

CITY OF MEDINA
PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday October 13, 2015

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

Present: Planning Commissioners Todd Albers, Randy Foote, Kim Murrin, Victoria Reid, Janet White, and Kent Williams.

Absent: Planning Commissioner Charles Nolan.

Also Present: Planning Consultant Nate Sparks, City Planner Dusty Finke, and City Councilmember John Anderson.

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

There were none.

3. **Update from City Council Proceedings**

Anderson reported that the City Council met two weeks ago to consider an approval of the Preliminary Plat for Stonegate, which was approved as a part of the Consent Agenda, and advised that the Council also approved a PUD for 3 Rivers Church.

4. **Planning Department Report**

Finke provided an update.

5. **Approval of the September 8, 2015 Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.**

Motion by Williams, seconded by Foote, to approve the September 8, 2015, Planning Commission minutes with corrections as noted. Motion carries unanimously. (Absent: Nolan)

6. **Public Hearing – Ordinance Amendment - Building Materials in the Rural Business Holding District and Rural Commercial Holding District**

Sparks presented a zoning amendment request related to the Highway 55 mini storage, noting that the business would like cement fiber board siding added as an allowed primary building material in the rural business holding (RBH) district. He noted that the rural commercial holding (RCH) district has overlapping standards and therefore has also been included in this request. He reviewed the current building material standards for the RBH/RCH districts and the purpose for those standards. He stated that the applicant would like cement fiber board siding to be allowed as a primary building material, noting that currently the material is only allowed to be used for a maximum of 20 percent of the building. He stated that some cities are starting to allow cement fiber board siding into their commercial and business districts on uses such as hotels and apartments. He stated that the City has recently allowed the use of the materials in two applications, the Golf Course and Goddard School, through the use of PUD. He provided photographs of buildings that use that type of material. He stated that even though the applicant is only requesting the material be allowed as a primary material in the RBH district, staff also included it in the RCH District because of the overlapping standards.

Murrin stated that earlier this summer she saw a news story where a hotel in Bloomington was having problems with its concrete siding and questioned if the proposed material is the same and whether durable and whether it requires additional maintenance.

Sparks stated that the material can require additional maintenance in terms of paint, but noted that the material does have a long lasting warranty period, which he believed to be 50 years. He stated that you can find issues online with any building materials if the material is not installed correctly. He stated that the materials listed in the primary building category are long lasting and noted that a 50 year warranty for the cement fiber board siding could be considered long lasting as well.

Reid asked if the applicant is requesting the use of cement fiber board siding because the material is cheaper than the other options currently allowed.

Sparks replied that he was unsure of the motivations, but believed that the material is cheaper than the other materials currently allowed.

Reid stated that it appears staff is proposing the change to the interim zoning districts, but not the permanent zoning districts.

Sparks stated that the intent was simply to address the applicant's request and not to fully review the entire ordinance. He believed that the cement fiber board is currently allowed in the Uptown Hamel zoning district.

Finke confirmed that the material is currently allowed in the Uptown Hamel districts.

Williams asked how the installation process compares to the other materials currently allowed.

Sparks stated that it would depend on the type of material that is used, whether lap siding or panels are used. He noted that the applicant has an expert present that can provide additional information.

Williams stated that it is his understanding that the water can seep in through the seams if not properly installed. He noted that with EFIS the water would get trapped. He stated that there is significant litigation over cement fiber board.

Footo asked the reason for the litigation.

Williams stated that the manufacturer is stating that the problem was installation, but noted that the problem could be an issue of design. He stated that there could be issues with rotting, mold and moisture intrusion.

Reid opened the public hearing at 7:20 p.m.

Jeff Pederson, 710 Shawnee Woods Road, stated that he purchased the mini storage 3.5 years ago and chose the material because there are so many places between the doors, and cement fiber board seems to be the material of the future. He stated that the material meets the fire codes better than other products currently offered.

Brian Varner, BV Construction, stated that he prefers to use the 7.25 lap siding with hidden fasteners underneath. He stated that people have run into problems with the paper used beneath the weather barrier.

Williams stated that problems with EFIS arose from the material used underneath, noting that he has seen solid plywood rotted all the way through in the past. He stated that his guard is instantly up when he hears of new products, but is glad to see that mechanical fasteners are being used rather than glue.

Varner stated that they use the Tyvek paper, and with the lap siding the water would drain all the way to the bottom if it does get beneath the siding. He confirmed that he has heard of the litigation.

Murrin asked if Varner would agree that the product lasts 50 years if installed correctly.

Varner confirmed that the only issue that he would see is fading of the paint because the hidden fasteners would be used.

Murrin asked the advantage of cement fiber board over vinyl siding.

Varner replied that there is a huge advantage over vinyl siding because the cement fiber boarding is much more durable and has a good fire rating.

Williams stated that perhaps a stipulation should be added that mechanical fasteners would be necessary for this type of material.

Varner agreed that installation is a huge factor in the use of cement fiber board.

Reid closed the public hearing at 7:29 p.m.

White stated that the amendment is limited to the RBH and RCH zoning districts, noting that she would not want to open the material to use by the other commercial zoning districts. She agreed that mechanical fasteners should be required and would then support the use of the materials.

Albers also agreed that he would support this request.

Williams noted that mechanical fasteners may not address the issue of water intrusion and suggested limiting the use of the material to lap siding.

Varner noted that lap siding has to be installed with mechanical fasteners or the material would not be warrantied.

Williams referenced Subdivision 2B, and suggested possible language using commercial grade cement fiber board lap siding.

Murrin commented that rather than changing the ordinance, perhaps when someone wants to use the material, they come through the Planning Commission to request that, which would allow more control.

Williams stated that would require an applicant to go through a PUD, as a variance could not be granted.

Finke noted that PUD criteria would then need to be considered for a request.

Williams stated that perhaps the Commission would not want to make an applicant go through the PUD process.

Finke noted that the PUD criteria are stringent.

Williams stated that he is not as concerned with the added material if lap siding is specified.

Reid agreed that the Commission should consider whether or not to approve the material.

Murrin asked and received confirmation that the material could be installed without being warrantied. She had concern that the material could still be glued. She asked if the builder had any language he would recommend to deter the use of glue instead of fasteners.

Varner stated that if glue is used, that would be caught during the inspections as that would not be an approved installation process. He stated that a statement could be added specifying that the material be installed to the manufacturer's recommendations.

Williams agreed that additional statement could be helpful.

Foote asked what recourse the City would have if the material is installed incorrectly and deteriorates after 10 years.

Sparks noted that the item could be addressed under the nuisance ordinance.

Williams reviewed the proposed language "commercial grade cement fiber board lap siding installed per the manufacturer's recommendation."

Motion by Williams, seconded by Foote, to recommend approval of the amended ordinance 835.08 and 835.208 as indicated in the draft provided by staff with the modification that subdivision 2, sub B, would be amended for both sections after cement fiber board to indicate "lap siding, installed pursuant to the manufacturer's specifications." Motion carries unanimously. (Absent: Nolan)

7. **Highway 55 Rental Portable Storage LLC – 4790 Rolling Hills Road – Site Plan Review**

Sparks presented the Site Plan review for the existing Highway 55 mini storage facility, which is an 18 acre parcel, noting that the building and proposed building area only covers four acres of the site as the majority of the remaining site is wetland and natural area. He stated that the applicant is proposing to expand the facility to gain approval for three new buildings, two of which would be built immediately and one in the future. He reviewed the current zoning of the parcel and future guiding of the parcel and surrounding parcels. He stated that in 1995 the City approved a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for ten mini storage buildings, noting that the applicant is proposing to add three buildings, which is still less than the ten originally proposed and therefore the CUP would not need to be amended. He reviewed the existing square footage of the building on site and the proposed new buildings. He stated that as proposed the new buildings would meet the setbacks of the zoning district, and noted that the use would continue to be the same. He provided photographs of the building and a design proposal which would use the cement fiber board material just approved by the Commission in the last case. He reviewed the proposed building materials for the buildings and the proposed roof materials. He stated that the applicant is proposing to provide modulation with height rather than bump-outs because of the design of the buildings. He stated that the building height would be less than the 30 foot maximum allowed. He stated that staff recommends that the drive access and aisles be paved. He stated that the fire marshals recommended that it be ensured that the fire vehicles could be moved through the site, specifically through the east side. He noted that no additional parking is proposed because parking occurs in front of the storage units. He stated that there are no employees

and therefore no employee parking is proposed or required. He noted that the applicant is providing additional wetland buffering in certain areas. He noted that four trees are proposed to be removed and explained that would not be impactful because of the size of the parcel. He noted that the Commission could require additional screening if desired. He advised that the fencing would be expanded to include the entirety of the new area and noted that enhancement of the security system have been proposed. He noted that a lighting plan would be required with the building permit. He stated that there is no provision for trash. He explained that in this type of use the applicant has stated that if there is a large trash enclosure, users will place items in the trash which can become a problem. He stated that no new signage is requested and noted that there is not a utility plan showing sewer and water because the office duties are handled by Highway 55 Rental. He stated that staff feels that the applicant conforms to the requirements of the zoning district, as long as the Council approves the material changes recommended by the Commission during the last case.

Williams asked for more information on the enhancements to the security system recommended by the public safety director.

Finke stated that there were not specific enhancements for the security system noted.

Sparks stated that the condition could read security system enhancements to the satisfaction of the public safety director.

Albers asked the type of fence currently at the facility.

Pederson stated that there is a six or eight foot chain link fence currently and confirmed that there is no wire on the top of the fence.

Williams stated that thefts were noted by the public safety director, but noted that it did not specify when the thefts occurred. He referenced the issue of parking and asked for additional information.

Sparks stated that there are not specific parking regulations for this type of facility because there are not employees.

Williams asked the number of units at the facility.

Reid stated that parking is provided in front of each garage door for the units.

Sparks estimated 76 units for the two additional buildings along with the current storage building.

Williams asked the number of existing parking stalls.

Sparks stated that there is informal parking for the facility, noting that proposed design would match the existing layout, with customers parking in front of the stalls. He stated that there are areas available where additional paving could occur for striped parking stalls should the Commission desire.

Finke stated that typically the customer is not leaving their vehicle unattended and is loading or unloading items into their storage unit and then leaving in their vehicle.

Albers stated that if parking stalls were provided, that might encourage people to leave vehicles for a period of time rather than leaving the site after their work is done at their storage unit.

Pederson stated that there was an attempted break-in when he first purchased the property, but has not had an incident of theft since he has owned the property. He noted that he goes through the site three times each day and if there is an unlocked unit, he places a lock on the unit and then calls the customer and informs them of the replaced lock. He stated that he will work with the public safety director to determine what improvements need to be made. He stated that typically people load their items into the storage unit and do not return until they need something from the unit. He stated that there is not a lot of traffic that goes through the site, noting that he was at the site on Sunday for five hours and there was not one person that came through the site. He stated that he is the only employee for the site at this time. He explained that each customer has a unique code to open and close the gate so that he can track who comes and goes into the site. He stated that there had been problems before he purchased the facility, but noted the previous owner lived in Saint Paul. He noted that perhaps people know that he owns it and is more attentive which has stopped the theft incidents.

Reid asked if Pederson believed that additional parking would be required.

Pederson noted that he has never seen anyone in the site doing anything other than loading or unloading their unit and they park in front of their unit. He stated that he has only owned the site for the past 3.5 years and is still learning.

Reid stated that there is a lot of hardcover and she did not believe that additional parking would be needed.

White asked how the new buildings would look compared to the existing building.

Pederson stated that the existing building will not be seen from Highway 55 and displayed a sketch of the newly proposed buildings. He noted that the new buildings would not have doors that face the highway. He advised that he did install a new sign and LED lighting on the site this past year.

White referenced the property to the north which appears to have a heavy tree line between the properties and asked if there has been any input from that property owner.

Pederson confirmed that there is a berm with trees on top of the berm. He stated that the property owner to the north has commented that he is interested in being the caretaker of the site. He stated that he keeps the property neat and clean and believed that is appreciated by the neighboring property owner.

Albers commented that he likes the landscaping and sees the site as an improvement from what it had been.

Murrin asked what the current building is composed of.

Pederson stated that the building material is rock faced block.

Murrin asked if there are security lights or cameras.

Pederson replied that he does have motion activated lights, but does not have security cameras because there is not an internet speed available to support that element.

Murrin asked if Pederson would find it useful to have signs posted stating that people can only park for a limited amount of time.

Pederson stated that he is open to that if the Commission has a recommendation, but did not see that being an issue because there are not that many people using the site at one time or for extended periods of time.

Murrin asked if the applicant is planning to extend the chain link fence to match the existing fence.

Pederson confirmed that he would be extending the chain link fence and noted that the fence is six feet in height and not eight feet in height, as he was unsure earlier in the meeting.

Murrin asked, and received confirmation, that the entire area shown in grey on the sketch would be paved.

Foote stated that he appreciates the modulation proposed.

Reid asked if lights would be on during the night hours.

Pederson noted that the lights would meet City Code and would be on during the dawn and dusk hours.

White asked if the site has hours, or if the site is available 24 hours.

Pederson stated that the site is open 24 hours, but noted that he has not noticed customers coming to the site during the late night hours.

Murrin referenced condition four and confirmed the consensus of the Commission to clarify that the landscaping plan should meet the standards of 832 and 828. She asked if the Commission wanted to add a condition regarding the fencing.

Williams stated that is already part of the plan.

Murrin asked if an additional condition should be added addressing the public safety director's comments.

Williams noted that is already a condition.

Motion by Murrin, seconded by Albers, to recommend approval of the Highway 55 Rental Portable Storage LLC Site Plan review with the recommendations proposed by staff, revising condition four to include Sections 832.3.04 and 828.41, and adding an eighth condition stating that all concerns of the public safety director shall be addressed. Motion approved unanimously. (Absent: Nolan)

8. Council Meeting Schedule

Albers volunteered to attend the next Council meeting.

8. Adjourn

Motion by Williams, seconded by White, to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.