

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS, MN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
October 20, 2021**

1. **Call to Order:** The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Women Fairbanks.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were Deborah Humann, Colleen Sievert, Liz Fairbanks, Dustin Pavel, Tara Kelly and Alan Lauermann. Absent: Todd Gardner

Others in attendance: Kate Thunstrom- Community Development Director, Kevin Robinson - City Council, Beth Richmond – City Planner

3. **Adopt Agenda:** Motion by Pavek, second by Sievert to approve the agenda with the addendum related to the Green Valley 2nd Addition. Motion carried 6-0.
4. **Approve Minutes:** Motion by Sievert, second by Pavek to approve the September 25, 2021 minutes. Motion carried 6-0.
5. **Public Comment:**
Gene Rechtzigel, 6533 160th Street W Apple Valley, court action filed today in Civil court, Case # 02-CV-21-4908 titled in the matter of to determine boundaries and title of his land located in St. Francis next to the Green Valley 2nd development.

6. **Public Hearing:**

a. **Green Valley Preserve 2nd Addition – Rezoning, Preliminary Plat, Subdivision, Variances**

Richmond reviewed the staff packet identifying the request and reasons for the rezoning, preliminary plat, subdivision and variance. The public hearing tonight is on the matter of the road. The road would be a temporary dead-end street that is requesting to meet rural standards. The road was location was reviewed by Anoka County and they have requested an east bound turn lane and a west bound bypass lane. Richmond had reached out to the DNR regarding the snowmobile trail and did not receive a response. The applicant is willing to continue the trail in the public right of way and through the conservation easement. A tree survey was conducted of all trees greater than 8” and quality and is working to develop with the least amount of disruption. The public benefit is required for PUD flexibility and this will be met through the passive open space by creating a cluster development and preserving the snowmobile trail.

Public Hearing Opened: 7: 19pm

- Gene Rechtzigel, 6533 160th Street W Apple Valley, Court action was filed for determination of boundary that blocks this action. Applicant is subdividing his property and must follow State of MN Statutory requirements
- Zack Stadem 19817 Juno Trail, Lakeville – his family owns property to the north and west. Plat is incorrect, fence line is questionable. Should not decide tonight per lis pen dens, under law cannot vote.

- Phil Thompson 6448 Ambassador Blvd, Request that the PC continue to make a vote tonight being mindful of the statutory deadline and the impact it will have on this project. Understands that PC members live in similar areas. Concern regarding the 10 acres and wetlands are a natural preserve.
- Rebecca Curtis 6481 Ambassador Blvd, concerns on road changes and the location by driveway. Road accidents and vehicle speed concerns.
- Jeff Tenner 23003 Springhill Road, does not follow public benefit and this project does not follow the comp plan. Tax payers paid for the plan and the city is not following it. Negative impact to the city.
- Matt Schultz 6533 160th Street W Apple Valley, concerns over safety, to close to farmland and hunting. Not good for kids or teenagers.
- Carolyn Thompson 6938 Ambassador Blvd, please follow the rules and look at the impact this project is making.
- Jeff Tenner 23003 Springhill Road, snowmobile trail is already on protected land. Would require approval by each property owner.
- Ashley Dominick 6481 Ambassador Blvd, safety in the winter and getting into driveways is a concern. Bypass land creates an unsafe approach. Get stuck now and cars are speeding. Snowmobiles will not be able to cross safely.
- Donald Slaughter 6445 Ambassador Blvd, would rather see road be residential to catch what will go into wetlands. Want to see lots at 10 acres.
- Pete Moeller 6423 Ambassador Blvd, against development, traffic issues with 14 hours creates 28 additional vehicles. Widening the road does not fix issue.
- Jun Rechtzigel 6533 160th Street W Apple Valley, Plan does not fit into the city. City is agriculture. To go against 10 acres is short sited. Applicant is cutting down trees.
- Cody (?) 6481 Ambassador Blvd, what will be done in the event of a fire call with a minimum road, concerns over safety.
- Jodi Cutis 25155 Llama Street NW, Zimmerman, does not want to see her daughter lose her yard and have them be put in danger. (handed out a copy of comments as identified in packet addendum). City wants urban for homes but rural for road. Everyone wants growth but this is not the right place for it. 2040 plan is tax payer paid for and citizen input was considered. Light pollution from south traffic. Voting no supports, the plan, rural setting, land and families.
- Jesse Jones 7038 Ambassador Blvd, questioned if large lot can be developed again. If he can do this I can. Keep it fair for everyone.

Public Hearing Closed 7:55 pm

Commission discussed the concern that the project does not meet the Comp Plan. Richmond identified that the project does meet the comp plan land density and that cluster developments are supported.

Commission discussed the difference between buildable and gross acres. Richmond explained that the old code required that there be 10 buildable acres for a lot to be split and this was updated with the last code update. The large lot

could not be split further with the current comp plan because they are already at max for gross area density.

Commission questioned the safety for fire and police access. Richmond identified that this road is adequate to handle any safety or snow issues and should have a turn around at the end for those purposes. This type of road also has ditches to handle stormwater needs.

Commission discussed Ambassador Blvd changes that are required due to the new city road. Richmond identified that no residential land will be taken from a property owner. All changes or improvements will happen in the County right of way. This was the County's addition to their road to address safety concerns.

Commission discussed the snowmobile trail. Thunstrom identified that this is not a DNR trail and at no time are property owners required by any easement or other to host the trail. The applicant is willing to continue working with the snowmobile group and keep the trail through the public right of way and ditches. This will not require any snowmobile driver to obtain permission.

Commission had concerns about hunting. Thunstrom clarified this is private property and if this property owner allows it people may hunt. Otherwise they are trespassing. This owner is choosing to develop his property.

Concerns about the possible legal case were discussed and Thunstrom asked that the Commission continue their recommendation as required. This project is still under land use statutes and until the city is served notice to stop we will continue to move forward as needed. Planning is a recommendation and that stop order would be applied to Council as the final approval/denial.

- Josh, property owner – spoke on behalf of his project. They bought this land in 2013 and already developed the property on the north side of Ambassador. He is a local owner; his kids are in the schools and has worked to be a good neighbor. When he approached the city, they started with 10 acre lots but after brainstorming and a few concepts have what was brought before Planning and Council last spring. This design keeps the rural setting and is similar to Isanti rules.

Commission discussed open space as the public benefit and if this land is open to the public. Richmond identified that the land will be owned and maintained by the City. No parking lot or trails are planned for this space, it is meant to be a passive space or greenspace. It does however hold the snowmobile trail.

Humann moved to recommend denial of the approval of the rezoning of roughly 146 acres south of Ambassador Blvd and ease of Nacre St from A-2 Rural Estate Agriculture to PUD A-2. Lauermaun 2nd. Motion failed 3-3

Fairbanks moved to recommend denial of the preliminary plat of Green Valley Preserve 2nd Addition with conditions and finding of fact as recommended by Staff. Humann 2nd. Motion failed 3-3

Fairbanks moved to recommend denial of the subdivision variance to allow a temporary dead-end street to be narrower than 32 feet wide and longer than

1,500 feet with conditions and findings of fact as recommended by Staff.
Humann 2nd. Motion failed 3-3

All motions failed without a majority of PC members in support. Planning Commission Chair chose to move items directly to Council due to deadlock of votes.

7. Regular Business Items:

a. Concept Plan – Meadows of St. Francis 4th Addition

Richmond reviewed the staff packet. Applicant is looking to rezone to a PUD and plat 7-12 units per net but this will be reviewed in the context of the full development including the 1st through 3rd phases. The applicant is looking to extend the trail along Cree street to 229th and a trail on south side should be discussed. Wetland delineation is being updated and lot 44 would become an outlot instead of a lot. Stormwater is being reviewed. For tonight's meeting, no formal action is taken this is for input and feedback.

Commission discussed concerns over road and driveway sizes. When the 3rd addition was brought forward the idea of making the roads one way was discussed. However it was explained that as a private road that would be the developer and/or association call. The applicant is working to put the structures at 19' from the curb. Planning Commission feels there should be guest parking with this size of driveways and narrow roads. Also is there something that can be done with outlot in back of development? It would be nice if the trails met up with the park.

8. Planning Commission Discussion –

- a. Thunstrom brought forward the idea for the group to go paperless. The City would supply a tablet for their term and the agenda would be emailed and posted on the city website for access eliminating the paper copy. Four were interested in a tablet, two positions are turning over and one prefers to stick with paper. The City will work on obtaining tablets for members who wish to go that direction and continue to mail to others. We will look to get people transferred by the end of the year.

9. Adjournment: Motion by Lauermann, second by Humann to adjourn. Motion carried 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Website Link to Packets and Minutes for the Planning Commission:

<https://www.stfrancismn.org/meetings>

Recorded by: Kate Thunstrom

DATE APPROVED without change: December 15, 2021