

CITY OF MEDINA PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 14, 2012

1. **Call to Order:** Commissioner R. Reid called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

Present: Planning Commissioners John Anderson, Robin Reid, Kathleen Martin, and Victoria Reid (arrived at 7:08 p.m.).

Absent: Kent Williams and Nolan

Also Present: City Planner Dusty Finke and Planning Assistant Debra Peterson

2. **Public Comments on items not on the agenda**

No public comments.

3. **Update from City Council proceedings**

Finke updated the Commission of recent activities and decisions by the City Council.

4. **Planning Department Report**

Finke provided an update of upcoming Planning projects.

5. **Approval of the January 10, 2012 Draft Planning Commission meeting minutes.**

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Martin, to approve the January 10, 2012 minutes with suggested changes. Motion carried unanimously. (Absent: Williams and Nolan)

6. **Approval of the February 6, 2012 Draft Special Planning Commission meeting minutes.**

Motion by V. Reid, seconded by Anderson, to approve the February 6, 2012 minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously. (Absent: Williams and Nolan)

7. **Public Hearing – Lennar Corporation – A Planned Unit Development Concept Plan for 116 Single Family Homes on nine parcels with an overall gross area of 48.4 acres. The properties are located west of Brockton Lane and south of Hamel Legion Park.**

Finke presented the application, explaining the application consisted of redeveloping nine existing parcels consisting of 48.4 acres for the construction of 116 single family homes. He said the majority of the lots would be 70 feet in width and the lots in the

southern portion of the project would be 90 feet in width. He reviewed density requirements of the zoning districts. He also reviewed the PUD and Comprehensive Plan Objectives that should be met when reviewing a PUD project. He said 89 lots were proposed to be 75 feet in width and 27 lots were proposed to be 90 feet in width.

Staff explained how side yard setbacks could have an impact on the perception of density. He said the Cherry Hill development only had 15 feet between homes.

Wetlands and floodplains were touched on as part of Finke's presentation stating further clarification would need to be done for the next stage of the development if the project moved forward.

A road connection for the proposed development would tie into The Enclave of Medina subdivision that was approved last year. The location of the road would be on the north side of the property rather than the southern portion as was previously approved in 2011.

He further explained that the Commission had the greatest discretion with a PUD and suggested they look to the Comprehensive Plan first in their review process and verify consistency.

He said one of the things referenced in the staff report was that the Comprehensive Plan suggests diversity of housing and suggested that the Commission look at the option of affordable housing on either the current application or the previously approved Enclave development within their townhomes or single family homes.

V. Reid asked about affordable housing and if homes qualified as affordable housing would the values of the homes be required to stay affordable. Finke explained someone or some group would have to regulate or be a partner in enforcement to maintain.

Joe Jablonski, representative for Lennar Corporation, explained that the proposed project would be an expansion of "The Enclave of Medina" project. He said he would like to look at it as one neighborhood. He explained that the proposed project would offer lots that were 70 feet wide, which were not offered in "The Enclave of Medina." He said their main goal was to find out if the Commission was supportive of blended density on a conceptual level.

V. Reid asked how the applicant thought the two projects would be one neighborhood when they are divided by a large conservation area. Joe explained they would have one homeowners association for the single family homes and one for the townhomes. He said the pedestrian paths would all be interconnected.

R. Reid asked about what the price range would be for the project. Joe said they would be higher than the lower \$400,000.00.

Martin said the proposed building footprints seemed to be similar to the already approved project along Hunter Drive. Jablonski said the housing product would be the same or similar. He said they have 16 different product types to offer. Jablonski explained the side yard setbacks were the same as the “Enclave of Medina” project and they were requesting the same be allowed.

Martin asked what the neighborhood amenities would be for the proposed project. Jablonski said the proposed project could use the tot lot in “The Enclave of Medina” which will be located at the southern portion of the development and southwest of the proposed project. He also informed the Commission that the City Park was just north of the proposed project and offers a variety of activities.

V. Reid said on the original plans of “The Enclave of Medina” a community building was initially shown, but then later taken out. She asked if they had given thought to adding a community building with this project. Jablonski said they had thought about it, but decided against it.

Anderson asked if the applicant had control of all the properties. Jablonski said they did not.

V. Reid said one of their goals was to keep some modulation to the property. She asked if they were going to mass grade the land. Jablonski explained that all the dirt had to be either moved or compacted in order to prepare for a building pad. He explained that the land is fairly flat already.

V. Reid asked why Lennar wasn’t proposing townhomes. Jablonski explained that they were showing 41 townhomes in “The Enclave” already and they felt it was a sufficient number of units for that area. He further went on to explain that “affordable” townhomes were not feasible. He said the current townhome market was very difficult, since a lot of reevaluating of townhomes was going on right now. He said their company couldn’t meet today’s building codes and standards for the price you can buy a used one today.

V. Reid asked what the smallest buildable lot size was. Jablonski said 65 foot wide lots were in “The Enclave.” He further said the smallest their company builds on were 55 feet in width. V. Reid asked about lot depth and Jablonski said approximately 120 feet. He said the lot depth is more for meeting minimum lot size requirements.

Public Hearing Opened at 7:44 p.m.

Mike Bitterman of 4175 Brockton Lane appeared before the Commission. Bitterman explained he owned a hobby farm with a big red barn that was currently for sale. He explained his property can’t be missed and didn’t understand how Lennar didn’t include it as part of the proposed project since it was for sale. He said they recently had two interested parties and they both backed away from purchasing when they saw

the big blue land use signs. He said he was curious as to why Lennar was in such a hurry to develop the area. He said he was questioning why the City of Medina wanted to turn the country feel into developing it like the City of Plymouth. He said he felt that 116 lots on the amount of acreage being proposed seemed to be too many lots.

He asks that people get creative and involve his property into the application. He wants to know why his property was not included in the process and offered it to be utilized as a community building.

Martin suggested he look back at the records regarding the Comprehensive Plan to provide an answer as to why his property wasn't included and to better understand the rationale behind it.

Bitterman asked about on-site wetlands/floodplains and if any work had been done. Martin and R. Reid explained it would be forthcoming in the next stage of the project.

Bitterman said he read the staff report and questioned if traffic studies would be required. R. Reid said traffic studies would be required during the next stage of the project.

Finke explained the conceptual plan is on the low end of the density of what was planned for the area. He explained the impacts from traffic would be coming more from the properties to the east of Brockton Lane which is the City of Plymouth.

Bitterman wanted to know if a storm drainage study would be required. Finke said one of the conditions was that one be completed. Bitterman asked about assessments. Finke said they would be unlikely. He said the practice has been the developer pays and not the surrounding property owners.

Bitterman said he wanted the Commission to seriously consider reducing the 116 units proposed, since he felt it was too high. He asked the Commission to make sure that all required studies be completed and that he be notified of any assessments that could be coming up. He further urged the City to allow Variances as it related to his property so he could sell.

Earl Mattson of 4425 Brockton said Plymouth was planning on putting development across the street to the east. Finke said staff had contacted the City of Plymouth and one of their comments was that they had seen a concept plan to the east of Brockton Lane and it appeared that the road would line up with this application.

Martin said she would like to see something different and more creative with the use of the land; offering our residents something other than an addition to "The Enclave of Medina" subdivision.

Anderson said the Enclave development had land really worth conserving. V. Reid said she didn't think the proposed project met any of the criteria of the Comprehensive Plan requirements. Martin said she isn't convinced with the proposed conceptual plan and the properties are zoned for more density and would be looked at again in 2020. The City has no incentive to develop property with the kind of density being proposed. V. Reid said it isn't the timing of the project for her, but rather she needs to see more creativity and feels it doesn't meet that standard; and PUD's are for something special. Martin said something unique would be needed and she doesn't see that in the proposal. V. Reid said the proposal didn't appear to meet the necessary requirements.

V. Reid said she understood that townhomes would be difficult to sell, but the City doesn't have affordable housing or housing for aging. All we have is for families with children.

Jablonski explained he would like to respond to the Commissioners comments and review the City's eight objectives. He explained all property owners are present, which shows they are ready to do something with their property. He explained the City didn't have the right to decide if a property should develop, but rather the City does have control of what they see on the property. He explained the land was fairly flat and there isn't a lot of opportunity on the nine lots to be creative as it relates to preservation. He said the type of land did make it easier and more efficient to develop greater density. He said:

1. He felt they created a layout that was an efficient use of the land;
2. He was excited about their architectural designs and styles, and feels they are second to none;
3. Developing next to a park with trail connections to park and neighborhoods was a great amenity;
4. If the Commissioners walked the nine properties they would see there wasn't a lot of topography worth doing anything with; some trees could be preserved, but it isn't something they would show on a Concept Plan level;
5. The proposal allows for phased development of sewer, water and public improvements;
6. The road system is efficient and doesn't create future potential for private streets or cul-de-sacs;
7. He understood the Commissions comments, but felt they had met all other objectives;
8. When the proposed project is combined with the existing Enclave they do meet the objectives.

He further explained that everything south of their proposal was outside of the MUSA line and they transitioned their density to decrease as the project flowed to the south.

Martin suggested berming or landscaping the southern lot lines to ensure some protection of their heritage. Jablonski said they hadn't looked at that, but could look at that possibility and take it into consideration.

Jablonski said he understands how long the Enclave took, but with this application they didn't have the same amount of time with multiple property owners involved. He said he would like to get a recommendation from the Commission with direction to allow for density blending, without townhomes.

R. Reid said she didn't have a problem with the blending. V. Reid said she liked the blending of more density to the north with the transition to the south lessening. She liked a bunch of units along the park for use of the park. What she didn't like was so many houses of the same style and same size.

R. Reid would like to look at the project as a separate project from the Enclave. She acknowledges that the zoning allows for it, but would like something different. V. Reid added a different feel and a geographic divider would be good.

Finke suggested different housing products rather than values. V. Reid said different sizes of homes would also be good.

Dan Dugan of 4125 Brockton Lane said on the north end of the project there is a snowmobile trail and asked if it would stay. Jablonski said it goes through the conservation area, but was proposed to be eliminated even if the Enclave project hadn't gone through.

Public Hearing Closed at 8:34 p.m.

Finke explained the Council may have additional feedback to the applicant prior to revising their plans.

Motion by Anderson, Seconded by Martin to deny the proposed PUD Concept Plan as designed. The Commission approved of the density blending. Motion carried unanimously. (Absent: Williams and Nolan)

8. Continued Public Hearing – Text Amendment to Chapter 8 of the Medina City Code related to regulations for signs.

Finke presented.

Martin said she liked the 8 percent with the maximum per sign. Anderson said the ordinance was clear the way it was written. V. Reid said the sign on the Target building was the right size and she doesn't see people having trouble finding the Target. Finke explained the 200 square foot sign is larger than any of the other signs.

Dynamic Signs – Finke explained this change was initiated from the Holiday Station Store representative. He explained brightness and size was a concern of the Commission.

Anderson said nothing about dynamic signage was consistent with the City of Medina in any location. Martin asked Anderson what he thought about signage along Hwy 55 in a very limited area. Finke said it would be allowed all along Hwy 55. R. Reid said if they allowed it now, it wouldn't stop more from coming. Finke said some of the suggested changes may encourage more businesses, since it allows for a larger sign.

Finke said the ordinance could have a maximum on a certain portion of a dynamic sign. V. Reid said it was the height that appeared to bother her. Anderson said the sign displayed at the 2/6/12 special meeting was too bright.

Michael Cronin of Michael Cronin and Associates, Representative for Holiday Station Stores, suggested dynamic signage shouldn't exceed more than 10 feet in height and should be contiguous.

Anderson asked if dynamic signs help the merchant. Cronin said the signs were very expensive and after using them to advertise certain items, felt it did indeed help move product.

Martin said she liked the idea of a contiguous sign no higher than 10 feet. Anderson and R. Reid agreed with Martin.

Cronin thanked the Commission for their time and asked the Commission to adopt the sign ordinance; but to not regulate the letter height, since other communities don't regulate. He said if you are going to put a minimum height on it, he suggested choosing 7 inches rather than the 9 or 12 inches.

The Commission asked if they could just allow the dynamic signs for gas stations. Finke said staff wouldn't advocate it. He said he would like the Commission to give a good reason why only gas stations.

Cronin said only if changing a reader board. R. Reid said it seems more appropriate for a gas station than other uses. Cronin said some City's have had minimum lot sizes or lot frontages in order to allow.

Public Hearing opened at 9:10 p.m.

The consensus of the Commission was that limitations should be placed on the dynamic signs. They liked one sign with a certain minimum amount of road frontage and the lowest panel to not be higher than 10 feet in height (contiguous).

The Commission agreed to keep the additional language added relate to brightness.

Cronin asked that fuel prices be excluded from the dynamic sign area, and not be included in the square footage.

Height of letters – Commission agreed a 7 inch height was reasonable.

Lighting of signage – the Commission agreed to keep white backgrounds prohibited.

Off premise signage – the Commission agreed to not give bonus signage for off-premise signage.

Public Hearing Closed at 9:35 p.m.

Motion by Martin, Seconded by Anderson, to approve the Text Amendment to Chapter 8 of the Medina City Code related to regulation for signs subject to the revisions recommended by the Commission. Motion carried unanimously. (Absent: Williams and Nolan)

9. City Council Meeting Schedule

The Commission discussed schedule.

10. Adjourn

Motion by Anderson, seconded by Martin, to adjourn at 9:36 p.m.
Motion carried unanimously. (Absent: Nolan and Williams)