

MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE
February 26, 2018

The regular monthly meeting of the White Bear Lake Planning Commission was called to order on Monday, February 26, 2018, 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, Marvin Reed, Ken Baltzer, Mark Lynch, and Erich Reinhardt.

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Peter Reis, and Mary Alice Divine

MEMBERS UNEXCUSED: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Anne Kane, Community Development Director; and, Samantha Crosby, Planning & Zoning Coordinator

OTHERS PRESENT: Neil Tessier, Bernie Reiland, Bryan Zimmerman, and Dan Engebretson

2. APPROVAL OF THE FEBURARY 26, 2018 AGENDA:

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

3. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 29, 2018 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES:

Chair Jim Berry questioned if any members had any additions or changes to the January 29, 2018 minutes. No comments or changes were made.

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

4. CASE ITEMS:

A. Case No. 15-1-Sa2: A request by **Northern Tool and Equipment** for an Amendment to an approved Planned Unit Development, per Code Section 1303.170, to increase the exterior display area of large size merchandise from six to fifteen parking stalls, for the property located at 3201 White Bear Avenue.

Crosby discussed the case. Staff recommended approval of the Planned Unit Development Amendment subject to conditions.

Berry opened the public hearing.

Dan Engebretson, Director of Real Estate for Northern Tool and Equipment, commented on staff's concerns about the diversity of items to be displayed in the exterior display area. He stated that they often times have multiples of one product, for which they know has high demand and will easily sell. Engebretson stated that if they do not have the items available on hand, then they will lose sales to the competition. He stated that they currently have 10 trailers on display, with three (3) of one model at the store. He asked that the commission please take this fact into account and then he thanked them for their consideration.

Reinhardt asked how retailers, like Home Depot, sell their trailers if they do not have them parked outside. Engebretson replied that other retailers, like Home Depot, will bring the items in as seasonal items. Engebretson then stated that most large retailers will have an enclosed display area near the lawn and garden section of the store.

Reinhardt asked if that is how Sam's Club sells their trailers. Engebretson stated that Sam's Club does not have an enclosed display area; therefore, they will often times put these items outside the automotive section of the store.

Baltzer asked if they track the sales history to determine the need for having a particular type of trailer on display. Engebretson responded yes, and stated that in fact they conduct market research in advance to see what trailers will sell and where their highest demand is coming from.

Baltzer then asked if Engebretson could state what the maximum number of duplicates would be at one time. Engebretson replied that he was comfortable saying that the maximum number of duplicates would be three (3) on any given month.

Reed asked if there were any other designated indoor storage areas on site. Engebretson replied no, the exterior area under discussion was their only storage area.

Baltzer asked if the trailers were stored overnight, and if they were locked up. Engebretson stated that they were stored overnight and locked up.

Reed inquired about the location of their distribution center. Engebretson stated that they get the trailers directly from the manufacturers and that they only get shipments every two weeks. He then stated that this is different from other retailers, like Home Depot who, because of their volume, have more leverage on when they can order shipments.

Baltzer asked which end of the lot was the storage area located and what portion of the 15-stall area would be used for used for storing trailers. Engebretson replied that the storage area was located at the west end and he clarified that all 15 stalls would be used for storing trailers. He then stated that they were requesting to allow for seasonal items such as log splitters to be stored in the place of a trailer.

Baltzer confirmed that there would be no more than three (3) duplicate models of trailers on display at once. Engebretson agreed with this statement, and he commented that although some of the trailers may look very similar, there are slight variations from model to model, such as capacity.

Reinhardt inquired if trailer sales were becoming a large part of their business. Engebretson replied that trailer sales are certainly a growing part of their business. He then stated that over all, trailer sales were less than 10 percent of their total sales.

Reinhardt commented that when this request originally came through the commission for approval, he had assumed there would be items beyond just trailers displayed in the area. Engebretson stated that because they have room inside the store for those smaller items, they don't really need anything beyond trailers outside.

As no one else came forward, Berry closed the public hearing.

Reinhardt asked if the City has received any calls of complaint or concerns from the residents. Crosby responded that we have not.

Lynch voiced a concern that if the sales were to go well, then he thought the applicants might be back again to request another amendment to allow for more than three (3) duplicates. He then stated that, if this were the case, he would like if they were to come back and request another amendment in the future.

Baltzer moved to recommend approval of Case No. 15-1-Sa2, with an amendment to condition 5.d, that the number of duplicate items not exceed 3. Member Reed seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Berry explained that this matter would be addressed by the City Council on March 13, 2018.

B. Case No. 18-2-V: A request by St. Pius X Catholic Church for seven variances in order to reconstruct the existing parking lots:

- i. A 24-foot variance from the 30-foot hard-surface setback required along Highland Avenue, per code section 1302.050, Subd.4.17.a.1;
- ii. A 30-foot variance from the 40-foot hard-surface setback required along Cedar Avenue, per 1303.050, Subd.6.e;
- iii. A 7-foot variance from the 40-foot hard-surface setback required along Kinglsey Avenue, per the same;
- iv. A 31-stall variance from the 244-stall parking requirement, per 1302.050, Subd.8;
- v. A 14-tree variance from the requirement for 39 trees around the perimeter of the parking lot, per 1302.050, Subd.4.h.16;
- vi. A 361-shrub variance from the requirement for 361 shrubs around the parking lot perimeter, per 1302.050, Subd.4.h.16; and
- vii. A variance to allow 4 of the internal island trees to be evergreens instead of shade trees per 1302.050, Subd.4.h.16;

for the property located at 3878 Highland Avenue.

Crosby discussed the case. Staff recommended approval of the seven variances subject to conditions.

Lynch inquired about the details of 3881 Highland and the parking agreement that was described in the staff report. Crosby replied that 3881 Highland used to be owned by the church. She also stated that the parking agreement was still in place even though the church no longer owned the parcel located at 3881 Highland.

Lynch asked if variance request number iv. was in addition to the existing parking variance. Crosby confirmed that. She added that at this time they were only considering a 31-stall variance because the previous parking variance would not be amended nor revoked.

Berry inquired about variance number vi. for shrubs. Crosby stated that maintenance of the fence and shrubs would both be difficult if both items were required to be installed on site.

Berry further inquired about the landscaping being required. Kane asked Berry to clarify if he was talking about the perimeter shade trees or the perimeter shrubs. Berry stated he was referring to the shrubs.

Crosby explained that the trees would provide more benefits than the shrubs would. She also stated that staff felt this plan would work best with the existing fence and the existing landscaping that was already on site.

Lynch inquired about the high number for the shrub requirement. Crosby clarified that the number of shrubs was high because of the large size of the parking lot.

Kane commented that the property fronts on 4 different roadways and stated that there have been several changes and updates since the parking lot was installed back in 1991.

Berry opened the public hearing.

Neil Tessier, the Engineer for the proposed project, appeared before the commission and stated that there were representatives from the church present as well.

Lynch inquired about the time line for the project. Tessier stated that the project would be conducted in phases that were yet to be determined. He stated that the church was planning to remain open and that the parking lots would be worked on accordingly to allow for church services to continue.

Berry asked Tessier to talk about the trees. Tessier stated that they will be planting Maple trees, and he stated that they felt the spacing requirements should be lowered because of how the trees would grow. Tessier commented on the trees being planted on City property. He also stated that they did not want to plant the trees so close to the ball field. He stated that there would be 112 trees on site once the project was completed. He said they would use the

25-foot spacing requirement along Highland and Cedar; however, he recommended that this spacing standard be increased for future projects throughout the City.

Berry asked how the snow plowing would be handled. Tessier stated that was another reason for not wanting to plant the shrubs. He said that instead they have proposed the shrubs as foundation plantings around the base the building. He also stated that the fence is not for aesthetic purposes, but rather for the children that play in the area.

As no one else came forward, Berry closed the public hearing.

Lynch commented on the proposed decorative fence being a nice improvement from the existing chain link fence. He also stated that he would not be opposed to moving the trees away from the ball field and off of Midland Ave. Lynch stated that the trees could be planted elsewhere on site as Tessier requested, but that he would like to hear other members opinions on it as well. Crosby stated that staff has had many conversations with the applicants on this topic already and there are many characteristics on site that prohibit the trees from going elsewhere. Crosby stated that staff strongly felt that the Midland Ave area was the most receptive place for the new trees to go.

Berry stated that he was okay with not requiring the additional trees; he thinks they will get in the way of the first base line. Batlzer agreed.

Lynch inquired then if a different type of tree would be better suited for that area. Crosby suggested ornamental trees, which are much smaller than overstory trees.

Reinhardt stated that he did not see the need for the trees to be planted along the Midland Ave right-of-way. He suggested striking the second part of condition 5.a and all of condition 6.

Kane inquired if Reinhardt was making a motion and recommended that the landscape plan be revised to space the trees 25 feet on center, as required by code.

Member Lynch moved to recommend approval of Case No. 18-2-V with the proposed amendments to staffs recommended conditions. Member Reinhardt seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Berry explained that this matter would be addressed by the City Council on March 13, 2018.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. City Council Meeting Minutes of February 13, 2018.

Member Lynch inquired about the status of the Lake Level Lawsuit and asked if there would be a residential watering ban this summer. Kane stated that she was not present at the last City Council Meeting, but stated that the appeal is still in process, so she did not believe that was final at this time.

B. Park Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes of February 15, 2018.

No discussion

6. ADJOURNMENT:

Member Baltzer moved to adjourn, seconded by Member Lynch. The motion passed unanimously (5-0), and the February 26, 2018 Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.