

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES - CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Tuesday, March 15, 2011 – 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
Pat Simon
Tony Scales
Paul Hark
Damon Roth
Dennis Wippermann

Commissioners Absent: Harold Gooch (excused)
Christine Koch (excused)
Mike Schaeffer (excused)

Others Present: Allan Hunting, City Planner
Heather Botten, Associate Planner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the January 18, 2011 and February 15, 2011 meetings were approved as submitted.

RJ RYAN CONSTRUCTION – CASE NO. 11-02CA

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Simon read the public hearing notice to consider a request for a conditional use permit amendment to add an addition to the existing auto sales building located at 1290 – 50th Street. 6 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Heather Botten, Associate Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. She advised that the applicant is requesting a conditional use permit amendment to add an 860 square foot addition to the existing building. Staff recommends approval of the request with the conditions listed in Alternative A.

Commissioner Simon asked if staff heard from any of the six notified property owners, to which Ms. Botten replied they had not.

Chair Bartholomew asked if the seven conditions listed in Alternative A were carried over from the previous conditional use permit, to which Ms. Botten replied in the affirmative. She stated the only change was the dates listed in Condition 1.

Opening of Public Hearing

The applicant, Brian Trombley, RJ Ryan Construction, 6781 Country Oaks Road, Excelsior, stated his client, Inver Grove Hyundai, was proposing to build an addition that would accommodate more vehicles in the 'write-up' area.

Chair Bartholomew asked if the applicant was agreeable with the seven conditions listed in Alternative A, to which Mr. Trombley replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Simon asked if customer and employee parking would be clearly signed, to which Mr. Trombley replied in the affirmative.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Wippermann, second by Commissioner Simon, to approve the conditional use permit amendment to add an addition to the existing auto sales building located at 1290 – 50th Street, with the seven conditions listed in the report.

Motion carried (6/0). This item goes to the City Council on April 11, 2011.

CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS (GERTENS PROPERTY) – CASE NO. 11-01Z

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Simon read the public hearing notice to consider the request for a rezoning from A, Agricultural district to Comm PUD, Commercial Planned Unit Development district, for the property located on the northeast corner of Upper 55th Street and Blaine Avenue. 24 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Allan Hunting, City Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. He advised that subsequent to the recent approval of the Gertens greenhouse expansion, the City Council requested staff initiate a rezoning for the parcel in question. The parcel is owned by Gerten Greenhouses and is currently being used mostly as growing fields. The property is zoned Agricultural, however, staff is recommending it be changed to Commercial Planned Unit Development which is a designation the City uses in the Southeast Quadrant as a temporary holding zone. If development would occur in the future, the parcel would likely be changed to Planned Unit Development. He stated the proposed rezoning would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan designation for the property, as well as with the other properties in the southeast quadrant that are zoned Comm-PUD prior to a specific development plan being approved. He advised that the City hopes to convert the property fronting Upper 55th into commercial development at some point in time. Staff recommends approval of the request.

Commissioner Hark asked what the advantages and disadvantages of the rezoning would be for Gertens.

Mr. Hunting replied that Gertens would be able to continue their growing field operation as a legal non-conforming use, and the rezoning would likely increase the value of the property as there would be more allowable uses.

Commissioner Hark asked if Gertens was in agreement with the proposed rezoning.

Mr. Hunting replied that his understanding from correspondence he received from Gertens' legal counsel was that they do not object as long as the development contract and maintenance agreements were completed as anticipated.

Opening of Public Hearing

Lewis Gerten, 5500 Blaine Avenue, stated that while he did not have any objections to the zoning change itself, he was concerned about the timing because the development agreements and drainage permit had not yet been finalized.

Chair Bartholomew asked if the Commission could perhaps table the request until the development agreements were complete.

Mr. Hunting stated they could table the request, however, if the rezoning was approved staff's intention was to put the rezoning on the same Council agenda as the final improvement agreements. He stated Gertens already received approvals for the expansion but were simply waiting for final documents from the City and stormwater permits from other agencies.

Chair Bartholomew asked if Mr. Gerten would be agreeable to putting this item on the same Council agenda as the improvement agreements, to which Mr. Gerten replied in the affirmative.

Planning Commission Discussion

Commissioner Simon asked how the Planning Commission should direct staff to bring the rezoning and development agreements to City Council at the same time, to which Mr. Hunting replied it should be part of the motion rather than an added condition.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Simon, second by Commissioner Roth, to approve the rezoning from A, Agricultural to Comm PUD, Commercial Planned Unit Development for the parcel located on the NE corner of Upper 55th and Blaine Avenue, with the intention that the request gets delayed until such time as the final improvement agreements for the Gerten expansion go to City Council.

Motion carried (6/0).

RIVER COUNTRY CO-OP – CASE NO. 11-03CA

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Simon read the public hearing notice to consider a request for a conditional use permit amendment to add an addition to the existing convenience store and other property improvements, for the property located at 3240 – 57th Street. 38 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Heather Botten, Associate Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. She advised that the applicant is proposing to construct an addition and remodel to the existing vacant gas service station located on the southwest corner of 57th Street and Carmen Avenue. The proposed plans include an 800 square foot addition and remodel, two additional fuel pumps and canopy, an LP fill station, one additional buried fuel tank, and additional landscaping. She advised that the request complies with the City's CUP criteria, including the landscaping requirement, however, staff is recommending that all landscaping be located outside the 20 foot utility easement on the north property line. She advised that the Parks Department has commented that there is a gap in the City's trail system along 57th Street between Cahill and Carmen. The City is therefore requesting that the applicant grant the City a 15 foot trail/sidewalk easement along the northern property line so that in the future the City may consider the construction of a trail/sidewalk. The applicant has been working with the City Engineering Department regarding stormwater runoff and has agreed to add a rain garden to reduce the amount of runoff on the property. Staff recommends approval of the request with the conditions listed in Alternative A. She advised that staff heard from four residents who were all in support of the request.

Chair Bartholomew pointed out a typo in Condition 10, to which Ms. Botten replied that the word 'screening' should be replaced with 'equipment'.

Commissioner Simon asked what the hours of operation would be, to which Ms. Botten replied she was unsure and noted there were no restrictions on hours.

Opening of Public Hearing

Tom Boland, River Country Co-op, 1231 Alameda Street, St. Paul, referred to Condition 3 regarding exterior lighting. He advised that they plan to reuse the existing lights by the entry points and on the canopy. The new canopy and any lights on the building would be downcast and the new canopy lights would be flush-mounted or screened on the side.

Chair Bartholomew asked if staff would be agreeable to that, to which Mr. Hunting replied in the affirmative, stating the applicants could reuse the existing lights as long as they were not changing anything.

Mr. Boland stated they would screen the sides of the fixtures if at some time in the future they switched to more energy efficient lighting on the existing canopy. Mr. Boland also stated he had no issue with a trail going through the utility easement as long as it did not change the curb cut or interfere with traffic coming on and off the site.

Ms. Botten stated the trail would be located within the easement area and should not have any negative impact on the site. She added that any change to the curb cut would be at the cost of the City.

Mr. Boland stated they intended to retain the existing rate sign.

Commissioner Simon asked if the applicants would be performing oil changes or servicing autos, to which Mr. Boland replied they would not.

Commissioner Simon asked what the hours of operation would be, to which Mr. Boland replied the longest day would likely be 5:00 a.m. to midnight.

Commissioner Simon noted that the City had a noise ordinance and asked if the applicants would have a PA system.

Mr. Boland replied that by law they needed to have a PA system, however, they would not use it at night.

Chair Bartholomew asked if the pumps were credit card operated and would be open 24 hours a day, to which Mr. Boland replied in the affirmative.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Roth, second by Commissioner Wippermann, to approve the request for a conditional use permit amendment to add an addition to the existing convenience store, along with other property improvements, for the property located at 3240 – 57th Street with the conditions listed the report.

Motion carried (6/0). This item goes to the City Council on April 11, 2011.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bartholomew adjourned the meeting at 7:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Fox
Recording Secretary