

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES - CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Tuesday, April 16, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.
City Hall Chambers - 8150 Barbara Avenue

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

Commissioners Present: Armando Lissarrague
Tony Scales
Dennis Wippermann
Bill Klein
Annette Maggi
Paul Hark

Commissioners Absent: Pat Simon (excused)
Harold Gooch (excused)
Victoria Elsmore (excused)

Others Present: Allan Hunting, City Planner
Eric Carlson, Parks and Recreation Director

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the April 2, 2013 Planning Commission meeting were approved as submitted.

BRIAN AND JULIE LEHMAN – CASE NO. 13-04ZA

Chair Hark advised that this application has been tabled to May 7, 2013.

CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS (PARKS) – CASE NO. 13-07Z

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Scales read the public hearing notice to consider the request for a rezoning of three parcels from I-1, Limited Industrial District to P, Institutional District, for property located along 66th Street, between Concord Boulevard and the Mississippi River. 8 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Allan Hunting, City Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. He advised that Eric Carlson, the City's Park Director, was available to answer any specific questions regarding the request and would also provide an update on the Heritage Village Park Plan. Mr. Hunting advised that the request is to rezone three City-owned parcels so the land can be used to construct a trailhead for the Mississippi River Regional Trail (MRRT). Staff recommends approval of the request.

Opening of Public Hearing

Commissioner Klein asked if the Kladek property had been settled yet.

Eric Carlson, Director of Parks and Recreation, replied it was not; however, the hearing was anticipated to take place next month.

Commissioner Klein asked if some of the property for the trailhead was therefore still in question.

Mr. Carlson replied it was not. He stated the City took ownership of the property in 2012, but were awaiting final judgment regarding Mr. Kladek's challenge to its value.

Chair Hark asked if Mr. Carlson had anything to add to Mr. Hunting's comments.

Mr. Carlson presented an overview of the project and explained why a zoning change was being requested. He advised that the Parks and Recreation Department is proposing a partnership project with Dakota County and the National Park Service to construct a trailhead; this would include off-street parking, restrooms, wayfinding information, historical interpretation, and picnic facilities. He advised that the picnic shelter would seat 50-60 people and would have electricity, water, security lighting, a counter, and would be available for rent. Construction is expected to be substantially complete by December 2013. He advised that funding for this project comes from a number of different sources, including Dakota County, the National Park Service, as well as the City of Inver Grove Heights, which is using funds from the bonding money they received from the State of Minnesota.

Commissioner Klein stated when he was on City Council he requested that parking spots be designated in the lot for buses and RV's.

Mr. Carlson responded that what he recalled from Commissioner Klein's comment was that he wanted two entrance/exits to the parking lot so larger vehicles could swing through without having to back up and turn around. The parking lot plan was since modified to reflect two entrance/exits. He advised there was no bus or large vehicle parking designated on this plan as the site was too small to accommodate that.

Commissioner Klein stated he felt large vehicle parking was necessary as large groups would likely be coming in by bus to visit the swing bridge, use the picnic shelter, etc.

Mr. Carlson replied that the site was very constrained with regard to what it could accommodate for parking. If parking is found to be a challenge they will have to address it in the future by acquiring more property.

Chair Hark stated that Mr. Klein brought up a good argument; however, it could likely be handled better by City Council rather than at this hearing.

Chair Hark closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission Discussion

Chair Hark stated he supported the request, and hoped the bike trail would bring additional customers to the local businesses.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Wippermann, second by Commissioner Klein, to approve the request for a rezoning of three parcels from I-1, Limited Industrial District to P, Institutional District, for property located along 66th Street, between Concord Boulevard and the Mississippi River.

Motion carried (6/0). This item goes to the City Council on April 22, 2013.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Carlson provided an update on Heritage Village Park. City Council recently adopted the updated Master Park Plan for Heritage Village Park. This plan envisions passive-type uses such as playground equipment, trails, a small performance area, etc. Mr. Carlson advised that the City has been acquiring properties from willing sellers through the Doffing Avenue Voluntary Acquisition Program. Their goal thorough that program is not only park improvements, but also to remove structures within the flood areas. He advised there were four properties remaining within the future

park boundaries that the City would still like to acquire; this will occur when those property owners become willing sellers. He advised that the total cost to complete the master plan would be approximately \$9.5M, including land acquisition, park development, and public infrastructure. The City is hopeful that the public investment will spur private investment through improved housing stock, new businesses and jobs, and an improved tax base.

Commissioner Klein advised that one of the reasons Council established the Doffing Avenue Voluntary Acquisition Program was because the flood wall needed an excessive amount of expensive repairs. Rather than repair the wall, Council decided to instead purchase properties from willing sellers as they became available and thereby remove the potential for future property damage.

Chair Hark suggested Mr. Carlson's PowerPoint be posted to the City's website.

Mr. Carlson agreed to do so.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Fox
Recording Secretary