



Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission

Tuesday, May 28, 2019

7:00 p.m.

1307 Cloquet Ave, Cloquet, MN 55720

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wilkinson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Attending: Planning Commission members: Elizabeth Polling, Terri Lyytinen, John Sanders, Mark Cline and Uriah Wilkinson; City: Al Cottingham.

Absent: Philip Demers.

Others Present: Robert Yorkell, Mike Koski, Barb Mackey, Mike Acheson, Dana Sanders and Ron Carlberg.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

None.

AGENDA ITEMS

May 14, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Chairman Wilkinson asked for any corrections or additions.

Motion: Commissioner Cline made a motion to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes from May 14, 2019, Commissioner Lyytinen seconded. (Motion was approved 5-0).

Zoning Case 19-06: Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Rezoning for Mike Koski

Chairman Wilkinson noted the public hearing was held at the last meeting, but he would allow people to present new information and limit them to two minutes for Zoning Case 19-06, Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Rezoning for Mike Koski, 1001 Avenue B. Chairman Wilkinson asked Mr. Cottingham to provide an overview. Mr. Cottingham stated Mr. Koski is proposing a Comprehensive Amendment and Rezoning from Light Industry to Public-Semi Public. He noted this was tabled at the last meeting for some additional information and to have a representative from Northern Lights Academy. He stated Mr. Koski was present along with a representative of Northern Lights Academy.

Mr. Koski, 1001 Avenue B stated they did meet with a representative from the state and except for some code items they were Ok with the site. They stated there are other schools closer to



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railroad tracks than this facility. He wanted the Commission to know that this was not a done deal yet.

Barb Mackey, Northern Lights Academy stated they serve special education students all day. They cover twelve school districts and currently have 35 students, but that number varies. Currently none of the students are mobility impaired.

Commissioner Polling inquired about fencing around the retaining wall because of the height.

Mr. Koski stated that there was a fence there and when the prior owner came to remove the kennels they also took the fence. He will be installing a new fence along the top of the wall.

Commissioner Sanders inquired as to the time between when students are dropped off and when they can enter the building.

Ms. Mackey stated that the students are dropped off by bus with staff escorting them into and out of the building. They will not be left outside alone either at the beginning or end of the day.

Commissioner Cline inquired as to where the drop off would occur.

Mr. Koski stated it would probably be along 10th Street since there are two doors there but it would be addressed by the architect for the project.

Robert Yorkell, 1005 Avenue B applauded them for what they are doing but had concerns with spot zoning and eliminating the Light Industry area. He was concerned with the proximity to the heavy traffic and tobacco shop. He realizes this may be convenient but is it in the best interest of the kids.

Commissioner Sanders inquired if we had heard from BNSF? He knows they have concerns with trespass in the area and this may be inviting to the kids.

Mr. Cottingham responded that he had not.

Commissioner Cline stated he did not want to second guess the school and supports the proposal.

Chairman Wilkinson stated he did not feel this was spot zoning and that this is how schools are all around the city.

Commissioner Polling was concerned with if this was the appropriate site for the school.

There being no further discussion Chairman Wilkinson looked for a motion.



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Motion: Commissioner Cline made a motion to approve Resolution No. 19-06 Comp, A Resolution Recommending the City Council Approve the Comprehensive Plan Amendment (Land Use Plan) from “Light Industry” to “Public/Semi-Public” for Mike Koski, Commissioner Lyytinen seconded. (Motion was approved 3-2, Sanders and Polling).

Motion: Commissioner Cline made a motion to approve Resolution No. 19-06 Rezone, A Resolution Recommending the City Council Approve the Rezoning from “LI – Light Industrial” to “PI – Public/Institutional” for Mike Koski, Commissioner Lyytinen seconded. (Motion was approved 3-2, Sanders and Polling).

Cottingham noted that Planning Commission is only an advisory board and this recommendation would be forwarded to the City Council for action at their meeting on June 4, 2019 at 7:00 pm.

Zoning Case 19-07: Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Rezoning for Michael J. Acheson

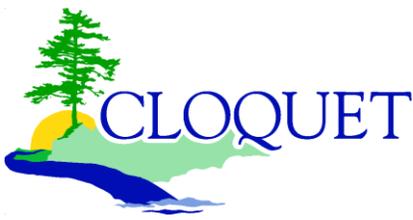
Chairman Wilkinson noted the public hearing was held at the last meeting, but he would allow people to present new information and limit them to two minutes for Zoning Case 19-07, Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Rezoning for Michael J. Acheson. Chairman Wilkinson asked Mr. Cottingham to provide an overview. Mr. Cottingham stated this item was referred back to the Planning Commission by the City Council since one of the members contacted the Council and stated they would have voted differently after seeing in their opinion there was no sight visibility issues at the intersection. Mr. Acheson was present to answer any questions.

Dana Sanders, 201 Boulder Drive, stated there are other concerns besides the sight visibility. She stated that it doesn’t meet the requirements for the Comprehensive Plan for the area north of the river. She understands the economic development of the community but noted there is also a housing shortage. This will have an impact on the neighborhood by allowing the commercial encroachment.

Ron Carlberg, 216 Boulder Drive, stated he had nothing against Mr. Acheson or his business. He was concerned with the encroachment on the neighborhood and the impacts that would go along with it. He was concerned with a precedence being set for the neighborhood if this were approved. He understands the economics of this but the neighborhood has rights also.

Commissioner Polling inquired as to why the City Council referred this back to the Commission.

Chairman Wilkinson stated he sent an email to the City Council stating he would have voted differently because he does not believe there is a safety issue with the proposal. He believes the use is reasonable since no commercial building or home could be placed on the lot.



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Commissioner Polling understands his issues but her major concern was the change to the neighborhood.

Commissioner Cline stated his decision was based on the impact to the neighborhood.

Commissioner Sanders stated City Code 17.5.15 Design Standards for the Highway 33 Corridor, Subdivision 5 Parking Standards states sites shall be designed to facilitate the location of off street parking in the side and rear yards. Also parking areas adjacent to street intersections shall prohibited, unless buffered landscaping and appropriate setbacks are provided. He stated that screening would be very difficult due to the elevation of the proposed parking lot and the road. This would impact the integrity of the neighborhood and how do you stop the encroachment into the neighborhood if this is approved. He felt the integrity of the neighborhood would be eliminated.

Michael Acheson, 305 Sunnyside Drive, stated the parking lot would be in the side yard of his property being that it would be located further back than the front of the building. He noted a variety of buildings that were built after his with either no screening or parking in front of the building. He noted that he can put up a fence or barrier on the lot the way it exists today.

Commissioner Cline wondered why we would damage the neighborhood by allowing this encroachment.

Commissioner Sanders stated Boulder Drive is a one-block, dead end, residential street. The property in question used to have a house with a family residing in it. They were forced to move when Highway 33 was upgraded, and the roadway encroached into the neighborhood. He strongly opposes the Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Rezoning of the property.

There being no further discussion Chairman Wilkinson looked for a motion.

Motion: Commissioner Cline made a motion to approve Resolution No. 19-07 Comp, A Resolution Recommending the City Council Deny the Comprehensive Plan Amendment (Land Use Plan) from “Low Density Residential” to “Highway Commercial” for Michael J. Acheson, Chairman Polling seconded. (Roll call, Motion was approved 3-2, Wilkinson and Lyytinen).

Motion: Commissioner Cline made a motion to approve Resolution No. 19-07 Rezone, A Resolution Recommending the City Council Deny the Rezoning from “R1 – Single-Family Resident” to “RC – Highway Commercial” for Michael J. Acheson, Commissioner Polling seconded. (Roll call, Motion was approved 3-2, Wilkinson and Lyytinen).

Cottingham noted that Planning Commission is only an advisory board and this recommendation would be forwarded to the City Council for action at their meeting on June 4, 2019 at 7:00 pm.



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Commissioner's Questions/Comment

Commissioner Sanders stated staff needed to put all of the commissioner concerns in their staff reports to the City Council and not just some. Staff did correct themselves at the meeting.

Commissioner Lyytinen inquired about the former Nels Nelson property on Tall Pine Lane and the thoughts of placing a church in the Light Industry District.

Mr. Cottingham stated this was not allowed and there were two options, either amend the Zoning Ordinance of rezone the property. He felt the rezoning would be stand a better chance than changing the Ordinance.

The commission seemed to agree with this.

Next Meeting

June 11, 2019

Meeting adjourned 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Cottingham, City Planner/Zoning Administrator