

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES - CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Wednesday, November 19, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.
City Hall Chambers - 8150 Barbara Avenue

Chair Maggi called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

Commissioners Absent:

Others Present: Heather Botten, Associate Planner
Heather Rand, Community Development Director

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the November 6, 2019 Planning Commission meeting were approved as submitted.

PRAIRIE ESTATES, LLLP – CASE NO. 19-48C

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Simon read the public hearing notice to consider a request for a conditional use permit amendment to modify the existing site plan to add garages, along with other property improvements, and any variances related thereto, for the property located at 6121-6199 Carmen Avenue. 26 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Heather Botten, Associate Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. She advised that the applicant is requesting a conditional use permit amendment to modify the existing site plan by adding 26 garage spaces to the property known as Prairie Estates, which is zoned R-3C, Multi-Family Residential. In addition, the applicant would be remodeling the existing residential units, improving the community space, and adding connectivity to the development, including a possible sidewalk connection to 63rd Court. While most of the proposed improvements would be occurring over existing hard surface, there would be a 4% increase in impervious surface. The R-3C zoning district allows for a maximum of 40% impervious surface; however, the proposed improvements would bring the total to 46% on this property. Multi-family residential districts do not have the same CUP process to exceed the amount of impervious surface as single-family residential neighborhoods do, therefore, they are requesting a variance. Ms. Botten noted that there was a date error in both Conditions No. 1 which will be amended to reflect the submitted plans. Staff recommends approval of the request with the conditions listed in the report and the change to both Conditions No. 1. Staff did not hear from any of the surrounding property owners.

Opening of Public Hearing

Ken Isaacson, Twin Cities Housing Development Corporation, advised he was available to answer any questions.

Chair Maggi asked the applicant if he read and understood the report.

Mr. Isaacson replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Niemioja was excited about this project and the fact that the additional impervious surface would help with connectivity and ADA compliance.

Mr. Isaacson agreed, stating the proposed improvements would enable someone in a wheelchair to work themselves around the entire site which is not possible today.

Chair Maggi closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission Discussion

Chair Maggi stated this seemed like a reasonable request and would be an improvement for this area.

Commissioner Robertson stated the individuals living there deserve these amenities and she was pleased with the proposed site plan.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Niemioja, second by Commissioner Scales, to approve the request for a conditional use permit amendment to modify the existing site plan to add garages, along with other property improvements, and a variance to exceed 40% impervious surface in the R-3C, multi-family zoning district, for the property located at 6121-6199 Carmen Avenue with the conditions listed in the report and the practical difficulty listed in the report as well as the fact that it improves ADA compliance, with the two changes to Conditions No. 1 noted by staff.

Motion carried (9/0). This item goes to the City Council on November 25, 2019.

Mr. Isaacson advised that his company acquired this property on July 1, 2019 and they plan to be an actively engaged owner.

OTHER BUSINESS

City of Inver Grove Heights – Case No. 19-52X

Steve Dodge, Assistant City Engineer, explained that the Planning Commission is being asked to review four capital improvement projects for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. He advised that City Project 2019-09D is a partial reconstruction of the 64th Street area. This project will be paid for from non-assessed stormwater utility funds as this area appears to have an under-capacity stormwater system.

City Project 2016-09G includes 60th Street, 62nd Street, and Bacon Avenue improvements. This is an unimproved road that got paved many years ago. The City is proposing to bring it up to urban standards. This road is accessed off Babcock Trail and dead ends at the walking trail along Highway 52. Because the road is so narrow, construction will take up the full width of the road. Therefore, staff is proposing to widen a portion of the existing pedestrian trail to be used for residential vehicle accessibility from the hours of 7 AM to 7 PM. Once the project is completed the area will be closed off at each end and this would continue as a pedestrian trail but will also serve as a future public safety emergency access for the neighborhood. These improvements will be paid for out of the Pavement Management Fund.

Commissioner Niemioja asked who would be using the improved trail during construction.

Mr. Dodge replied it would be for residential access only; construction traffic would use Babcock Trail.

Commissioner Niemioja asked what material the temporary road would be made of.

Mr. Dodge replied that it would be upgraded with gravel during the construction of 62nd Street.

Commissioner Robertson asked if they would need to clear some of the existing foliage in order to widen the trail enough to accommodate residential traffic.

Mr. Dodge replied in the affirmative, stating the trail will be closed to pedestrian traffic during this construction project.

Commissioner Weber asked about the ownership of the two lots south of 44.

Mr. Dodge replied that Lot 44 was owned by the City and the two lots south of it were owned by either MNDOT or the City.

Jake Moser, Civil Engineer, explained that City Project 2019-09F is an edge mill and overlay for Carter Path and Carter Court which will be paid for through special assessments and the Pavement Management Fund.

Commissioner Niemioja asked if residents were notified of this improvement project.

Mr. Moser replied in the affirmative, stating there was also a public informational meeting held prior to the City Council receiving the feasibility report.

Commissioner Simon asked for clarification of the proposed casting adjustments.

Mr. Moser explained that they will add two inches of bituminous to match the elevation of the manholes so there is no jarring bump when driving over it. Regarding City Project 2019-09C, Mr. Moser explained that this Cahill Avenue mill and overlay will be paid for through special assessments and the Pavement Management Fund. Only the commercial properties will be assessed.

Commissioner Scales asked when this road segment was built.

Mr. Moser replied that the more seriously distressed northern portion of the road was built in 1994, followed by some intersection improvements done in 2003.

Commissioner Scales asked if there were more roads in the City that were built around this time and were in serious disrepair.

Mr. Dodge stated according to the geotechnical studies they have done throughout the City, approximately one third of the City streets are in disrepair. In order to stretch the taxpayer dollars, they do a mill and overlay when possible versus a complete reconstruction to extend the life of the pavement.

Commissioner Niemioja asked when construction would take place for the Cahill Avenue project.

Mr. Moser replied summer 2020.

Commissioner Robertson believed that the projects were consistent with the main goals of the City's comprehensive plan.

Motion by Commissioner Scales, second by Commissioner Weber, to recommend that the capital expenditures for the four projects are consistent with the comprehensive plan.

Motion carried (9/0).

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Fox
Recording Secretary