



Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission

Tuesday September 13, 2016

7:00 p.m.

1307 Cloquet Ave, Cloquet, MN 55720

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Wilkinson called the meeting to order at 7:18 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Attending: Planning Commission members: Chuck Buscher, Bryan Bosto, John Sanders and Uriah Wilkinson; City: Al Cottingham.

Absent: Commission members: Kelly Johnson, Jesse Berglund and Michael Haubner.

Others Present: Bert Whittington, Roy Aho, Brandon and Amber Porter, Jerry Madsen, Sue Adams, Derek Howe, Andrew David, Tom and Kelly Anderson, Sherman Liimatainen and Bill Stone.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

None.

AGENDA ITEMS

July 12, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Chairperson Wilkinson asked for any corrections or additions.

Motion: **Commissioner Sanders made a motion to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes from July 12, 2016, Commissioner Buscher seconded. (Motion was approved 4-0).**

Zoning Case 16-12:Rezoning, City of Cloquet

Chairperson Wilkinson reviewed the public hearing procedures and format and opened the public hearing for Zoning Case 16-12, Rezoning for City of Cloquet. He asked Mr. Cottingham to provide an overview of the topic. Mr. Cottingham noted that this is a public hearing with a legal notice published in the Pine Journal on September 1, 2016 and effected property owners and property owners within 350 feet were sent notice of the meeting. The City of Cloquet is proposing to rezone private property around the airport from AIR – Airport district to FR – Farm Residential District. This is being done to clean up the zoning map so that it is consistent with the uses of the property. The property is located south of Airport Road and east of Cartwright Road.



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Chairman Wilkinson asked if anyone would like to address the Commission on this request.

Ms. Sue Adams, 1603 Airport Road stated she had concerns with the rezoning and the possibility of additional homes/apartments being built on this property. There has been an increase in traffic on Airport Road and she is concerned with additional vehicle traffic in the area.

Mr. Cottingham noted the Farm Residential District had a minimum lot size of five acres with 200 feet of frontage on a public road. It also only allows a single family home on a parcel. There has been a fair amount of development on Fond du Lac property lately and the City does not have any controls over that.

Chairman Wilkinson asked if anyone else wished to speak and since nobody wished to he closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Sanders stated that the proposal was consistent with the current uses of the property and property surrounding this area. The proposal made sense to him.

Chairperson Wilkinson inquired if other zoning classifications were looked at for this property.

Mr. Cottingham stated that other districts required both sewer and water to be available to the property and since this area did not have both of these services the Farm Residential was the only district that made sense.

Motion: Commissioner Sanders made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 16-12, A Resolution Recommending Approval of the Rezoning from AIR – Airport to FR – Farm Residential for the City of Cloquet, Commissioner Buscher seconded. (Motion was approved 4-0)

Mr. Cottingham noted this item would be forwarded to the City Council for their September 20, 2016 meeting.

Zoning Case 16-13:Alley Vacation, Bert Whittington

Chairperson Wilkinson reviewed the public hearing procedures and format and opened the public hearing for Zoning Case 16-13, Alley Vacation for Bert Whittington. He asked Mr. Cottingham to provide an overview of the topic. Mr. Cottingham noted that this is a public hearing with a legal notice published in the Pine Journal on September 1, 2016 and affected property owners were sent notice of the meeting. Mr. Whittington is proposing to vacate the east/west alley between Broadway Avenue and Main Street north of St. Louis Avenue. The alley was platted with the City of Cloquet Dunlaps Addition in 1882 and was never constructed. A portion of the parking lot on the north side of the Northeastern Saloon sits within the right-of-way. There is an overhead power line located within the right-of-way so the easement for the utilities will need to be maintained if approved. He noted the Park and Recreation System Master Plan that was approved in 2014 identified that the city should look to purchase property along and around the riverfront. He had some concerns with vacating the alley even though it is only approximately



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750 square feet in size. He did point out that the City Council had turned down the opportunity to purchase some property to the west of this site earlier this year. Mr. Whittington was present to address this matter with the commission.

Chairman Wilkinson asked if anyone would like to speak on this item.

Mr. Whittington addressed the Commission noting that he and his wife had owned the Northeastern since 2000. He reviewed the history of the alley and how he found out that it wasn't vacated. He also addressed the history of the Northeastern and the plat that created the alley showing pictures of the area prior to the fire and after the fire. He reviewed the photos of the property from the past to the current. He noted the alley served no public purpose but to provide parking for the Northeastern. He commented that with the street reconstructions that have happened with Broadway Avenue and Main Street there were no curb cuts put in for the alley.

Chairman Wilkinson asked if anyone else wished to speak and since nobody wished to he closed the public hearing.

The Commission discussed the plat, the time frame involved and the opportunities that the city has had over time to do something with the alley. They noted the vacation seemed appropriate while maintaining the easement for utilities.

Motion: Commissioner Buscher made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 16-13, A Resolution Recommending Approval of the Vacation of the East/West Alley Lying Between Broadway Avenue and Main Street, North of St. Louis Avenue. Commissioner Bosto seconded. (Motion was approved 4-0).

Mr. Cottingham noted this item would be forwarded to the City Council for their September 20, 2016 meeting.

Zoning Case 16-14: Variance, Brandon and Amber Porter

Chairperson Wilkinson reviewed the public hearing procedures and format and opened the public hearing for Zoning Case 16-14, Variance for Brandon and Amber Porter. He asked Mr. Cottingham to provide an overview of the topic. Mr. Cottingham noted that this is a public hearing with a legal notice published in the Pine Journal on September 1, 2016 and property owners within 350 feet were sent notice of the meeting. The Porters are proposing a variance to the front yard setback in order to construct a 24 ft. by 36 ft. detached garage. The garage is proposed to be placed closer to the road than the house thus the need for a variance. The proposed location would be approximately 100 feet from the front property line. The property is located at 402 Barbara Circle. He noted that he had heard from two of the neighbors and when it was explained where the garage was being proposed they were both Ok with the request. Mr. and Mrs. Porter are both present to address the Commission.

Mr. Porter addressed the Commission noting they were looking for a place to store things such as cars, a boat and atv's. The structure would match the existing home in appearance. They were



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trying to place it where it would have the least impact on the lot with minimal clearing and addition of additional hard surface. The location they chose would need a few trees removed and would still be screened from the road.

Chairman Wilkinson asked if anyone wished to speak and since nobody wished to he closed the public hearing.

Motion: Commissioner Sanders made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 16-14, A Resolution Approving a Variance from the Minimum Front Yard Setback for an Accessory Structure in the R1 – Single Family Residence District for Brandon and Amber Porter, Commissioner Bosto seconded. (Motion was approved 4-0).

Mr. Cottingham noted that they could apply for a building permit at any time.

Zoning Case 16-16: Variance, Jerry Madsen

Chairperson Wilkinson reviewed the public hearing procedures and format and opened the public hearing for Zoning Case 16-16, Variance for Jerry Madsen. He asked Mr. Cottingham to provide an overview of the topic. Mr. Cottingham noted that this is a public hearing with a legal notice published in the Pine Journal on September 1, 2016 and property owners within 350 feet were sent notice of the meeting. Mr. Madsen is proposing a variance to the front yard setback in order to construct a 24 ft. by 24 ft. detached garage. The garage is proposed to be placed closer to the road than the house thus the need for a variance. The proposed location would be approximately 125 feet from the front property line. The property is located at 113 Cedar Ridge Lane. Mr. Madsen was present to address the Commission.

Mr. Madsen addressed the Commission stating they have a drainage issue flowing around the north side of their home and placing the garage in this location or constructing an attached garage would cause greater problems with this. The topography of the lots falls off beginning at the road and continues out to the rear of the home. They have had both engineers and architects out to the property to provide advice on where this structure would cause the least amount of problems. The proposed location would have the least amount of impacts on the topography and drainage.

Chairman Wilkinson asked if anyone wished to speak and since nobody wished to he closed the public hearing.

Motion: Commissioner Sanders made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 16-16, A Resolution Approving a Variance from the Minimum Front Yard Setback for an Accessory Structure in the R1 – Single Family Residence District for Jerry Madsen, Commissioner Buscher seconded. (Motion was approved 4-0).

Mr. Cottingham noted that they could apply for a building permit at any time.



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Zoning Case 16-17: Conditional Use Permit, Lake Country Power

Chairperson Wilkinson reviewed the public hearing procedures and format and opened the public hearing for Zoning Case 16-16, Variance for Jerry Madsen. He asked Mr. Cottingham to provide an overview of the topic. Mr. Cottingham noted that this is a public hearing with a legal notice published in the Pine Journal on September 1, 2016 and property owners within 350 feet along with Thompson Township and Township of Brevator were sent notice of the meeting. Lake Country Power is proposing a conditional use permit to allow an electrical substation in the Farm Residential District. The proposed substation would be located within a fenced enclosure of 90 ft. by 185 ft. in size with along with a parking and maneuvering area of approximately the same size located on a parcel approximately 9 acres in size. The site is located in the southwest corner of West St. Louis River Road and Crosby Road. Representatives from Lake Country Power were present to address the Commission.

Mr. Derek Howe, Project Engineer, Lake Country Power addressed the Commission on the request. He noted this substation would help to relieve issues that they are having with two other substations that are both reaching capacity. If they have an outage at one of those stations they cannot back feed the customers in order to provide them service without this substation. This station would have most of the equipment underground so would be less obtrusive to the area.

Commissioner Sanders inquired as to the possibility of placing slats in the fence and what type of noise would be coming from the site.

Mr. Howe stated they could place slats in the fence to help with screening. The facilities that have everything above ground generates a noise of around 65 decibels on the road adjacent to the site. He believed with this equipment underground the noise level would be less than that.

Mr. Bill Stone, 382 Laine Road inquired where the power would come from to service this site and if they had explored alternative sites.

Mr. Howe stated the power would come from the overhead power lines located approximately one-quarter mile to the east of the site. They did look for alternative locations for the facility however this was the best location for what they were looking to achieve.

Mr. Stone stated he was very supportive of this project and the need for it. He was concerned with the lack of notice to residents, other options for the facility and felt the request should be tabled to explore other solutions.

Mr. Cottingham stated that notices were sent to the Cloquet residents within 350 feet of the full forty acre property and not just this site since it had not been subdivided yet. Also both Thompson Township and Township of Brevator were sent notices and if they chose not to notify their residents we could not help that. As to other options Mr. Howe addressed that issue. He did not see a need to table the request based on these issues.



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Mr. Roy Aho, 357 Laine Road inquired as to why not some other location.

Mr. Howe stated that for every mile the site is moved the cost of the project goes up and reduces the option for back feeding power into other locations. They had explored other locations but this was the best location for their facility.

Chairman Wilkinson asked if anyone else wished to speak and since nobody wished to he closed the public hearing.

The Commission discussed the proposal and the requirements of the Ordinance. They felt it met the requirements.

Motion: **Commissioner Sanders made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 16-17, A Resolution Recommending Approval of the Conditional Use Permit for Lake Country Power for an Electrical Substation in the Farm Residential District subject to the following conditions, 1) A Site/Fence Permit be issued; 2) An access permit from Carlton county is issued; 3) The company in good faith negotiate, enter and maintain a franchise agreement to operate an electrical distribution system in the City of Cloquet consistent with other utility companies; 4) Slats must be installed in the fence to help provide screening of the equipment; 5) The Conditional Use Permit approval is valid to allow construction to begin prior to January 1, 2019. If construction does not begin by that date the Conditional Use Permit will be void, Commissioner Bosto seconded. (Motion was approved 4-0).**

Mr. Cottingham noted this item would be forwarded to the City Council for their September 20, 2016 meeting.

Commissioner's Questions/Comment

None.

Next Meeting

October 11, 2016

Meeting adjourned 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Cottingham, City Planner/Zoning Administrator