

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS, MN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
August 18, 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 Todd Gardner, Colleen Sievert, Liz Fairbanks, Dustin Pavel, and Alan Lauermann
Absent: Deborah Humann, Tara Kelly

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

3. **Adopt Agenda:** Motion by Gardner, second by Pavel to approve the agenda. Motion carried 5-0.
4. **Approve Minutes:** Motion by Sievert, second by Lauermann to approve the July 21, 2021 minutes. Motion carried 5-0.
5. **Public Comment:** None received

6. **Public Hearing:**

- a. Rita Meadows Preliminary and Final Plat

Scheib reviewed the staff packet. This platting process is to create Rita Meadows 2nd addition as the first was created with the original split in 2007. Replat of Lot 2 becomes the 2nd addition. The concept identifies a 4 unit building proposed but this is an example of what would fit with the future development. Tonight, the PC is only acting on the Plat and a site plan review will come in the future. Future will review the access and public utilities of the development of this area.

This property is zoned for 3 to 7 units per acre per the comp plan, based on the subdivision as a whole this property would need the R2 zoning as a condition of future phases meeting those zoning requirements.

Public Hearing Open: 7:12 p.m.

- Chester Kottke 3328 Bridge Street. The development proposed is directly behind his property. Does the current plan create any impact to his property?

Scheib identified that the ROW path for 229th does abut his property and properties to the north would dedicate their area when and if developed. No chance until that time.

Public Hearing Closed 7:15 p.m.

Motion by Pavel to recommend approval of the preliminary plat splitting the property located at Block 1 Lot 2 of the Rita Meadows subdivision into two parcels with the conditions and finding of fact as presented by Staff. Second by Fairbanks. Motion passed 5-0

7. **Regular Business Items:**

- a. Sunram IUP – South 241st Ave and East of Hwy 47

Scheib presented the staff packet and updated the PC on tonight's process. This application was before them last month and the item was tabled. Tonight, is not a formal public hearing but they have the discretion of opening up for comment from the public.

First the PC must review the Zoning amendment to create the use of Ag-tourism. Ag-tourism is a use that is emerging in cities on the rural/urban fringe. Is PC willing to make a change to allow the use is the first step.

Second is the IUP application for Ag-tourism use at the identified parcel. This item was tabled for issues concerning screening, portable toilets and traffic concerns on Hwy 47.

Landscaping requests were above and beyond what is required by code but the applicant was understanding. The berm was extended and tresses were planted and the type was changed to accommodate seasons. By the time the property becomes a business park those trees will be established and further matured.

Traffic, as hard as this is to predict it is an important piece to land use. MnDOT did not feel based on this use that any changes were necessary. No further action is needed for the Hwy 47 & 241st intersection.

Portable toilets, the applicant has provided additional updates they will be removed when not in use except one for ongoing workers and the office area. Additionally, a fence with a gate will be included to secure the area.

PC discussed parking and access being roughly 800' off of Hwy 47 and the level of dust and how city sprays for controls. It was identified that if this use is created it is now allowed to any property in this zoning district. When this property becomes a business park or when development occurs past this property utilities will be extended. This is a temporary use and meant to wait for the market to demand the need for business park space. These improvements of the lot layout is done to facilitate the ability to develop in the future. The PC was open to public comment:

- Kellie Fiedler – 4221 241st Ave: 241st is a train wreck and the road is a washboard. This road does not allow traffic to go over 20 mph. Who has to monitor dust control? Is this burden on the residents? Already an issue. Also looking to understand concept of multiple lots and the reality of a business park. If this property becomes an issue, what is the plan for the city? What happens after the 5 years?
Scheib identified that the city will need to spot check the road. The multiple property layout is just an example of what this property could become if developed as such. This is not set in any way. The future will dictate the reality of future development. After 5 years this property must come back before the process.
- Paul Carey – 23956 St. Francis Blvd: concerned about traffic and it feels like it will be higher than anticipated. Worried that nothing is ever done on Hwy 47 until something happens and staging is not going to work making a left-hand turn going north. The speed limit northbound is high and it is dangerous making turns now without the added traffic. Clarification of the hours and the need to clean up garbage is important. Still have concerns about porta potties as they stink. Also concerns about people entering his property and the ability for someone to sue him.
Sheib identified if concerns become real that that falls back to the conditions on the IUP and the city requirement to enforce them. That MnDOT makes their comments based on the traffic in similar situations and must not have found a disruption at other locations. If the applicant is not following the conditions to address traffic the local police can be called for road concerns and PD will see those issues as well if accidents or parking issues occur. This will take a couple of years to get up and going then after 5 years it may have more frequent approvals needed.

- Angela Hammer – 4275 241st Ave: concerned about Hwy 47 and the number of cars and the current issue that many cars are not catching the bypass lane and make turning dangerous. How did MnDOT determine their opinion? The dirt road is bad and now adding an additional 500 cars is not going to help it. Nobody wants that many more people in their neighborhood. If this road eventually gets paved, who pays for that? The current road is not maintained but do not want the cost burden of paving. Aren't there other parcels that this type of use would fit on better than this one?
Scheib identified that MnDOT reviews traffic data to make their assumptions on the impact at intersections.
- Dale Blanchette – 4181 241st Ave: Issues he has are that Hwy 47 is a major concern and the current dust issue with 241st is bad. The headlights of this use will affect his house as he is close to the road. Concerned about toilets and people not using them, the speed on 241st, fowl language and loitering. How is this benefiting the city? How does this move forward? Dale is concerned about the value of his home and as he wants to retire does not want to see value drop. The left turn lane on Hwy 47 is not safe now.
Scheib identified that this is a step-in economic development. The city council is still needing to approve then the applicant can move forward. PC discussed the impact to bring in people for retail and local businesses.
- Chris Walker – 4357 241st Ave: Does the property touch Hwy 47 and why can't it have access to the Hwy instead of 241st? Why is the city giving a business access to a rural residential road?
- *Thunstrom identified that the parcel has legal access to 241st and that the state is not allowing Hwy access to any parcel.*

PC identified the idea that they understand the ongoing concerns but that we have to give it a try. If issues are found it will be brought back to them with concerns from Staff on the conditions of the IUP. The city is not the authority of Hwy 47 and have limited control but if a problem is created it will need to be addressed at that time.

General discussion continued around why there was a business park on the residential street. It was identified that when the City looks at the whole balance of land uses, in addition to jobs and expansion of services that is how zoning gets placed. At some point further subdivision will happen along this road and the road will be paved and the utilities brought down 241st. The discussion to bring the access point down to Ambassador may be worth talking about but what is a solution to one neighborhood becomes an issue for the next.

- Ryan Sunram – applicant: hears and understands the concerns the neighbors are having in regards to smell, noise and garbage but for his business to work these issues would be a big deal to him as well. Has no intention of letting the property have those issues.

Motion by Sievert to recommend approval of the zoning code amendment allowing agritourism as an interim use in the BPK district with findings determined by the Planning Commission. Second by Gardner. Motion passed 5-0

Motion by Sievert to recommend approval of the interim use permit for agritourism on property zoned BPK with conditions and finding of fact adding a condition regarding a response plan. Second by Fairbanks. Motion passed 5-0

8. **Planning Commission Discussion:** None

9. **Adjournment:** Motion by Gardner, second by Sievert to adjourn. Motion carried 0-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Website Link to Packets and Minutes for the Planning Commission:

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

Recorded by: Kate Thunstrom

DATE APPROVED: September 15, 2021