

CITY OF MEDINA
PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday June 9, 2015

1. **Call to Order:** Vice Chairperson Reid called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Planning Commissioners Todd Albers, Victoria Reid, Janet White, and Kent Williams (arrived at 7:30 p.m.).

Absent: Planning Commissioners Randy Foote, Kim Murrin and Charles Nolan.

Also Present: Planning Consultant Nate Sparks, City Planner Dusty Finke, and Planning Assistant Debra Peterson.

2. **Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda**

No comments.

3. **Update from City Council Proceedings**

Finke provided an update on the activity of the City Council since the previous Commission meeting.

4. **Planning Department Report**

Finke provided an update.

5. **Discussion Pertaining to Site Plan Review Procedures**

Finke stated that under the current regulations almost any construction activity on commercial or multi-family property requires a review by the Planning Commission and City Council and provided examples of some of the activities that fall under that category such as siding replacement. He stated that not all of those activities come before the Commission and Council, although that does not comply with the regulations. He stated that during the business forums the businesses have stated the process is over burdensome when they are just making minor improvements. He questioned if the Commission would be in favor of allowing administrative review for minor activities while still requiring larger requests to come before the Commission and Council. He stated that staff drafted a potential ordinance for review, which would incorporate the administrative review element and reviewed the items that would potentially fall under administrative review and the elements that would still require a formal review.

Albers questioned how the 10 and 20 percent thresholds were chosen and whether guidelines of other cities were used.

Finke stated staff chose that number and explained that Medina falls between what some other communities may do because of their size and regulations.

Reid questioned if staff believes this would make a big difference.

Finke did believe this would make a difference. He explained that some businesses design projects in smaller parts to fall under the administrative review process and instead run the projects over the course of two years to avoid the formal review process.

Albers questioned if there are other improvements that staff has considered for administrative review.

Finke did not believe additional items would need to be listed, as he believed the items listed for potential administrative review would cover most of those aspects.

White questioned if the Golf Course accessory structure would have fallen under administrative review under the proposed ordinance.

Finke explained that site is a PUD and therefore the formal review would still have been required.

White stated these are maximum numbers and the Commission would want to review anything larger.

Reid agreed this could make the process more user friendly for businesses.

Finke noted that a public hearing will be held the following month to consider this ordinance change. He stated that he stuck to the commercial side of the ordinance although noted that perhaps lot line rearrangement and lot combinations could also fall under administrative review. He stated that the less cumbersome process could encourage residents to combine multiple lots that they own. He stated that specifically in the shoreline overlay district this could help to bring noncompliant lots into conformance.

Reid stated that she is not a big fan of parking lots and asked that staff not make it too easy to expand parking, although still recognizing that businesses may need additional parking.

Finke stated the storm water regulations tend to discourage too much parking area because of the additional cost.

Williams arrived.

6. **PJ Norman, LLC – 345 Clydesdale Trail – Planned Unit Development
General Plan and Site Plan Review for Construction of an Approximately
9,000 Square Foot Goddard School**

Finke presented a request for the commercial development of a 9,300 square foot early childhood center by Goddard School. He stated the request includes two land use approvals, an amendment to the existing PUD and a Site Plan review. He stated that the property is zoned PUD, noting that the original PUD had planned for a 5,600 square foot restaurant on this lot with parking. He stated that this building is larger and orientated similarly, but would have substantially less parking and therefore would actually have less hardcover than the original plan for the restaurant. He stated that there would be more greenspace around the building, which would be play space for the children. He reviewed the proposed one-way access, which would be different than the shared access specified by the PUD. He reviewed the building material and architecture proposed and compared those to the requirements of the PUD. He reviewed the proposed landscaping. He reviewed the proposed access and stated that the applicant has concern with encouraging additional traffic to come through the site because of the children. He reviewed the proposed parking and stated that although there are not specific regulations for this type of use, staff did review similar facilities and believe

the proposed parking to be sufficient. He stated that staff did review the other existing locations to ensure the parking for this site was not needed in order to share with those sites. He stated that the storm water management aspects have already been met through the PUD, noting that this use would have less hardcover than the originally proposed use. He stated that staff recommends approval subject to the conditions noted in the staff report.

Williams referenced the area of storm water and questioned what the site could do, other than changing the existing system, to add value.

Finke stated that treatment could occur on site prior to discharge to the existing system.

Williams stated that his concern is that the City has new storm water regulations, but continues to grandfather parcels in under the old regulations. He stated that at some point the City needs to implement the rules.

Finke stated that the waiver is in place to allow this type of activity as these types of plans had already been approved. He stated that in this case there would be more opportunity because of the reduced hardcover, but noted the additional greenspace would be used as play space. He stated that the reduced parking and increased greenspace could be seen as an improvement and could be quantified.

Williams questioned if it would be difficult to include a rain garden and whether there would be an appropriate location.

Finke stated that there would be available space, but was not sure how that would work with the site layout and piping.

Albers referenced the traffic flow and questioned the original design for the restaurant, noting that the Caribou drive-thru limited that action. He questioned if there was an alternative traffic flow that would not use the Caribou parking lot.

Finke stated that staff does not have any concern with the internal flow of this lot as proposed. He stated that staff does not want to encourage internal traffic through to that site, noting that the property to the east is the one of concern.

Albers noticed that traffic for this site could come in and out through Clydesdale and therefore is less concerned.

Finke stated that the applicant preferred to have no tie in to the Caribou site, but staff recommended a minimal connection for emergency purposes. He stated that traffic from the east will be discouraged.

Williams noted that additional signage could be posted as well to direct and/or limit traffic.

White stated that she is confused about that issue as she feels the drive-thru and the street to the right of the drive-thru is already dangerous. She noted that the parking gets tight in front of the Caribou site and envisioned people dropping their kids off and instead of exiting to Clydesdale choosing that curb cut instead.

Finke stated that the applicant is proposing the access be shrunk down to one lane.

Williams stated that blocking that completely would eliminate that concern.

Finke noted that the Caribou drive-thru is already a mess and stated that although that is not the fault of the applicant, staff wants to ensure that this does not add to that problem. He did not believe that the proposal would add to problem Caribou has with their drive-thru.

Reid stated that her assumption would be that when this PUD was designed, the restaurant would have been the centerpiece of the development. She questioned if there would be any other place for a restaurant or whether this would be the last pad-ready location.

Finke stated that there would only be one more pad available for development in this PUD.

Reid stated that the land has been available for a while and has not been turned into a restaurant. She stated that the school would be a good thing, but was sad to see there would not be a restaurant.

Williams agreed that the PUD included retail shopping and this would be a departure from that.

Albers noted that there is a need for this type of use in Medina, as there were not many options for childcare when his family moved to the City.

Reid opened the public hearing at 7:57 p.m.

Aaron Amic, Medina resident, stated that he is present in representation of Goddard School. He stated that his wife and mother in-law opened and have run the existing location in Plymouth since 2007, noting that he joined his wife when his mother in-law retired. He stated that the Plymouth site is full and is landlocked, which does not allow expansion. He stated that the next best option would be to expand in another area and they believed Medina would be a good fit. He stated that they have had their eye on this site for a while, as it has remained vacant.

White questioned if the capacity of students is seasonal or whether that remains constant.

Amic stated that while the students drop slightly in the summer, for the most part it does remain constant as most families choose to stay with the school through the summer.

Williams questioned the age range of children.

Amic stated that they work with children ages 6 weeks to six years, noting that they do not provide kindergarten, but do provide pre-K education.

Williams questioned the peak hours for traffic.

Amic stated that the plan would be to mirror the Plymouth location, which opens at 7:00 a.m., noting that the busiest drop off times are between 7:00 and 9:00 a.m. He stated that pickup time is a little more spread out, starting around noon for half day students and then busier between 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Williams referenced the fencing around the building.

Amic stated that Goddard is a national program and requires a six-foot fence unless not allowed by City standards. He stated that they do not have a six-foot fence in Plymouth, but are in a very secluded area and therefore that has not been a concern at that location. He stated that this site is more public and he would worry about the safety of the children if only a four-foot fence was used. He stated that he would prefer the larger six-foot barrier.

Reid asked for additional information regarding the requested number of parking stalls.

Amic stated that there will be slightly more children here than the Plymouth location, but believed the parking would be sufficient for the staff and parents.

Reid stated that perhaps the teachers could park in the Caribou area.

Amic stated that while he did not think the business would mind that on occasion, he was unsure that Caribou would like the school to do so on a regular basis.

Finke confirmed that the parking is shared through the PUD and noted that there is a lot of excess parking near Target.

Amic stated that he would like to be a good neighbor and would not want to make teachers walk a lengthy distance in the winter.

Reid referenced the choice of siding materials and asked for additional information.

Bob Timperley, Watson-Forsberg Construction Company, stated that he was involved in the construction of the Plymouth site as well, noting that this would be a similar construction. He stated that the siding choice was made by group decision, as the school is being asked to conform to the standards of the PUD. He stated that they would need a more durable material for the school building, which is why this material was chosen. He provided an example and additional description of the material to the Commission.

Albers questioned, and received confirmation, that the play area would include play equipment and grass area.

Williams referenced storm water management and asked for additional information regarding the viability of installing a rain garden or another element that would treat some of the water onsite.

Timperley stated that he is not a civil engineer, but reinforced the comment made by Finke that it would be awkward to place the rain garden as the water would not slope towards an available area and would have to be piped into that area.

Reid referenced the trash and recycling location, which will be located outside the building but will look like it's inside the building.

Amic explained the purpose of that location. He stated that they originally would have liked to place the trash further away from the building, but had been told that would not be an option. He stated that this is the only location that would not interfere with the play area or flow of traffic/parking. He stated that the outdoor trash is for sanitary purposes.

Reid referenced the landscaping and noted that it appears there is more room for landscaping on the east side of the building.

Amic agreed and stated that they are working with staff on that element as they are very open to placing more trees or shrubbery in that area.

Reid referenced the façade on the east side of the building, which is treated as the back but in reality looks into the rest of the development. She realized people would not be coming into the site from that side, but suggested that perhaps some additional modulation could be added.

Amic stated that is the gymnasium, which is why the number of windows are reduced on that side. He agreed that additional windows could be added in a strategic way in order to account for the needed design of the preschool rooms. He stated that additional windows also add distraction and sun in the afternoons.

Reid closed the public hearing at 8:17 p.m.

Reid confirmed that the Commissioners did not oppose changing the proposed use from restaurant to school or with the materials proposed. She referenced the issue of modulation and stated that she does have an issue with the east side, noting that she would like to see more windows and additional landscaping.

White agreed that the east side does need something, although she did not want to limit that aspect to windows.

Albers also agreed, noting that adding trees and shrubs could add to that view.

Williams stated that an additional condition could be added specifying that something be done to the east side, whether that is with modulation, windows or additional landscaping.

Albers questioned if a Goddard School sign could be placed, or was considered, on that side of the building as well.

Amic stated that was considered.

Finke stated that the PUD limits signage to three sides.

Albers questioned, and received confirmation that the signs would not be lit.

Williams stated that if the concern is that it looks like the back of the building, additional windows will not change that, but believed that a sign would. He stated that modulation could be added to make it more interesting and landscaping could be added as well.

Reid questioned the orientation of the restaurant for the site.

Finke stated that the orientation would have been the same.

Reid referenced landscaping, noting the consensus of the Commission to have additional landscaping added, specifically to the east side. She referenced the Caribou access and parking issue.

Williams stated that he did not think people would want to go out the same way they came in.

Albers stated that people would also come from 101 and go through the Target parking lot. He did not see as much of a concern and believed the traffic would go out to Clydesdale.

White questioned if people park and walk their children into the building.

Amic confirmed that people do walk their children into the school. He stated that after observing the Caribou situation, they decided they want to stay as far away from that as possible. He stated that the curb cut was proposed for emergency purposes and noted that the plan is to place a double do not enter/do not exit sign at the location to deter people from traveling between the sites.

Finke stated that the main access is on the west side and traffic would normally exit to the north.

Amic stated that between 7:00 and 9:00 a.m. the average is one child per minute for drop offs. He stated that the total time for the drop off process is about three to seven minutes.

Reid stated that she would prefer to keep the road wider for the long-term use of the building.

Williams questioned if that could be widened in the future should a new use come in.

Finke explained that this is not a public road and if additional flexibility is desired that should be expressed at this time.

Williams stated that the theory behind the one lane would be that traffic would be less likely to go through that area. He questioned the enforceability of the do not enter/do not exit signage.

Finke stated that would not be enforceable.

Amic stated that would be enforceable to their clients.

Finke explained the usual traffic pattern that people would follow.

Reid confirmed the consensus of the Commission to make the access to Caribou a little wider with signage. She also confirmed the consensus of the Commission to allow the storm water waiver.

Motion by Williams, seconded by Albers, to recommend approval of the General Plan of Development to amend the PUD and the Site Plan Review subject to the conditions suggested in the staff report with the following additions: 1) the landscaping plan be modified to conform to the City standards, 2) that the east elevation have additional architectural details added to improve the appearance of the right third, and 3) that the southeast access be widened to accommodate two lanes of traffic. Motion approved unanimously. (Absent: Foote, Murrin and Nolan)

7. **Approval of the May 12, 2015 Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.**

Motion by White, seconded by Albers, to approve the May 12, 2015, Planning Commission minutes as amended. Motion carries unanimously. (Absent: Foote, Murrin, and Nolan)

8. **Council Meeting Schedule**

Finke advised that the Council will be meeting on June 16th and Albers will be the representative in attendance.

9. **Adjourn**

Motion by Williams, seconded by White, to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.