

CITY OF MEDINA
PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday February 11, 2020

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

Present: Planning Commissioners Aaron Amic, Peter Galzki, Ron Grajczyk, Beth Nielsen, Kerby Nester, Cindy Piper, and Robin Reid.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Planning Director Dusty Finke and City Planner Deb Dion.

2. **Introduction of Planning Commission Members**

All the members of the Commission introduced themselves and provided background information on their experience.

3. **Election of 2020 Planning Commission Chair**

Finke opened the floor for nominations for the position of Chair.

Motion by Piper, seconded by Amic, to nominate Reid as 2020 Planning Commission Chair.

Finke called for other nominations. No other nominations were made.

Motion by Piper, seconded by Amic, to elect Reid as 2020 Planning Commission Chair. Motion carries unanimously.

4. **Election of 2020 Planning Commission Vice-Chair**

Finke opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chair.

Motion by Reid, seconded by Nester, to nominate Amic as 2020 Planning Commission Vice-Chair.

Finke called for other nominations. No other nominations were made.

Motion by Reid, seconded by Nester, to elect Amic as 2020 Planning Commission Vice-Chair. Motion carries unanimously.

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

No comments made.

6. **Update from City Council Proceedings**

Finke provided an update from the most recent City Council action. He reported that the Council approved the variance request for the Raskob property, refinanced bonds, and

applied for and received a grant to complete a study of fire/public safety services. He stated that the Council heard the OSI request and directed staff to approve documents of approval. He advised that a new Police Officer was hired, noting that Belland will be retiring at the end of March and current Sergeant Jason Nelson will be promoted to the Chief position. He stated that the Police Department is currently recruiting for the Sergeant position. He advised that there was a resignation in the Public Works Department and staff is currently recruiting for that maintenance position.

7. **Planning Department Report**

Finke provided an update.

8. **Public Hearing – Ordinance Amendment: Residential Parking Requirements**

Dion stated that this ordinance review started with a staff review of a potential application for a townhome project. She stated that at that preapplication meeting the square footage minimum for the garage space of 440 square feet was determined to be too high for the project. She noted that the development seemed to meet all the other requirements for a townhome development in Medina, with the exception of garage size. She stated that the City currently requires a minimum of 440 square feet for a single-family home and townhome. She noted that staff then reviewed the requirements of other communities in the metro area and reviewed those findings. She provided photographs provided by a developer of two vehicles parked inside garages of smaller square footage. She stated that in 2011 the City passed the regulation requiring a minimum square footage of 440 square feet for a garage and noted that prior to that the City did not have a minimum requirement. She stated that prior to the regulation, the Lennar townhome project used garage sizes of 370 and 389 square feet in size.

Finke noted that the Dominion townhome project, which was constructed after the 440 square foot requirement, made similar comments about garage size and had to adjust their design to accommodate larger than normally built garage sizes.

Nielsen stated that she did not see Corcoran on the list.

Finke stated that city does not have much of an existing townhome development and therefore staff did not look into that city.

Piper stated that she is surprised that Wayzata and Orono do not have minimum requirements.

Amic stated that in his opinion Wayzata has a more urban feel which typically has less garage space.

Nester noted a conference she recently attended where it was stated that as transportation continues to change, people will most likely change their garage space to additional living space.

Amic noted that he has also heard that many families may transition from two vehicles to one vehicle.

Dion reviewed the recommendation for the minimum garage size for single-family homes to remain at 440 square feet with townhomes decreasing to 400 square feet.

Finke stated that currently the City has many regulations based on different uses in different districts. He stated that the proposed table would standardize the requirements for garages based on use rather than zoning district. He stated that in some cases two garage spaces would now be required where not previously required and therefore those properties would become non-conforming. He explained that those properties are within “legacy districts” that were constructed prior to the regulations enacted in the 1980s. He used the example of the Independence Beach neighborhood.

Reid opened the public hearing at 7:27 p.m.

No comment made.

Reid closed the public hearing at 7:27 p.m.

Nester stated that her fear would be that people would not have enough room to park two vehicles in their garage and would park one vehicle outdoors, which is not aesthetically pleasing. She stated that she is in agreement with the restructuring within the ordinance but would remain at a minimum of 440 square feet.

Nielsen stated that this sounded similar to the deck issue on Hunter, where builders build as much as they can. She commented that this would allow a builder to build more home with less garage/deck.

Piper commented that a smaller garage would also cause people to want to place their trash cans outside of the garage.

Nielsen commented that this could also cause people to put their bicycles and other items outdoors.

Reid commented that often happens at homes with two and three car garages.

Amic commented that some trucks are too large to park in a garage. He stated that when walking through the Enclave townhome development, he does not often notice two vehicles parked in a garage. He commented that often those garages have enough space for one vehicle and the additional storage items.

Nielsen asked if 400 square feet would be sufficient for the potential development application.

Finke stated that the developer would still need to modify their plans, noting that the difference would simply be how much living space would need to be converted to garage space.

Piper asked if townhome developments require vehicles to be parked in garages.

Finke commented that often trash cans are required to be in the garage but not vehicles. He stated that the Enclave townhome development has garages of 380 square feet, and therefore 400 would be slightly larger.

Amic commented that at 400 square feet you are probably not going to fit two vehicles. He commented that he does not believe that garage space will be a problem in 20 years and believed that 400 square feet seemed like a good middle ground.

Galzki stated that one amenity of Medina is the amount of open space and he is leery when he sees the trend in more development of smaller homes. He stated that 440 square feet is already a small garage and would leave it as is.

Nielsen stated that if the garage size was reduced, the developer could potentially redesign to add another townhome unit.

Galzki stated that the development would still need to meet all the other zoning requirements and a few hundred square feet will most likely not make a significant difference.

Finke stated that the developer has stated that if the requirement is changed to 400 square feet, the builder could make the change converting living space to garage space, but at 440 square feet the entire model would need to be changed. He noted that the developer has not tweaked their model to that degree for any other community in the metro.

Reid stated that she would not have a problem changing the minimum to 400 square feet, as people moving into townhomes often expect less space. She referenced the requirement that would require all garage space to be connected or tucked under. She asked how that would apply to multi-family housing, such as apartments.

Finke stated that if the requirement is not included, the apartment would have the option for a detached garage bank that is a more outdated style of construction.

Amic commented that he believes that the Enclave townhome garages are too small but agreed that 400 square feet would seem to be a good middle ground.

Finke explained that for townhomes, the larger requirement would equate to more garage façade rather than living space. He spoke of the relation of the size requirements and density requirements, noting that only so much will fit on the land still meeting the density and other requirements.

Galzki commented that 400 square feet seems sufficient for a townhome and would be a good compromise in providing for additional development.

Motion by Nester, seconded by Piper, to keep the minimum garage size at 440 square feet.

Further discussion: Nielsen stated that the question would then be whether to change the other requirements recommended by staff.

Motion by Nester, seconded by Piper, to keep the minimum garage size at 440 square feet and recommend approval of the other changes to the ordinance pertaining to residential parking as presented. Motion failed with a vote of 3–4 (Nester, Nielsen, and Piper in support).

Galzki noted that there are requirements from the Metropolitan Council and this change would help to support the required density.

Grajcyk commented that he previously lived in a townhome with a smaller garage that was still very nice with good curb appeal. He commented that in his experience 400 square feet was enough space to park two vehicles and keep the trash can inside.

Motion by Amic, seconded by Galzki, to recommend adoption of the ordinance amending regulations pertaining to residential parking as recommended by staff with a minimum garage

size of 400 square feet for townhomes. Motion carries 4-3 (Nester, Nielsen, and Piper opposed).

9. **Approval of the December 10, 2019 Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.**

Motion by Nielsen, seconded by Galzki, to approve the December 10, 2019, Planning Commission minutes with the noted changes. Motion carries unanimously.

10. **Council Meeting Schedule**

Finke advised that the Council will be meeting the following Tuesday but noted that the Commission could provide a representative for the first Council meeting in March. Nielsen volunteered to attend in representation of the Commission.

11. **Adjourn**

Motion by Galzki, seconded by Piper, to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.