

**CITY OF MEDINA**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, May 13, 2014

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

Present: Planning Commissioners Robin Reid, Kent Williams, Randy Foote, Robert Mitchell, Victoria Reid, and Janet White.

Absent: Commissioner Nolan

Also Present: Mayor Liz Weir, 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**  
Weir updated the Commission on recent activities and decisions by the City Council.

4. **Planning Department Report**  
Finke provided an update of upcoming Planning projects for June.

Mitchell asked about Villas at Medina Country Club and what the next step would be for them.

5. **Approval of the April 8, 2014 Draft Planning Commission meeting minutes.**

**Motion by V. Reid, seconded by Foote,** to approve the April 8, 2014, Planning Commission minutes as written. Motion carries unanimously (Absent: Nolan).

6. **Public Hearing – Ordinance Amendment – Loading Dock Regulations in the Industrial Park zoning district**

Finke presented the application explaining the recommended changes to the code. He said in 2009 the Business, Business Park and Industrial Park standards were updated to allow for an applicant to be able to apply for additional loading docks if “it deems it practically necessary.” In 2009 the Industrial Park Zoning District, IP was not amended and staff feels this was an oversight. PC and Council should discuss if such an exception is appropriate in IP as well. The amendment proposed would add exception similar to B and BP districts for loading docks. Also, the amendment clarifies the definition of loading dock to include docks under 12 feet in width.

Williams questioned the language “if deems it practically necessary.” He said to whom? Finke said to the City Council. Williams felt it may cause more trouble than it would be

worth. He recommended replacing it with “in its sole discretion.” Mitchell agreed. R. Reid asked if the ordinance was approved, would Loram need the Variance. Finke said if the Council adopted the amendment they would not need a Variance. R. Reid asked who would be making the decision to allow more docks. Finke said almost every significant building requires a Site Plan Review, so it would be the Planning Commission and Council. R. Reid asked if the city was already built out in industrial. Finke said it impacts five existing buildings, and the vacant parcels immediately adjacent to Loram. Foote asked where the 20% came from. Finke said it’s not all that common to have limitations in other City Codes, so it is hard to find comparables. Finke discussed the visual look and why the code was written the way it was. He said the thought behind it was to require more of a courtyard design so they docks are screened by buildings. Mitchell said the Supervalu in Hopkins is an example. Foote said he suspects more than 20% are loading docks. A distribution center would have many more loading docks Mitchell said. Finke asked if the Commission had visited the new Police/Public Works building. It’s around 20%, certainly higher than 10%. Mitchell said if it’s not broke don’t fix it. Mitchell said the architectural improvements within the ordinance are good. He suggested that requiring owners to plant vines to the outside of their buildings would be an improvement.

Williams suggested the language was too vague, but it could be changed to state “upon a showing of a practical necessity.” If going for flexibility, then they would say, “The City may allow.”

**Public Hearing opened at 7:40**

**Public Hearing closed at 7:41 p.m.**

**Motion by Mitchell, seconded by R. Reid,** to approve the ordinance amendment.

Williams suggested changing it from 10% to 20%. Mitchell said he likes making the applicant work for it. So between those percentages they need to spell it out and provide justification as to why they need it. Finke provides a sketch for visual aide showing 100 foot courtyard.

**Williams proposed a friendly Amendment to Mitchell’s motion, seconded by Mitchell,** to recommend approval of the Ordinance Amendment subject to striking “if it deems practically necessary” and replacing it with “at the City’s sole discretion.” **Motion carried unanimously.** (Absent: Nolan).

7. **Public Hearing – Loram – 3900 Arrowhead Drive – Variance to exceed the area of loading docks permitted on a structure; Site Plan Review for accessory structure and parking lot expansion**

Finke presented the application and explained a Site Plan Review was necessary for construction of a 4000 square foot storage building and adding 23 parking stalls to their existing parking lot. Stucco was being proposed by the applicant as an exterior material. The building does not provide any elements of modulation. Stucco is an acceptable exterior material and the three loading dock doors would exceed the 10 percent allowed by Code. Staff feels the application meets the necessary requirements, if extra docks would be allowed by the Council adopting the ordinance amendment previously discussed. If not, he stated that staff does not believe the criteria for a variance were met, and would recommend denial.

**Public Hearing opened at 7:47 p.m.**

Tim Heisel, Facilities Manager for Loram, said the concern for the loading dock doors is that they will be used as a storage building and they need a 14 foot in height door for use of their forklifts. If they didn't put in the proposed number of loading dock doors they would have one section of the building spanning 55 feet in width without a loading dock door. He said it would make everything in the central portion of the building unusable. They intend to rack the entire building because the current CEO is pushing to have everything inside. They have things sitting outside such as large stairways, hydraulic filtering stations, plow trucks, and utility trucks would be stored inside and having three doors would allow for the access they need for the entire building and improved efficiency.

Foote said the building is 80 feet wide and Loram proposes three – fourteen foot doors. The accessory building would be 75 feet away from their main building. V. Reid said what would be seen from the highway would not be loading docks. Heisel said because of the railroad tracks and berms they may not see anything from Hwy 55. Williams asked the applicant what Loram would do if their application wasn't approved. Heisel said the CEO said "why build it if it doesn't work." They would continue with what they are doing he said. Heisel said the building will be fairly expensive and if it can't meet their needs then why build it. He said the CEO regularly goes around and asks questions of what is really needed and how often are the things/equipment used. He said all doors are invisible to all except themselves.

**Public Hearing closed at 7:54 p.m.**

R. Reid said she agrees with staff that the Loram application does not meet the Variance requirements. Finke suggested language to the Commission as it related to the Ordinance Amendment and Variance being requested. Finke said if the Council adopts the Ordinance Amendment previously heard for the IP district, staff recommends approval of Loram's request. If Council doesn't approve the Ordinance Amendment, staff recommends denial of their request.

Weir said she thought the district was more of an oversight and reason for ordinance amendment. She said she is only one of the five on the Council, but she is in favor of the request. She asked if the dumpster along Hamel Road would be removed as part of the proposed building. Heisel said the existing dumpster was only intended for getting rid of old furniture and not intended to be permanent.

Heisel asked if they knew where the old propane tank used to be, since that is where the building is being proposed.

Mitchell said outside storage is an issue to him and appreciates Loram working on cleaning up the area. He also said modulation of the building design is also an issue for him. The building dimensions are 50 x 80 and asked that the applicant modulate the new building.

Heisel said Finke suggested a patio on the outside of the building facing Arrowhead Road for curb appeal. The patio could be constructed with pervious pavers.

R. Reid commended the applicant on the existing principal building and the proposed building and said it wasn't a concern for her. R. Reid said she was fine with the application and hadn't ever considered the height and size compared to the principal building. Foote

asked the building height and Heisel said 20 feet, but he is not sure of pitch at this point since they are still working on it.

Williams said the application didn't qualify for a variance and their application was conditioned upon the City Council approving an ordinance that allows Loram's building proposal.

R. Reid asked if hardy board was more durable than stucco. Weir said maybe it's a material the City should consider. Finke said staff would support it. It was suggested staff research hardy board and allow it as an exterior material in the Business and Industrial districts.

**Motion by Mitchell, seconded by Foote**, to recommend approval of the Site Plan Review contingent on the City Council adopting an ordinance which would cause the proposed loading docks to be in compliance. Further move that such approval be subject to the conditions noted in the staff report, with the following modifications:

- 1) amend condition number 3 to state "additional architectural elements are strongly recommended to be provided on the storage building,"
- 2) add condition 7 to state "Review outside storage and bring into compliance for the Loram property at the NE corner of Hamel Road and Arrowhead Drive,"

Further move that, if the loading dock ordinance amendment is not adopted, the Commission does not support a Variance for this application. **Motion carried unanimously.** (Absent: Nolan).

8. **Council Meeting Schedule**

Williams agreed to attend and present at the May 20, 2014 Council meeting.

9. **Adjourn**

**Motion by White, seconded by Williams**, to adjourn at 8:15p.m. Motion carried unanimously. (Absent: Nolan).