

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS  
ST. FRANCIS, MN  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
September 16, 2020**

1. **Call to Order:** The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:12 pm by Chairman Zutz via Zoom
2. **Roll Call:** Present were Todd Gardner, Greg Zutz, Colleen Sievert, Tara Kelly and Joe Kollodge. Absent: Liz Fairbanks and William Murray

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

3. **Adopt Agenda:** Motion by Sievert, second by Gardner to approve the September 16 agenda. Motion carried 5-0.
4. **Approve Minutes:** Motion by Gardner, second by Kelly to approve the August 19, 2020 minutes. Motion carried 5-0.
5. **Public Comment:** None received
6. **Regular Business Items:**

- a. City Acquisition of Real Property  
Thunstrom reviewed the packet and attachments. The City and EDA look to acquire four properties in the downtown area off of Bridge Street and Ambassador Blvd. The City will acquire for the purposes of demolition and redevelopment which may include the development of a Civil Campus.

Thunstrom explained the process and steps of relocation. The group discussed the other City owned properties that surround the ones considered for acquisition. Thunstrom explained the steps the city has taken so far in regards to the development of a City Campus. Robinson also provided information on how the City is reaching out to other partners such as the library or post office.

Commission supported the idea of the Civic Campus and considered it an upgrade to the City. Per Zutz this had been discussed in 1998/99 from a group formed for the future of the City. One of the concepts was exactly what is being considered now. This is a win for the City to have a city hall on Bridge St – our main street. Sense of a center for the City and a favorable asset. It may also continue to support the need to connect Bridge and Hwy 47.

Commission Comments received as required for acquisition based on being a Comprehensive Plan City.

- b. City Zoning District and Code discussion  
Richmond reviewed a Zoning Code update through a presentation, *attached*. Identified that the update to continue compliance with the adopted 2040 Comprehensive Plan. This step allows consolidation of small updates needed

into one process. Zoning needs to evolve and reflect current trends and needs of the City. Statute provide the City nine months to update these pieces with the Comp Plan which brings us to the end of the year.

Discussion:

- When considering rezoning schools and public space to keep together, does this limit the number of properties in an area? This will keep similar uses together while correctly identifying the use of the properties, it does not contain limits.
- Like idea of keeping Bridge street a foot and boutique type of district verses the chain store and heavy traffic uses with drive throughs.
- It was favored to reduce area by rezoning if it makes sense to improve efficiencies. Green space isn't always quality park or open space. Desirable cities have quality park systems. Continue to work on improvements. City should strongly condition park space and how it is used.
- Requests for updates is coming from both existing residents, in demands such as bees or accessory structures while other changes are being recognized from questions that come from potential developers or businesses looking to locate into STF.
- Surprised at lack of commercial building in the last 10 years and hope we are not zoning them out.
- Commerce comes in many ways including park and trail systems. How can the zoning capture local and County park system to create commerce in STF.
- Setbacks need be realistic to ensure the character of a district. Some seem close or at property line. Are we reviewing to ensure working with businesses and not being over restrictive to not restrictive enough.

This was an informational only item to collect initial feedback of zoning and code updates.

**7. Public Hearing:**

a. Meadows of St. Francis PUD

Richmond reviewed the packet identifying the update of the zoning code from R3 to PUD-R3. This is a strategy to clean up existing structure issues and to allow the current builder to meet the City expectations of the plat approved and development in progress.

Discussion included:

- How did the project end up with these issues? Staff does not have the files to identify what was originally approved and agreements made. It is possible that these items were addressed when the development was originally platted but the files do not contain what is needed to make that determination. This will allow us to have that information and the builder to complete the project in compliance.
- Any consideration for park space? Since this is a clean up effort there are not any changes to the proposed uses that would allow a park to be considered.
- Issues related to parking and access; consider recommendation condition be that the parking is to be utilized for compact cars only in the driveway. There is no parking on the road and no guest parking in the development. The city at this point cannot require that parking be created but would require any future developments to address these issues more favorably. Seems as

streets were developed in an unreasonable size and that major errors were done. City needs to be aware of the aesthetics of how this will look going forward. Hope to not experience these issues again and not interested to cram a development in utilizing a PUD overlay.

Public Hearing Open - 8:32 pm

Public Hearing Closed – 8:33 pm with no comment

Staff was requested by the commission to review the possibility of streets being created into a one-way street. Staff will review prior to Council action.

Motion to recommend approval of the rezoning of Block 1 Meadows of St. Francis from r-3 Medium Density Residential to PUD R-3 with conditions and finding of fact as recommend by Staff and include the review to determine if street could be made into a one way by Sievert,  
Second by Gardner, Motion passed 5-0

8. **Planning Commission Discussion:** Group discussed new businesses and development updates.
9. **Adjournment:** Motion by Gardner, second by Kelly to adjourn. Motion carried 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Website Link to Packets and Minutes for the Planning Commission:

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

Signed by: Kate Thunstrom

**DATE APPROVED: October 21, 2020**

# Zoning Code Update

Planning Commission – September 16, 2020

## Agenda

- **Purpose of Update**
- **Topics of Particular Focus**
- **Zoning Districts**

9/16/2020  
Planning  
Commission

Agenda

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# Purpose

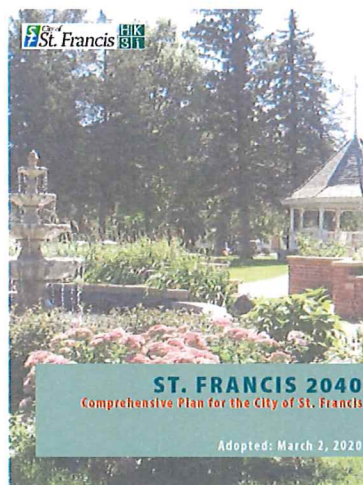
- **Implement the 2040 Comprehensive Plan**
- **Consolidate Code updates**
- **Reflect current trends**

Purpose

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# Implement the Comprehensive Plan

- **2040 Comprehensive Plan adopted March 2020**
  - City has 9 months to update zoning and subdivision regulations to comply with new Comprehensive Plan
- **Guiding Principles**
  - Focus on Home
  - Focus on Character and Form
  - Focus on Business and Economic Strength
  - Focus on Infrastructure
  - Focus on Natural Areas
- **Several Action Items identified in the Comprehensive Plan relate to this Code update**



Purpose

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# Comprehensive Plan Action Items

- Rezone parcels to **accommodate commercial and industrial** development
- Incorporate business and development supporting policy into the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances
- Revise zoning and subdivision regulations as needed to **encourage a mix of housing types and prices** in development projects
- Update ordinances to maintain **housing functionality and livability** and to **address new technologies, market trends, and resident needs**
- **Streamline** permitting and development processes
- As part of the site plan review process, review how potential developments provide for effective linkages between housing and nearby community services and amenities
- Update the City's **park dedication** requirements
- Ensure that the City Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances comply with and implement the **transportation** chapter of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan
- Update the **stormwater management** portions of the City's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances

Purpose

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# Consolidate Updates

- **Code is result of series of amendments to address historical issues**
- **More efficient to complete one larger update**
  - Eliminate inconsistencies
  - Reduce complexities for property owners
  - Clarify provisions that have been confused in the past
  - Revise grammar
- **Frequent requests for updates/amendments**
  - Topsoil
  - Residential driveways
  - Keeping of bees
  - Recreational motor vehicles
  - Drive-thrus

Purpose

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## Reflect Current Trends

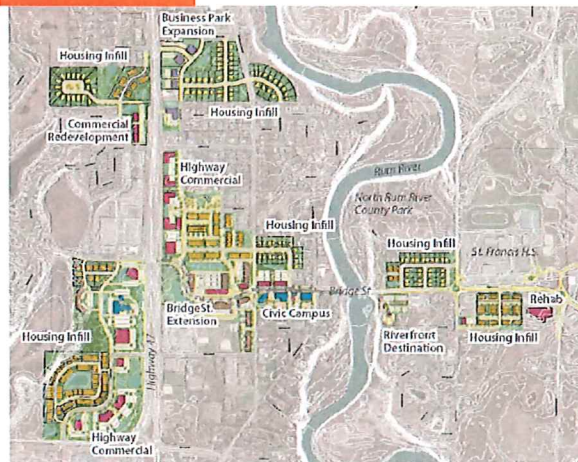
- **Bridge Street, Highway 47, Business Park areas**

- Support investment while encouraging appropriate commercial/industrial character

- **New uses**

- Moratoriums
  - Self-storage facilities
  - Auto uses
- ADUs
- Drive-thrus

FIGURE 3.5 ST. FRANCIS FORWARD PLAN GRAPHIC



Purpose

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## Topics of Particular Focus

- **Update Zoning Districts**
- **Update Zoning Map**
- **Miscellaneous Items**

Important  
Topics

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## Next Steps

- **Goal: Complete update by end of 2020**
- **Current Focus: Zoning Districts and Uses**
- **Staff will provide regular updates to Planning Commission and City Council throughout process**