funding mechanism that works for every benefitting party, so that they pay their share. The County has two legs on this intersection and two private commercial developments. The arrangements for the payment of the signalized intersection have not been ironed out. The right turn into Lund's is being paid 100% by the developer. The sidewalk is eligible for a 50/50 share with Ramsey County. There will be a funding agreement before any work begins.

Baltzer asked if there's a U-turn at the north intersection. Kane stated that one of Ramsey County's comments was to change the geometrics on that north

intersection so that U-turns are allowed there.

Lynch stated that it would be nice if southbound at Highway 96 and northbound at the new signal a sign saying "U-Turns Allowed" could be put in. It would help people from all directions figure out where they're supposed to go.

Lynch asked about the lights in the parking lot. Kane indicated that the lights are on 22' poles on a 2' base. It's consistent with what was approved for Phase I.

Lynch asked about the 30' utility easement. If something needs to be torn up, how do deliveries get made? Kane stated that there is a reciprocal easement agreement between the City, White Bear Heights, and Lund's & Byerly's. This would be given the highest priority for repairs.

Lynch indicated that he likes the quick right-in. It will be very helpful. He's impressed with the September 2018 opening date.

Kane discussed an e-mail received from Tom Moriarity and his brothers representing properties to the south, a copy of which was provided at the dais. A lot of the issues regarding grading and drainage would be ironed out as part of the site development permit process.

Berry opened the public hearing.

John Johansson, Division 25, Welsh Companies, 4350 Baker Road, Minnetonka, came up to speak. They're delighted to be here and hopefully welcome Lund's & Byerly's to White Bear Lake. With him here tonight are Mitch Avery with Lund's & Byerly's; he has a team of people with him. Also, their partners and consultants from Alliant Engineering are here. The contractor is ready to break ground right after city approval and continue with construction through the winter and summer. They've met with the County several times.

Johansson referred to condition #4A in the staff report. The sidewalk moving out to Centerville Road would meet that condition. They want to continue the Phase I sidewalk that runs between the senior housing building and Centerville Road, and continue that along their property. Eventually, Tires Plus and Walgreens will have to put a sidewalk in as well.

Regarding landscaping, Johansson stated that they will add the calipers to the trees. They need cooperation with MnDOT to remove scrub growth within the I-35E corridor. They would replant. Otherwise, they may need to put up a pylon sign.

For the 5 foot encroachment into the easement, Johansson stated that they accept the conditions. It's extremely rare that new utility lines fail, at least within the first 40 or 50 years. The reality is that every commercial property is surrounded by utility lines. If something unforeseen happens, they'll deal with it.

Johansson talked about the traffic improvements on Centerville Road. They are very hopeful that the County and neighboring property owners understand the

improvements. They may not like all the improvements, but they're necessary for safety. They are thankful for the City's assistance in helping to find some funding vehicles, hopefully with the County. They'll absorb their share.

Regarding the U turn at the new traffic light, Johansson welcomes it very much. It's a very slow turn on a controlled light.

Johansson stated that there are three utility poles along the frontage. They'll bury them if there is room. The issue with Connexus is that there are so many utilities running through there in the right-of-way.

Mitch Avery, Lund's Food Holdings, 3946 W. 50th Street, Edina, came up to speak. He introduced their development team. Avery stated that the family-owned and operated Lund's started in 1939. They are a good neighbor. They think their customer lives here in White Bear Lake and they love the community. He explained the type of food that the grocery store and Creations Café will have and what they will be like. The building will have beautiful exterior walls, and the building will be similar to the Edina store. With the replacement of scrub trees with new plantings on the east side, they won't have the need for a large pylon sign. They put together a minimal sign package. They want to be open by the end of September of 2018. The shopping hours and times for their customers are spread out, and there will be a spread out traffic flow. They want wider parking stalls, and safety and security in front of the store. The right turn lane coming in is very important to them. They appreciate the welcoming they've had from city staff.

Divine asked what the hours will be. Avery responded the hours will be 6 a.m. – midnight. Creations café will be open pretty much the same hours.

Linda Henry, Jonquil Lane in White Bear Township, came up to speak. Three towns meet at this intersection. She avoids it; it needs to be fixed. She is concerned about the traffic and overdevelopment causing environmental damage. It affects the quality of life for them and future residents. They don't need another grocery store in the area, as there are others nearby. No taxpayer money should be spent on construction that will further reduce the flow of traffic, pollute the air and harm the land.

Michael Oase, Kowalski's, 8505 Valley Creek Road, stated their concerns with the construction and road changes. They want to protect their customers and want to make sure they have the access they need to their parking lot, Centerville Road and Meadowlands Drive. The traffic signal is going in because of the new development. They think there are some benefits; but there's also drawbacks such as traffic stacking in their parking lot, and a U-turn at the median, which will create slowdowns for people wanting to go south out of their parking lot onto Centerville Road.

Divine talked about Meadowlands Drive. She stated that maybe there needs to be some re-education to Cub's customers. Oase stated that their primary concern is people being able to go North on Centerville Road.

John Moriarity, owner of White Oak Development, 4600 Centerville Road, came up

to speak. More traffic for them is good traffic. They are excited about Lund's & Byerly's coming in. He is concerned about some of the traffic and the elevation. The grade for the internal service drive is pretty steep, with the ramp starting on their property. He referred to the traffic study; there are no counts for projected traffic that will go up the ramp.

Kane responded that the counts don't look at internal traffic impacts. It examines impacts onto the adjoining roadway network.

Moriarity wondered if Lund's knows what their internal counts are. He likes the outlet that they are putting in. He'd like to see an engineer look at that.

Kane responded that the city engineer will be looking at it through the permitting process.

Moriarity would like it if the developer can curve the road.

Johansson talked about the grade. It's not so steep that it's uncomfortable, it is consistent with the grade of Walgreen's existing driveway to Centerville Road.

As no one else came up to speak, Berry closed the public hearing.

Reinhardt talked about the road between Arby's and Auto Zone. Can a sign be installed directing people on Highway 96 to take that road as opposed to Centerville Road?

Kane thinks that's a great idea. It could be temporary directional signage that remains sometime after the road improvements are made to provide additional way-finding signage for motorists. However, she doesn't know what the County's position is with identifying commercial businesses within a public right-of-way.

Lynch stated that he likes this design and proposal. He thinks it's very well thought out. He likes the improvements that have come through on Centerville Road. It solves a lot of problems. He likes the fact that densification is happening, because it means that people don't have to drive as far to where they'd like to shop. He thinks it's good for competition too. His one concern is the drive aisle through the front. It seems a little tight, but that will help people slow down, which makes it safer. The U-turns and left turns on Centerville Road will help the circulation. He likes this a lot.

Member Batlzer moved to recommend approval of Case No. 17-5-CUP. Member Reinhardt seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

C. Case No. 17-1-LS: A request by **Betsy Larey** to split one lot into two for the property located at 1298 N. Birch Lake Boulevard.

Crosby discussed the case. Staff supports the request, subject to the standard conditions.

Berry opened the public hearing. As no one came up to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Member Reinhardt moved to recommend approval of Case No. 17-1-LS. Member Baltzer seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. City Council Meeting Minutes of November 14, 2017.

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B. Park Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes from October 19, 2017.

Kane stated that the last Park Commission meeting was held at the November 16th open house for the South Shore Boulevard Trail design that was conducted at South Shore Trinity Lutheran church. There was a good turnout, although only one resident from County Road F signed in. The City, the Township and Ramsey County are working together to do a very preliminary design on how to extend the trail, as part of the Lake Links Trail Connection program. They are looking at one-way streets, so she'd encourage the Planning Commissioners, if they have thoughts on that, to attend the next open house on December 7th at 5:30 p.m. at South Shore Trinity Lutheran church.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

Member Lynch moved to adjourn, seconded by Member Reinhardt. The motion passed unanimously (5-0), and the November 27, 2017 Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.