

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES - CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Tuesday, May 4, 2010 – 7:00 p.m.
City Hall Chambers - 8150 Barbara Avenue

Chair Bartholomew called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Tom Bartholomew
Paul Hark
Mike Schaeffer
Dennis Wippermann
Tony Scales
Christine Koch
Damon Roth

Commissioners Absent: Harold Gooch
Pat Simon (excused)

Others Present: Heather Botten, Associate Planner
Tom Link, Community Development Director

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the April 20, 2010 meeting were approved as submitted.

LUTHER NISSAN KIA – CASE NO. 10-14CA

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Hark read the public hearing notice to consider the request for a Conditional Use Permit Amendment to allow the expansion of outdoor storage on the existing surface parking lot, and a Conditional Use Permit to exceed 25% impervious surface coverage in the Shoreland Overlay District, for the property located at 1430 – 50th Street. 7 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Heather Botten, Associate Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. She stated the applicant is requesting to amend their existing conditional use permit to allow the expansion of an outdoor storage area and a conditional use permit to exceed the maximum impervious surface standards to allow 44.5% whereas 25% is allowed. She advised there are no buildings being proposed and the access will remain the same. She stated the general public will not be allowed on the expansion lot, and vehicles will be stored there temporarily until they are moved to the dealership site. She stated the proposed landscaping plan meets or exceeds the City's landscaping requirements. Ms. Botten advised that the DNR has reviewed the request to exceed the impervious surface in the shoreland district and they do not object provided an adequate stormwater plan is approved. She stated staff received one general inquiry from a neighboring resident. Staff recommends approval of both requests with the conditions listed in the staff report.

Commissioner Wippermann asked how the elevation change would be addressed between the subject site and 50th Street, to which Ms. Botten replied a retaining wall was being proposed.

Opening of Public Hearing

The architect, John Baker, 150 S. Fifth Street, Minneapolis, advised he was available to answer any questions.

Chair Bartholomew asked if the applicant was in agreement with the 15 conditions listed in the

report for the conditional use permit amendment as well as the five conditions for the conditional use permit, to which Mr. Baker replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Wippermann asked if the area in the northeast corner was currently wooded, to which Mr. Baker replied in the affirmative, stating it was remnant right-of-way owned by MnDOT.

Commissioner Wippermann asked what the total distance was along 50th Street where the seven evergreen trees were being proposed, to which Mr. Baker replied approximately 200 feet.

Commissioner Wippermann asked what landscaping would be between the proposed evergreen trees and 50th Street, to which Mr. Baker replied the land in question was right-of-way.

Commissioner Wippermann questioned whether more evergreens or vegetation should be planted to create a better buffer between the expansion lot and 50th Street.

Christine Moss, 105 S. Fifth Avenue, stated a retaining wall would be installed next to the evergreen trees.

Commissioner Wippermann stated from a visual standpoint the retaining wall would not block the proposed expansion area since the top of the retaining wall would be lower than 50th Street.

Mr. Baker stated they could review the site to determine what existing vegetation was present in the right-of-way area.

Commissioner Wippermann stated currently there was enough vegetation in the right-of-way to screen the expansion area, but he was concerned that it would be removed during project development.

Ms. Moss stated they would not alter anything between the curb and the property line (approximately 30 feet) as they did not have rights to the right-of-way.

Mr. Baker stated he believed the right-of-way area was heavily wooded.

Commissioner Wippermann stated if that was the case he did not have any issues, but if the existing trees and vegetation got removed during completion of the project then he would like to see more evergreens planted.

Commissioner Koch asked for clarification of the elevation of the proposed expansion, to which Mr. Baker replied that the expansion area would be roughly the same level as the existing lot.

Commissioner Koch asked if the existing access would remain the same with no additional accesses being added, to which Mr. Baker replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Hark stated evergreens would be the only vegetation that would provide a year-round buffer.

Commissioner Roth advised that planting trees near the retaining wall could potentially compromise the geo-grid system.

Commissioner Koch asked how many vehicles the lot would hold at completion, to which Mr. Baker replied approximately 280.

Commissioner Koch asked if there would be vehicles in the lot at all times, to which Mr. Baker

replied the inventory would fluctuate but there would always be some vehicles in the lot.

Planning Commission Discussion

Chair Bartholomew stated he was in favor of the request.

Commissioner Koch referred to Condition 4 for the Conditional Use Permit request, and asked who would maintain the 20 foot easement around the pond.

Ms. Botten replied that the easement would remain basically untouched, but it would be the property owners' responsibility. The City, however, would have the authority to make changes or improvements if necessary.

Commissioner Roth stated this would have been a good opportunity to use permeable pavers and study their effectiveness, especially with the potential for pollutants from the vehicles to drip onto the pavement and get filtered before eventually reaching the nearby wetland.

Commissioner Schaeffer stated he was pleased to see the expansion of an auto dealership and he felt the additional storage area was much needed.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Schaeffer, second by Commissioner Koch, to approve on a white ballot the request for a conditional use permit amendment to allow the expansion of outdoor storage on the existing surface parking lot, and a conditional use permit to exceed 25% impervious surface coverage in the Shoreland Overlay District, for the property located at 1430 – 50th Street.

Motion carried (7/0). This item goes to the City Council on May 24, 2010.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Link reminded Commissioners of their annual joint meeting with City Council on May 10 at 5:30 PM in the Council Chambers. He advised that the Community Development Department would be providing an update on department activities at the meeting as well.

Mr. Link advised that the City Council adopted the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and it was now in effect. He thanked Commissioners for their time and effort and asked Commissioners to contact him regarding whether they wanted a paper or electronic copy of the document. He added that the plan was also available permanently on the City's website.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bartholomew adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Fox
Recording Secretary