

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES - CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Tuesday, October 15, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.
City Hall Chambers - 8150 Barbara Avenue

Commissioner Scales called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Pat Simon
Tony Scales
Joan Robertson
Armando Lissarrague
Brett Kramer
Dennis Wippermann
Jonathan Weber

Commissioners Absent: Elizabeth Niemioja (excused)
Annette Maggi (excused)

Others Present: Heather Botten, Associate Planner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the October 1, 2019 Planning Commission meeting were approved as submitted.

ANDREW HOROWITZ – CASE NO. 19-42C

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Simon read the public hearing notice to consider a request for a conditional use permit to allow a medical complex/treatment facility to be operated out of the existing building, for property located at 6775 Cahill Avenue. 61 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Heather Botten, Associate Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. She advised that the applicant is proposing to renovate an existing building into Gateway Recovery Center which would provide services for up to 16 adults who need residential substance use disorder treatment. The facility would be licensed by the MN Department of Health. The only change to the exterior of the building would be the addition of a 400 square foot patio to the west side of the building. Staff recommends approval of the request with the conditions listed in the report. Staff heard from one neighbor who had general inquiries.

Opening of Public Hearing

Andrew Horowitz, 1663 Celia Road, Mendota Heights, advised he was available to answer any questions.

Commissioner Scales asked the applicant if he read and understood the report.

Mr. Horowitz replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Robertson asked the applicant what the acuity level was of their patients.

Mr. Horowitz replied they only take patients with moderate-to-mild withdrawal symptoms from substances and would not accept anyone needing higher acuity hospitalization. Anyone entering this facility needs an appointment, prior authorization, and advance approval from their medical director and medical team.

Commissioner Robertson asked what the staffing would look like.

Mr. Horowitz replied they meet or exceed the MN Department of Health and Human Services staffing requirements, including 24/7 nursing care overseen by an on-call medical director. Overnight awake staff would also monitor patients to make sure they are stable.

Commissioner Wippermann asked how long patients would typically stay at this facility.

Mr. Horowitz replied that patients typically stay 48-72 hours. Once a patient is admitted to the facility, they are not able to leave until the medical doctor authorizes their discharge. A patient's stay depends on their medical response to medications.

Commissioner Kramer asked if Gateway had other facilities currently operating in the Twin Cities.

Mr. Horowitz replied that Gateway is a new establishment providing this service; however, he owns and operates other comparable businesses.

Commissioner Robertson asked if this facility would be locked at all times.

Mr. Horowitz replied in the affirmative, stating no one could enter unless they were preapproved and had an appointment. No one could exit once they had been admitted unless authorized.

Commissioner Kramer asked if there were any issues at the other locations.

Mr. Horowitz replied this would be a quiet establishment with low activity which catered to middle- and upper-class individuals who do not qualify for a free county detox service.

Marie Gadway, 6601 Buckley Circle, Unit 104, asked how many patients the facility would have at any given time and whether they anticipated ambulances and emergency vehicles.

Mr. Horowitz replied that ambulances or police would not be arriving at this location. Individuals in that type of condition would be brought to a hospital. Police could not show up at their facility with someone who was intoxicated and ask them to be admitted. He added that there would be no more than 16 patients at any one time.

Commissioner Scales closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission Discussion

Commissioner Robertson stated this service was needed and she supported the request.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Weber, second by Commissioner Kramer, to approve the request for a conditional use permit to allow a medical complex/treatment facility to be operated out of the existing building, for property located at 6775 Cahill Avenue, with the conditions listed in the report.

Motion carried (7/0). This item goes to the City Council on November 12, 2019.

OTHER BUSINESS

The next Planning Commission meeting has been rescheduled to Wednesday, November 6 due to Election Night on November 5.

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Fox
Recording Secretary