

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES - CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Tuesday, June 21, 2016 – 7:00 p.m.
City Hall Chambers - 8150 Barbara Avenue

Commissioner Scales called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Elizabeth Niemioja
Pat Simon
Tony Scales
Armando Lissarrague
Joan Robertson
Dennis Wippermann
Jonathan Weber
Luke Therrien

Commissioners Absent: Annette Maggi (excused)

Others Present: Allan Hunting, City Planner
Heather Botten, Associate Planner
Tom Link, Community Development Director
Eric Carlson, Park and Recreation Director

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The June 7, 2016 Planning Commission minutes were approved as submitted.

SYDNEY AND JOSHUA WITTMIER – CASE NO. 16-20DCA

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Simon read the public hearing notice to consider the request for an amendment to the development contract for Shamrock Oaks to allow more than 5,000 square feet of impervious surface for Lot 4, Block 1, Shamrock Oaks, and an amendment to Resolution 06-61 approving the preliminary plat for Shamrock Oaks to allow more than 5,000 square feet of impervious surface for Lot 4, Block 1, Shamrock Oaks, for the property located at 2122 – 94th Court. 5 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Heather Botten, Associate Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. She advised that per a condition of the Shamrock Oaks plat approval and development contract this development is limited to a 5,000 square foot impervious surface maximum per lot. The applicant is requesting an amendment to the development contract and resolution to allow up to 8,000 square feet of impervious surface to construct a new home, driveway, and an additional 2,000 square feet of hard surface for potential future improvements. This would allow them to build their stormwater basin to size to treat the additional impervious surface, negate the need for them to come back in the future for another amendment, and would be more cost effective to do it all at one time. The submitted plan shows the additional runoff to be directed to the north and to the stormwater basin. Staff recommends approval of the request with the four conditions listed in the report. Staff has not heard from any of the property owners that received notice.

Commissioner Simon asked if the property was sewered.

Ms. Botten replied it was well and septic.

Commissioner Simon asked why impervious surface was limited to 5,000 square feet for the

Shamrocks Oaks development.

Ms. Botten replied it was per a request of the neighboring property owner. That property owner was notified of this request.

Commissioner Simon asked where that property was located in reference to the subject property.

Ms. Botten replied to the north.

Opening of Public Hearing

Sydney Wittmier, 15364 Flower Way, Apple Valley, advised she was available to answer any questions.

Commissioner Scales asked the applicant if she read and understood the report.

Ms. Wittmier replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Simon asked the applicant why she was asking for an additional 2,000 square feet over what was needed for the planned house and driveway.

Ms. Wittmier replied they were requesting the additional hard surface should they want to add a deck, pergola, or pavers in the future.

Commissioner Scales closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission Discussion

Commissioner Robertson asked why the neighboring property owner originally wanted the hard surface limited to 5,000 square feet.

Ms. Botten replied the neighbor did not want additional stormwater runoff going onto his property, so the developer had enough treatment to handle 5,000 square feet of runoff per lot.

Commissioner Robertson asked if the proposed additional runoff would be sufficiently addressed.

Ms. Botten replied in the affirmative, stating the stormwater basin being designed for this lot would treat the additional runoff above the 5,000 square feet. She noted that in 2013 a similar request was approved for an additional 10,000 square feet of hard surface on one of the other properties in the neighborhood.

Commissioner Niemioja stated it made sense to ask for the additional hard surface at this time for potential future needs, and she noted it was a difficult lot due to the steep topography.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Niemioja, second by Commissioner Wippermann, to approve the request for an amendment to the development contract for Shamrock Oaks to allow more than 5,000 square feet of impervious surface for Lot 4, Block 1, Shamrock Oaks, and an amendment to Resolution 06-61 approving the preliminary plat for Shamrock Oaks to allow more than 5,000 square feet of impervious surface for Lot 4, Block 1, Shamrock Oaks, for the property located at 2122 – 94th Court.

Motion carried (8/0). This item goes to the City Council on June 27, 2016.

MIKE PONE – CASE NO. 16-21V

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Simon read the public hearing notice to consider the request for a variance from the bluff line setback to construct a patio and deck addition on the existing residential property, for the property located at 8336 River Road. 4 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Heather Botten, Associate Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. She advised that the property is located between River Road and the Mississippi River and is zoned E-1. The applicant has submitted a variance to construct a patio, deck, and pool addition that would encroach into the bluffline setback. The property was granted a variance in 2005 to construct the house 20 feet from the bluffline. The proposed improvements would not be any closer to the bluffline than the original 20 foot variance approval. This request was sent to the DNR for their review; a response was received saying they had no comment. Staff believes the request is in harmony with the general purpose of the City Code and intent of the Comprehensive Plan, the request is reasonable as the proposed improvements would be within the original 20 foot bluffline setback, the property is unique in that it is not possible to construct the proposed improvements in compliance with the City Code, and the improvements would not have any impact from the view from the river or from abutting properties. Staff recommends approval of the request with the four conditions listed in the report. Staff has not heard from any of the abutting property owners.

Commissioner Wippermann asked for clarification that the 100 foot setback requirement was a DNR regulation and that the DNR has indicated they have no concern with what is being proposed.

Ms. Botten replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Robertson asked if the proposed additions would comply with the maximum impervious surface allowed for the property.

Ms. Botten replied in the affirmative.

Opening of Public Hearing

Mike Pone, 8336 River Road, advised he was available to answer any questions.

Commissioner Scales asked the applicant if he read and understood the report.

Mr. Pone replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Simon asked the applicant if they had an existing pool.

Mr. Pone replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Simon asked where they drained their existing pool.

Mr. Pone replied into the back yard.

Commissioner Scales closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission Discussion

Commissioner Robertson stated she supported the request as it did not encroach any further on the bluffline than the original structure and would be an improvement to the property.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Robertson, second by Commissioner Lissarrague, to approve the request for a variance from the bluff line setback to construct a patio and deck addition on the existing residential property, for the property located at 8336 River Road.

Motion carried (8/0). This item goes to the City Council on July 11, 2016.

INVERWOOD GOLF COURSE – CASE NO. 16-22V

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Simon read the public hearing notice to consider the request for a variance from the maximum fence height to allow a netting system around the driving range, for the property located at 1850 – 70th Street. 10 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Allan Hunting, City Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. He advised that earlier this year City Council approved plans for renovations to the golf course, including remodeling the existing practice driving range. They are requesting to replace the existing 25 foot high netting with 50 foot high netting. The netting would fall under the definition of 'fence' which has a maximum height allowance of seven feet. The Park and Recreation Director has noted that technology has improved resulting in golf balls that travel further than they used to. The additional height is necessary to block the path of golf balls for safety and to protect the general public. Staff recommends approval of the variance. He advised that the Park and Recreation Director was in the audience tonight and was available to answer any questions.

Commissioner Scales asked how many reports they have received of balls going over the existing fence.

Eric Carlson, Park and Recreation Director, replied that the adjacent single-family property owner east of the driving range reports that they receive balls in their back yard. Golf course staff picks up balls at the end of each day and often finds balls outside of the netting system around the property.

Commissioner Weber asked if they were proposing to extend the range deeper, noting that they were proposing to remove 220 lineal feet of 25 foot high fencing but adding 430 lineal feet of 50 foot high fencing.

Mr. Carlson replied in the affirmative. He advised they were moving the tee line back approximately 100 feet into the parking lot resulting in the removal of approximately 41 stalls of existing parking. He advised they are also lowering the tee box two feet in elevation which will change the ball flight angle and improve the ability to keep balls within the defined driving range area.

Commissioner Simon asked if the 200 linear feet of 25 foot high netting on the south side would be existing or new.

Mr. Carlson replied that all the netting would be brand new.

Commissioner Simon wondered whether they would be reusing some of the existing 25 foot high netting that had been recently been replaced in order to save money.

Mr. Carlson replied they were moving the entire system back further than its current location and

would be replacing it with new netting.

Opening of Public Hearing

There was no public testimony.

Commissioner Scales closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Niemioja, second by Commissioner Therrien, to approve the request for a variance from the maximum fence height to allow a netting system around the driving range, for the property located at 1850 – 70th Street.

Motion carried (8/0). This item goes to the City Council on June 27, 2016.

OTHER BUSINESS

Recommendation on Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan for Potential Property Acquisition

Tom Link, Community Development Director, advised that the owner of 6900 and 6910 Dixie Avenue approached the City and expressed an interest in selling her two properties to the City. The Inver Grove Heights Economic Development Authority will tentatively consider the request on July 11 and the Planning Commission is being asked to make a recommendation on the consistency of the acquisitions with the comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan discusses the importance of economic development and talks specifically about the City's interest in redevelopment of the Concord Neighborhood. The Austing properties are part of one of the identified redevelopment areas. The City has already acquired two properties in this neighborhood, if the Austing acquisition is approved it would be the third, and they are in negotiations with a fourth property owner. If acquired, the EDA would remove the structures and, at some future time, consolidate the properties into a larger parcel and sell it for redevelopment. Currently they are in the acquisition phase, with redevelopment anticipated to occur in 2-3 years. Staff recommends approval of the request to find the acquisition of the property consistent with the City's comprehensive plan.

Commissioner Scales asked which other properties the City owned in the neighborhood.

Mr. Link displayed a map showing where the other City-owned properties were located. He advised there were initially six property owners; the City acquired two of them, this would be the third, they are negotiating with a fourth, and there are two more remaining.

Commissioner Simon asked if people lived in the buildings on the two lots south of the subject properties.

Mr. Link replied in the affirmative, stating they were both residential rental properties. He advised that at some point the City's plan would be to acquire those.

Commissioner Weber asked if the rail line ran through most of the properties east of Dickman Trail.

Mr. Link replied that the rail line runs parallel to Dickman Trail, resulting in thin parcels between Dickman Trail and the railway and that the parcels are used occasionally for the stockpiling of materials.

Motion by Commissioner Simon, second by Commissioner Weber, to recommend approval of the

request to find the acquisition of the property at 6900 and 6910 Dixie Avenue consistent with the Inver Grove Heights Comprehensive Plan.

Motion carried (8/0). This item is tentatively scheduled to go to the EDA on July 11, 2016.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Fox
Recording Secretary