

**CITY OF MEDINA**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday November 10, 2020

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

Present: Planning Commissioners Theresa Couri, Peter Galzki, Ron Grajczyk, Beth Nielsen, Cindy Piper, Justin Popp, and Robin Reid.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Planning Director Dusty Finke, City Planner Deb Dion, and Planning Consultant Nate Sparks

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

No comments made.

3. **Update from City Council Proceedings**

Albers reported that the Council met the previous week and continued the public hearing related to easement vacation for the Lennar application. He stated that the Council will meet Friday to certify the results of the elections.

4. **Planning Department Report**

Finke provided an update.

5. **Weston Woods of Medina – Mark Smith – North of Hwy 55, East of Mohawk Drive – Preliminary Plat and Planned Unit Development General Plan – Development of 76 Twinhomes, 42 Single-Family, and 32 Townhomes – PIDs 0311823420001, 0311823410001, 0311823430005, and 0311823130002**

Finke presented a request for a PUD and Preliminary Plat for the Weston Woods development which includes a 150-unit residential development and seven-acre passive park area that would be dedicated to the City. In April, the Council adopted conditional approval of a Comprehensive Plan amendment for this parcel and reviewed a Concept Plan for this PUD. Since that time, the City has submitted an environmental assessment worksheet to the State for comment and review, which relates to the wetland impacts contemplated for the Chippewa Road extension from Mohawk Drive to Arrowhead. He stated that none of the agencies recommended that the more in-depth environmental review be required. He stated that the following week staff is recommending that the Council make the determination that an environmental impact statement not be required. He displayed an aerial photograph of the subject site and reviewed the zoning designation/land uses of each of the two parcels along with adjacent properties. He identified the areas of the project proposed for townhomes, twinhomes and single-family homes. He provided details on the Chippewa Road extension. He stated that the applicant has requested a Planned Unit Development (PUD), which allows flexibility to the zoning standards in return for better serving the objectives of the zoning ordinance and other City objectives. He provided details on three different types of lots proposed, noting that most of the flexibility requested is internal to the site which allows

more open space on the periphery of the site. He reviewed the details related to architectural design and provided photograph examples of the different home products. He stated that the southern site includes about 14 acres of woodlands, noting that half of that area would be preserved as a passive park. He noted that tree replacement would be required for removals above what is allowed by Code. He provided details on wetland impacts and infrastructure. He noted that the plat would be contingent upon approval of the PUD. He stated that two public comments were received, one of which was included in the Commission packet, and provided to the Commission. He stated that staff recommends approval of the PUD and Preliminary Plat subject to the conditions listed in the staff report.

Nielsen asked and received confirmation that the Planning Commission recommended denial of the Comprehensive Plan amendment. She referenced the proposed list of conditions and asked where the road would fall in that list.

Finke confirmed that would be included in condition six.

Grajczyk asked if the developer intends to build the twinhomes and townhomes but not the single-family homes.

Finke replied that the applicant can answer that question in their presentation.

Popp referenced condition 10 and asked if that would mean that the watermain would not source the irrigation system.

Finke confirmed that to be true. He explained that the City does not allow any new residential development to use the City's domestic water system for lawn and landscape irrigation. He stated that the applicant proposes stormwater reuse to supply water for irrigation purposes.

Popp referenced condition 12 and asked for a highlight of recommendations that may be included from the City Engineer related to Chippewa Road.

Finke stated that the primary comments were to attempt to reduce the wetland impacts for the roadway. He noted that as the broader permit process is completed for Chippewa Road there will be many other comments from multiple agencies and the plan will be adjusted throughout the process.

Mark Smith, applicant, stated that they intend not to build the single-family product as their main business has been the construction of twinhomes and townhomes. He stated that he is present to address any additional questions.

Reid opened the public hearing at 7:28 p.m.

Doug Macky, 4562 Bluebell Trail N, stated that initially this project stirred up a lot of discussion amongst his neighbors. He stated that after reviewing the plan and the evolution over the past year, this looks like a great use and similar neighborhood. He stated that they were pleased with the Fields of Medina neighborhood, including the trails and park, which have benefited the residents. He stated that he is excited to have a product of this type in the community that is available for those in the community that are aging or attempting to downsize. He referenced the park and private trails proposed and asked how the Bridgewater residents could access those amenities as there is not a park within Bridgewater.

Mr. Smith stated that they would have a trail that would be constructed with the new Chippewa Road and would connect to Arrowhead and that trail. He stated that there is another connecting point that will link to the park. He confirmed that there would be access for the Bridgewater residents to enjoy those amenities.

Mr. Macky commented that this looks like a great development and does not believe there is an opposition from the existing residents. He stated that this will be a benefit to the area.

Finke acknowledged the written comment received after the packet was sent out from the resident at 4111 Cavanaugh in support of the project and will become part of the record.

Todd Albers, 4800 Cubby Trail, asked if the single-family home product could be switched to townhomes if the market does not have demand for single-family homes.

Mr. Smith replied that their intent would not be to change that housing product, as there is a strong demand for single-family housing. He explained that his business typically does not construct custom single-family homes and therefore they would use a different builder for that product to compliment the other housing products. He stated that they would not propose to add additional twinhomes or townhomes. He stated that there is a demand for the twinhome and townhome product in this area, noting that even some Bridgewater residents have expressed interest as their children age, and they are looking to downsize.

Reid closed the public hearing at 7:38 p.m.

Galzki stated that he is happy to hear the residents in this area are supportive of the project and hopes that is a result of communication with the developer. He stated that he appreciates the changes that have been made by the developer and the contributions, especially the Chippewa Road extension. He commented that although this would require some changes and flexibility, it would provide an overall benefit to the community as well.

Piper commented that she is impressed and will be eager to see what is done with the park area. She commented that for the number of homes in that area, 5.1 acres feels small for a park. She stated that she does like the design.

Nielsen commented that she is still not in favor of moving up the staging but believes that good adjustments have been made to the plan and sees the benefits that would be provided to the City. She was also pleased that those previously opposed to the development in the neighboring development are now supportive.

Grajczyk thanked the applicant and City staff for working together to find the best ways to make use of the property and work with the neighboring residents. He commented that he likes the layout in this design better, which provides more buffered areas between the development and adjacent properties.

Couri stated that she agrees with the comments that this would provide a housing product needed in the community to allow residents to downsize from their larger homes. She stated that this appears to be a well-done project.

Popp stated that initially he was hesitant because of the staging and slow growth vision of the Comprehensive Plan. He commented that this is a well thought out design and appreciates the preservation of open space and wetland. He stated that the benefits to the City are also obvious and he is pleased with the development and reaction of the neighboring residents.

Reid commented that when the Commission previously reviewed the project the request was made to provide a variety of architectural styles and designs, which has been done. She stated that adding this variety of housing will be a benefit to Medina and she is happy with the proposed plan.

Finke commented that there is a park search in this area to serve not only this site but other properties that will develop in this area.

**Motion by Piper, seconded by Nielsen,** to recommend approval of the PUD General Plan of Development and Preliminary Plat, subject to the conditions noted in the staff report.

A roll call vote was performed:

Nielsen	aye
Galzki	aye
Piper	aye
Grajczyk	aye
Couri	aye
Popp	aye
Reid	aye

Motion carries unanimously.

6. **Holy Name Lake Estates – Donovan DesMarais – North of County Road 24, Northwest of Holy Name Lake – Preliminary Plat for Six-Lot Subdivision on Approximately 90 Acres and Variance from Maximum Cul-De-Sac Length – PIDs 2411823210001, 2411823220002, and 2411823240001**

Sparks presented a request for Preliminary Plat with a cul-de-sac length variance for the subject site. He noted that the request would require an extension of Pinto Drive into the property. He stated that three parcels would be divided into six lots and the lots generally meet the rural residential standards except for the cul-de-sac length. He stated that the subject property has a flag lot configuration that connects to Pinto Drive, which would serve as access to the site and the road would continue as shown on the plat. He stated that if the existing road were considered a cul-de-sac, it would already exceed the cul-de-sac length standard. He stated that the applicant proposes lots that generally meet the lot standards. He noted that the property requires a soils contestation, as the applicant believes that the Hennepin County soils map is inaccurate for this property. He stated that the applicant has submitted a diagram that identifies the contested soil areas. He stated that it does appear that the contest of the soils map is acceptable. He provided details on the cul-de-sac length standard and proposed variance. He stated that this is the only access for the parcel and there are no other alternatives, therefore this could be considered as a reasonable request. He provided details on the proposed trails as recommended by the Park Commission which would include dedication of trail easements and cash in lieu. He stated that the proposed tree removal would meet the City's requirements. He stated that staff recommends approval of the plat with the conditions noted in the staff report.

Nielsen asked why there is a limit on the length of a cul-de-sac.

Sparks explained that the intent is to prevent a long cul-de-sac with many homes on it in an urban area. He stated that the City regulation is 750 feet and/or 20 homes. He stated that if something were to happen, the City would not want to have long segments of roads that cannot be accessed by public safety. He noted that it is also difficult for plow trucks to go

down long segments of road with no way out. He stated that this is the nature of this rural area and there is not another option, therefore this does not seem very impactful.

Nielsen stated that she lives on a cul-de-sac road in the neighboring community and asked if the length of her road is known for comparison.

Grajczyk asked for details on the path of Pinto Drive.

Sparks stated that there are existing homes in this area and the new portion of Pinto Drive and confirmed that the new segment would go between two of the homes.

Grajczyk asked if Holy Name Lake is considered an impaired water body and whether there would be street improvements for Pinto Drive in terms of stormwater management.

Sparks stated that this application is going through the permitting process of the watershed. He was unsure of whether the lake is considered impaired. He noted that stormwater management would be provided through stormwater ponding and other infrastructure within this plan.

Grajczyk asked if any upgrades or improvements would be needed for Pinto Drive near 24.

Sparks noted that a portion of the road would be reconstructed along with this project and the City Engineer has provided comments. He stated that additional stormwater management is not required for the improved section of roadway as it is already existing roadway that is just being improved.

Piper asked for details on the width of the new Pinto Drive that would go within the subdivision.

Donavan DesMarais, the applicant, replied that the roadway would range in width from 22 to 24 feet as allowed by City Code. He stated that anywhere Pinto would connect to 24 and has been deemed substandard would be made standard through improvement. He stated that they would also re-engineer a portion of the road that has been deemed substandard to meet the City requirements. He stated that it will be a wider road all the way through which would serve the new homes along with the two existing homes that are served by the shared gravel driveway. He stated that this development would include large acreage lots ranging from 10 to 23 acres that would have a rural feel. He noted that the improvement work would be completed to Pinto Drive to make access to the landlocked parcels.

Paul Otto, project engineer, stated that they are in the process of review from the watershed, noting that their plans have been revised to incorporate the first round of suggestions from that entity. He stated that they will improve ditch sections and culverts to handle stormwater. He stated that within the development there would be a number of ponds, infiltration areas, and other stormwater management elements to meet the City and watershed requirements. He stated that the road would be paved and provided dimensional standards.

Grajczyk asked how soon the applicant would begin construction if this is approved.

DesMarais replied that due to seasonality they would postpone the start of this to late May when the road restrictions are lifted. He estimated that the first home construction would begin in late summer of 2021.

Nielsen asked if public safety has commented on the length of the cul-de-sac and whether there have been concerns expressed.

Sparks replied that negative comments were not received from public safety.

Reid opened the public hearing at 8:15 p.m.

Bruce Eidenshank, 2232 Pinto Drive, stated that there is a utility that runs through the front of his property and asked if it has been considered to route that underground. He commented that there is a wetland near his barn that drains to a ditch on the proposed development. He commented that when the ditch backs up, it floods into his barn, and asked if there are plans to improve that with a culvert. He referenced the Hennepin County park trails map, which appears to run through his property and asked if there could be clarity provided on that diagram.

DesMarais commented that the utility easement for power would go underground and run along Pinto Drive as it enters the subdivision, confirming that the overhead line would be replaced with the underground system. He stated that they continue discussions with the watershed to ensure any impact to wetlands would be mitigated. He stated that he is unsure of the source of backup to that wetland mentioned but stated that perhaps there are things they can do with sitework that can address that issue. He noted that they would not want to create or perpetuate existing issues.

Sparks commented that the trail plan is usually quite generalized and conceptual. He stated that the City would look to provide a connection between two roads in a generalized area. He explained that as properties develop within the conceptual area, actual trail connections are identified. He noted that the first diagram shows the conceptual trail plan while the second shows the actual proposed segment that would connect to the road right-of-way.

Eidenshank asked if homeowners must pay for the utility reconnections.

DesMarais replied that he did not imagine that there would be a cost to existing residents and any potential costs would be of the developer.

John Ducharme, 2182 Pinto Drive, asked what the improvements would be for the north/south section of Pinto Drive. He asked if the power lines along that section of Pinto would also be buried.

Otto replied that they walked the site with City staff and acknowledged the challenging apron of the resident. He stated that they designed around the end of that driveway, noting that they would match into the decorative end of that driveway. He stated that they would raise the road to better match that driveway. He stated that they will also add some fill on the west side to have the slope fall back down. He commented that there would be a number of trees removed that are within the right-of-way.

DesMarais replied that nothing on the northern property line would be buried. He noted that the east/west line along the southern portion of the property would be buried.

Dave Truax, 355 Lakeview Road, asked if that is the only possible home site for lot four. He commented that there is a ditch that runs where that home is shown as well and asked if that would be filled or crossed with roadway.

Otto stated that the potential buyer could build anywhere on the property, but they would assume they would want to be near the lake to take advantage of the views.

Truax commented that it would seem close to the existing lots for a large lot.

Otto replied that the proposed home site would match the City setbacks. He noted that the ditch was not delineated as a wetland.

Reid closed the public hearing at 8:33 p.m.

Galzki commented that any concern that he had was addressed by the resident questions. He stated that it is nice to see this subdivision with the larger lots that Medina is known for. He stated that this appears to be an improvement overall.

Piper asked if there would be an association for the six homes.

DesMarais replied that there are no plans to have an association but there would be covenants in place that would manage curbside aesthetics. He stated that the build range would begin at \$1,500,000.

Piper commented that she lives on a road like the road proposed. She stated that if someone is having lawn service, which parks on the road, it often blocks the road. She asked if that has been brought to anyone's attention.

Otto stated that they are using the City standards for road width and in his opinion that would be more of something the City should review if that is an issue in the community.

Grajczyk stated that he would want to ensure that the street improvements involve the neighboring property owners to ensure their concerns are addressed.

Couri commented that she believes that this project is consistent with the rural nature of the area.

Popp stated that it was good to hear the comments of the neighboring property owners. He stated that the project seems logical and he has no concerns with the cul-de-sac as proposed.

Reid agreed that this would be a good type of development with the larger lots.

**Motion by Piper, seconded by Couri**, to recommend approval of the subdivision with the variance subject to the conditions noted in the staff report.

A roll call vote was performed:

Nielsen	aye
Galzki	aye
Piper	aye
Grajczyk	aye
Couri	aye
Popp	aye
Reid	aye

Motion carries unanimously.

7. **Three Rivers Park District – 4001 County Road 24 – Conditional Use Permit for Construction of Shower Facility and Infirmary at the Outdoor Learning Center – PID 2011823210004**

Sparks presented a request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) amendment for a new structure at the Outdoor Learning Center. He reviewed the original approval and structures that have received approval since that time. He stated that the subject parcel is 291 acres in size and zoned public/semi-public. He stated that because this is a conditional use, an amendment would be needed for improvements and/or additional structures. He displayed an aerial photograph and identified the existing structures, noting that the new building would be located south of the office and cabins and north of the maintenance shed. He stated that the new building would be designed to match the cabins on the property and would be about 1,900 square feet. He stated that it would include showers, an infirmary area, along with storage and laundry. He stated that the building would not increase the capacity of the site. He noted that tree replacement would not be required as the tree removal would be minimal and within the limitations of Code. He provided details on the proposed solar panels and established wetland buffer area that would be protected from construction. He stated that staff recommends approval subject to the conditions noted in the staff report.

Jason Zemke, Three Rivers Park District, provided background information on the development on this site noting that a shower building was originally contemplated but the buildings were constructed in phases. He noted that the infirmary space is a State requirement, and they are looking forward to better serving the users of this site. He noted that previously they were bussing campers to the campground for showers and this would be a much more efficient feature.

Nielsen commented that she has stayed in the cabins at the site and the showers would be a nice addition.

Reid opened the public hearing at 8:48 p.m.

No comments.

Reid closed the public hearing at 8:49 p.m.

Galzki commented that he camped at Baker Park as a child and having the shower building close to the campsite was a benefit. He stated that this will be an improvement to the site.

Piper echoed the comments of support.

Grajczyk agreed that this will be a nice addition to that area of the park.

Couri stated that she has also stayed at this site and showers will be a welcome amenity.

Popp stated that he likes the inclusion of the sustainable design elements.

Reid commented that this is a good project, and she appreciates the improvements Three Rivers Park District continues to make for Baker Park.

**Motion by Couri, seconded by Grajczyk,** to recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit amendment subject to the conditions noted in the staff report.

A roll call vote was performed:

Nielsen	aye
Galzki	aye
Piper	aye
Grajczyk	aye
Couri	aye
Popp	aye
Reid	aye

Motion carries unanimously.

8. **Approval of the September 8, 2020 Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.**

**Motion by Galzki, seconded by Nielsen,** to approve the September 8, 2020, Planning Commission minutes with the noted changes.

A roll call vote was performed:

Nielsen	aye
Galzki	aye
Piper	aye
Grajczyk	aye
Couri	aye
Popp	aye
Reid	aye

Motion carries unanimously.

9. **Council Meeting Schedule**

Finke advised that the Council will be meeting the following Tuesday and Reid volunteered to attend in representation of the Commission.

10. **Adjourn**

**Motion by Piper, seconded by Nielsen,** to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.