

**MAHTOMEDI PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 11, 2022**

Chairperson Alex Rogosheske convened the regular Planning Commission meeting at 6:30 p.m. with the following members in attendance: Chantell Knauss, Dan Soler, Tony Chesak, Lacey Smieja and Peter Frank. Also in attendance were Planner Hannah Rybak, Engineer John Sachi, Mayor Jud Marshall and Office Assistant Luann Tembreull.

ABSENT WITH PRIOR NOTICE: Greg Maples.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Smieja moved, and Commissioner Frank seconded the motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 13, 2022 REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Soler moved, and Commissioner Chesak seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2022 regular Planning Commission meeting as written. The motion was unanimously approved.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

4a. CONSIDER APPROVAL – Request from Hearth Development, on behalf of property owner Mahmood Family Properties, for several variance requests to facilitate construction of a 39-unit apartment development at 10 Old Wildwood Road and described as PID 32.030.21.22.0004

Planner Rybak provided a power point presentation and said the applicant is proposing to develop the Lakeside Club site and construct a 39-unit market rate apartment building. The site is over four acres in total area, but contains a large wetland on the southern half of the parcel. The site has further constraints by frontage on both Old Wildwood Road and Lincolntown Avenue. The Applicant is requesting flexibility to facilitate the development through the following requests:

1. Site plan review of the multifamily development.
2. A Variance to increase the allowable building height in the Shoreland District.
3. A Variance to reduce the front yard setback (north) from 50' to 22.46'.
4. A Variance to reduce the corner side yard setback (east) from 50' to 28.45'.
5. A Variance to reduce the side yard setback (west) from 50' to 15.79'.

She noted that several land use applications for a 39-unit senior Co-op apartment building was approved for this site back in 2014, but the development was never constructed.

4a. (Continued)

Planner Rybak gave a brief update associated with the February 2022 meeting and noted the following alterations were made to these revised plans:

- Reduction of two units – 41 to 39
- Use of a flat roof instead of a pitched roof, allowing for additional stormwater to be captured and piped to the underground retention tank
- Reduction in overall height – 47 feet to 34 feet, 5 inches
- Southeast portion of the building reduction from three stores to two stories, reducing the visual impact of the structure from Lincolntown Avenue
- Building was shifted to provide a greater setback from Lincolntown Avenue to north and Old Wildwood Road to the east
- Overall parking ratio increased from 1.7 spaces per unit to 1.8 spaces per unit.
- Increased commitment to sustainability through use of higher standards for building efficiency (Green Communities Criteria)

Planner Rybak noted that the proposed apartment building is situated logically on the site. Instead of the previously proposed “C” shape back in February, they have revised it to an upside down “L” shape, which is a similar layout to the previously approved development back in 2014.

The maximum allowable building height within the R4 District is 35 feet, which the proposed structure conforms to. However, the Shoreland Overlay District has a maximum height requirement of 25 feet, and in speaking with the DNR, they have worked with other cities to allow a height of 35 feet for multifamily housing.

The Applicant is proposing to provide 73 parking spaces to serve the entire development, which exceeds the Ordinance requirement. A bike rack is also proposed within the parking garage, which will provide ample bicycle parking.

The project area includes 18 existing significant trees. Two (2) of these trees are proposed to be saved, and 16 will be removed. The planting plan shows 22 new plantings; 16 new overstory trees, and 8 new ornamental trees with approximately 40 caliper inches being added.

Mahtomedi Fire Chief, Terry Fischer, has reviewed the proposed plans and has the following comments:

1. An exhaust override switch must be installed in the parking garage that is easily accessible without completely entering the garage. Preferably two would be installed near both exterior entrances to the garage. This switch allows us to override the automatic system allowing us to turn the exhaust fan on in the garage to assist in ventilating the garage space of smoke from the fire.

4a. (Continued)

2. At least one of the elevators be large enough to accommodate a stretcher lying flat. The current plan showing an interior clear dimension of seven feet, eight inches by eight feet, eight inches, which meets this requirement. The elevator size shall not be reduced to a depth of less than seven feet.
3. Currently there are no fire hydrants directly adjacent to the property. The only one that appears to be in the area is across Old Wildwood Road. There must be at least one hydrant added on the property, but preferably, two would be added (one on each end).

The wetland located on the subject property is classified as “Preserved”. This requires a minimum buffer of 50 feet, and an average buffer of 75 feet. The plans show that the buffer will be planted with native vegetation and delineated with signs. A required wetland buffer does not exist today. A benefit of this development will be the establishment of the required buffer, which furthers the intent of the Wetland Buffer Ordinance and the City’s recently adopted Sustainability Plan.

It was noted that the following sustainable elements have been incorporated into the project plans:

- Bicycle parking
- Energy star rated appliances
- Low flow water fixtures
- Increased R-value in the wall and roof installation
- Use of regional building materials
- Higher grade fiberglass windows
- High efficiency HVAC systems
- Insulated underground garage
- Use of pollinator plants and native draught resistant plantings
- Establishment of wetland buffer
- Removal of invasive buckthorn
- Project incorporates Overlay to the Green Communities Criteria for building efficiency and sustainable living
- Retention tank underneath parking lot to collect stormwater

Planner Rybak stated that all criteria are being met to approve these variances and outlined them each specifically. (See the planning agenda packet)

4a. (Continued)

City Engineer John Sachi, stated that he has reviewed the application and had the following comments:

1. Show removal/disconnection of existing water service across Old Wildwood Road from the watermain
2. Provide emergency overflows for all low points
3. Submit structural calculations for walls greater than 4' at the time the building permit is submitted. Install fencing for walls for safety
4. Call out directionally drilling the water service under Old Wildwood Road
5. Verify accessibility and coverage of proposed hydrant with fire official. Additional hydrant may be required on Lincolntown Avenue side of the building

Planner Rybak stated that based on the criteria in this report, staff recommends approval of the requested site plan review and variances at 10 Old Wildwood Road, subject to the following conditions:

1. The dimensions of all site features and amount of impervious surface shall match the site plan reviewed and approved by the City Council on. Minor modifications to the site plans may be administratively approved by the City Administrator or his designee.
2. The size of the elevator shall not be reduced to a depth of less than eight feet.
3. At least one exhaust override switch shall be installed in the parking garage.
4. The Applicant shall submit a revised lighting plan that shows that parking lot lighting will not exceed 0.4 foot-candles at the north property line. All site lighting must be dark skies complaint.
5. Any proposed signage shall meet the requirements of the underlying R-4 High Density Residential District and shall be subject to sign permit approval ahead of installation.
6. When trash containers are brought outside for collection day, they shall be placed such that they will not impede handicap access to the building
7. The Applicant shall follow the requirements of the 2019 Overlay to the Green Communities Criteria, as stated in their project narrative.
8. The wetland buffer shall be planted with a native seed mix as shown on the site plan. Wetland boundary shall be marked with RCWD signs.
9. Construction vehicles must be staged on the property. On-street parking shall not be permitted.
10. Final plans shall address all concerns laid out in the WSB review memo dated April 27, 2022.
11. The final location of the hydrant(s) serving the site must be approved by the Fire Chief and City Engineer.
12. An operations and maintenance manual must be submitted and approved by the City Engineer for the storm water infiltration system.

4a. (Continued)

13. A berm of discarded debris exists near the pond. This berm shall be removed and the debris properly disposed of as part of the site demolition.
14. Any contamination that may be discovered on the site shall be brought to the attention of the City Administrator and remediation must follow all guidelines and requirements of the MPCA.
15. Any permits required by the Rice Creek Watershed District and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources shall be obtained and copies provided to the City of Mahtomedi.
16. The Applicant shall obtain all necessary building permits prior to beginning construction.

Upon a question by Commissioner Chesak, Planner Rybak stated that the height of the existing building is 15 – 18 feet tall.

Upon a question by Commissioner Frank, Planner Rybak stated that kids and/or possibly squatters have broken into the property, but that the city requires the building be secured.

Upon a question by Chair Rogosheske regarding the R-4 Zoning District and Multi-Family Housing, Planner Rybak noted that the Met Council states that all cities much have land available for multi-family housing.

Applicant, Mr. Link Wilson of Hearth Development, introduced himself and noted joining him at the meeting tonight is Peter Costanzo, Matt Woodruff, Ben Hartberg, Kelly Bopray and Glen Harstad.

Mr. Wilson presented a power point presentation reviewing both the original proposal and the revised proposal. He noted that the formation of the revised building will now be an “L” shape instead of the original “C shape. He noted the new design significantly reduces the proposed building height from the previous scheme, and the top floor units have been omitted from the south end of the building to further reduce a portion of the building’s height to two stories in that location.

The entire footprint of the building was reconfigured to increase the eastern setback from Lincolntown Ave and increase the northern setback from Old Wildwood Road. The revisions have helped increase the overall parking ratio and a sidewalk connection to Old Wildwood and Lincolntown intersection added to improve walkability of the neighborhood. The change to a flat roof allows for more stormwater to be piped to a retention tank underneath the surface parking lot. The expanded tank allows for the removal of the previous retention pond to the south between the building and wetlands. The addition of more native trees, shrubs and screening have been added for “Sustainability” to the project.

4a. (Continued)

Mr. Wilson stated that the practical difficulties with the 4-acre parcel is that it is comprised mostly of wetland and steep slopes.

Mr. Peter Costanzo, architect for the project, noted that the patio was moved from the west side of the proposed building to the north side of the building, which will face the ballfield. They have also added a walking path from the building to Old Wildwood Road. The newly proposed "L" shape of the building makes for a more efficient parking lot. The new proposal also shows a more harmonious color of the building, which is a darker color instead of the lighter color.

Mr. Matt Woodruff, Larson Engineering, introduced himself and noted that he is the civil engineer for this project. He prepared the storm water management plan, which included the underground storage for storm water. He obtained six (6) soil borings and noted the ground in this area is primarily sand, which promotes groundwater's natural infiltration.

Mr. Ben Hartberg, landscaper for this project, introduced himself and stated that he will be involved with the wetland buffer restoration and the implementation of trees and clean water features. It was noted that it would take at least five (5) years for the native plants to become established.

Mr. Kelly Bopray, Bopray Environmental Services, introduced himself and said he was asked to expand the scope of services to review two related environmental issues with respect to the proposed development on this site. The first issue was the concern of potential for a pair of resident loons striking the proposed building, and the second was about the proposed plan to remove buckthorn from around the wetland as part of developing the site. He stated that several studies on birds striking buildings show that larger birds, such as ducks, geese and loons were not mentioned as having notable numbers of collisions with buildings. He noted that birds striking buildings is generally due to mass migration, territorial aggression and panic flight to escape a predator. These factors are not issues that apply to loons, nor will this proposed building have a significant impact.

Mr. Wilson noted that the flat roof will now be solar ready and that the flat roof will push water north into the infiltration system. He stated that they are proposing to display a historic picture of the Lakeside Club in the lobby of the proposed building to preserve the history of the site. He noted that there is a tax benefit to the City with this project along with parkland dedication fees paid to the City of Mahtomedi. He reiterated that the Met Council will keep this parcel zoned as multi-family housing; this project will create great construction jobs; and rooftop solar is always a plus.

Chair Rogosheske asked the commission if they had any questions for the Applicant.

4a. (Continued)

Upon a question by Chair Rogosheske, Mr. Wilson stated that they would not be removing the power lines at the intersection of Old Wildwood Road and Lincolntown Avenue.

Upon a question by Commissioner Soler, Mr. Wilson stated that the area on the survey that shows part of Old Wildwood Road belonging to this parcel will be deeded back to the City with this project.

Upon a question by Commissioner Smieja, Engineer Sachi explained about the wetland buffer and the installation of native plants that will be placed in this area.

Engineer Sachi stated that Comcast is having an issue with cable casting tonight's meeting live and that those watching the meeting from home do not have sound, but the replays will have sound.

Chairperson Rogosheske opened the public hearing at 8:17 p.m.

Mr. Kelly McShane, 120 Rustic Drive, stated that Planner Rybak did a good job.

Then the severe weather siren on top of City Hall started sounding and the meeting was interrupted. Office Assistant Tembreull stated that the safe shelters are the women's and men's bathrooms and to stay away from any windows because of the glass. Several people attending the meeting started leaving the building. Others walked out into the hallway and lobby.

Chair Rogosheske conversed with commission members and once the siren started sounding for a second time, Chair Rogosheske stated that the meeting will be continued in the next two – four weeks and the meeting will pick up with opening the Public Hearing and skip over presentations by staff and the Applicant.

Upon motion by Commissioner Soler, seconded by Commissioner Frank, all members voting in favor, the Public Hearing was temporarily continued at 8:29 p.m. due to severe weather conditions.

Upon motion by Commissioner Soler, seconded by Commissioner Chesak, all members voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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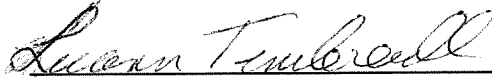
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Respectfully submitted by Luann Tembreull, Office Assistant.

APPROVED:

ALEX ROGOSHESKE
CHAIRPERSON

ATTESTED:



LUANN TEMBREULL
OFFICE ASSISTANT