

***PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 24, 2020***

The Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting of the Andover Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order by Vice-Chairperson Karen Godfrey on November 24, 2020, 7:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Commissioners present: Karen Godfrey, Scott Hudson, Nick Loehlein (remote), Marni Elias (remote), and Wes Volkenant

Commissioners absent: Chairperson Bert Koehler IV and Mary VanderLaan

Also present: Community Development Director Joe Janish
City Planner Peter Hellegers
Associate Planner Jake Griffiths
Others

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Associate Planner Griffiths explained the meeting process and mask mandate pertaining to public meetings.

OATH OF OFFICE

Vice-Chairperson Godfrey explained Commissioner Perra resigned her position and the Council has appointed alternate, Wes Volkenant, to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Vice-Chairperson Godfrey administered the Oath of Office to Wes Volkenant.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 10, 2020 Regular Meeting

Motion by Hudson, seconded by Volkenant, to approve the November 10, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. Motion was taken by roll call:

Volkenant - present

Godfrey - aye

Hudson - aye

Loehlein - aye

Elias – aye

VanderLaan - absent

Koehler – absent

Motion carries 4 ayes, 1 present (Volkenant) 2 absent (Koehler and VanderLaan)

PUBLIC HEARING: SKETCH PLAN/PUD CONCEPT PLAN - FIELDS OF WINSLOW COVE - PID'S: 23-32-24-41-0001, 23-32-24-42-0003, 23-32-24-43-0005, 23-32-24-44-0001, 24-32-24-31-0001, 24-32-24-32-0001, 24-32-24-33-0001, 24-32-24-34-0001, 24-32-24-43-0001 - U.S. HOME CORPORATION DBA LENNAR, LLC (APPLICANT)

City Planner Hellegers stated the Commission is asked to review the sketch plan, provide comments to the applicant, and conduct a public hearing. Mr. Hellegers reviewed the definition and purpose of a PUD and sketch plan. Mr. Hellegers identified the location of the development and stated it encompasses 240 acres. He indicated all but 2 acres are within MUSA boundaries. Mr. Hellegers gave background information on the Comprehensive Plan, density requirements, and how it relates to the current development proposal. He explained the proposed development is guided within the Urban Residential Low and Urban Residential Medium Low density range in the draft 2018 Comprehensive Plan update. Mr. Hellegers presented the sketch plan and stated there are many wetland acres on the property limiting areas that can be developed. He stated three different types of homes are proposed. Mr. Hellegers addressed the access points into the development. He reviewed the application with the Commission as presented in the staff report, addressing housing styles, screening and buffering, tree preservation, and wetlands. Mr. Hellegers explained the PUD Review Criteria. Mr. Hellegers stated the purpose of the meeting is to gather feedback to the developer prior to submitting a preliminary plat.

Commissioner Volkenant thanked Mr. Hellegers for providing an orientation for him and answering his questions. He stated he is concerned how the 2-acre property outside the MUSA affects neighboring properties. He indicated there is some children's play equipment in the way and asked how the City would address that. Commissioner Volkenant asked staff to address residents' concern about loss of trees and buffering to neighboring properties. Mr. Hellegers responded there are some structures in the right-of-way that was established in the 1970s and the structures would need to be removed. Mr. Hellegers stated the area Commissioner Volkenant referred to needs a buffer between the neighboring properties as the existing neighborhood is outside of the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) boundary.

Josh Metzger, with Lennar Homes, came forward remotely and addressed the Commission. Mr. Metzger identified the extensive trail system and open space through the development. He explained the ditches will be repurposed from a straight line to a meandering stream to give a more natural aesthetic. Mr. Metzger stated they are in conversations with the City and BNSF railroad regarding a railroad underpass in the northwest corner which could provide connections to the east and to the Community Center. Mr. Metzger explained they are preserving most of the wetlands with a few

exceptions. Mr. Metzger stated the variety of housing products they are providing sell well.

Mr. Metzger presented a draft tree preservation plan showing areas of trees that could be cut and areas that could be preserved. He stated the area is rather flat which should reduce the amount of grading they need to do to accommodate stormwater. Mr. Metzger addressed the buffering concerns that Commissioner Volkenant referred to and stated they will preserve as many trees as possible and potentially plant additional trees to provide a buffer.

Mr. Metzger stated there was a concern from the neighbors on the southeast regarding the tall pines. He stated they are proposing to preserve 50% of the trees in that area, mostly along the property line. Mr. Metzger explained the timeline and stated they will be doing an environmental study, looking at endangered species, and a transportation study. He stated Phase 1 would be in 2021 and Phase 2 may begin in 2022.

Commissioner Volkenant stated some people are under the impression that 30,000 trees will be taken down. He asked Mr. Metzger to confirm they will save around half of the trees. Mr. Metzger replied the tree study is not complete yet, however, the goal is to preserve half of them. Commissioner Volkenant asked Mr. Metzger what his preliminary plan was for the farmland along the railroad tracks which has no buffer. Mr. Metzger stated there is wetland along the railroad tracks and they are planning on using landscaping as a buffer and high-quality windows to reduce the noise. He explained they are proposing landscaping along Prairie Road and adding fencing if landscaping isn't sufficient.

Commissioner Volkenant stated he has concerns about the entrance and exits off of Prairie Road and the three intersections that are being created. He stated there may be a great deal of difficulty making left hand turns out of the neighborhood onto Prairie Road. Commissioner Volkenant also stated he has a concern about the connection to Palm Street on the south end. He said the neighborhood to the south is older with larger lots. Commissioner Volkenant stated Palm Street is not designed for that kind of traffic. Commissioner Volkenant stated he hopes the traffic study considers the impact to Palm Street and the existing neighborhood.

Mr. Metzger stated he would defer to staff on the ability of Palm Street to handle the traffic load and believes that Palm Street was always meant to be connected. Mr. Metzger stated they added a connection in the development to reduce the traffic driven towards Palm Street and allow easier access to Prairie Road.

Commissioner Hudson asked Mr. Metzger how the grading plan looks. He asked Mr. Metzger to address the 4 additions. Commissioner Hudson asked if there would be HOAs throughout the development or just in the villas. Commissioner Hudson asked Mr. Metzger to provide price points for the various housing products.

Mr. Metzger replied the grading would start on the west side because that is where sewer and water are coming from. He stated the two phases of grading and the four platting phases are estimates. Mr. Metzger said the grading may finish in one to two years, depending on the site, weather, and sales. Mr. Metzger stated the villas would have an HOA and if the other properties had architectural standards and pond maintenance, there would need to be an HOA. Mr. Metzger said price points for the villas would begin in the upper \$300,000 and the single-family homes would start at lower \$400,000 and up.

Vice-Chairperson Godfrey explained the public hearing process and sanitization procedure.

Motion by Hudson, seconded by Volkenant to open the public hearing at 7:48 p.m.

Motion was taken by roll call:

Volkenant - aye

Godfrey - aye

Hudson - aye

Loehlein - aye

Elias - aye

VanderLaan - absent

Koehler – absent

Motion carries 5 ayes, 2 absent (Koehler and VanderLaan)

Ross Tracy, 15300 Prairie Road, addressed the Commission stating he is speaking on behalf of his grandmother. Mr. Tracy stated his concerns are safety and quiet neighborhoods. He said lot sizes continue to shrink and he doesn't think it aligns with what people in Andover want. He said the addition of this many houses without a park creates an unsafe situation for people using Prairie Knoll Park. He said there is hunting that occurs on his grandmother's property and asked if they would be changing hunting regulations in since homes will be bordering their property. Mr. Tracy stated there should be consideration for buffering along the north property line.

James Tracy, 250 Rice Creek Terrace, Fridley, came forward and said he is related to the family who owns the land which has the ghost plat. He asked for a definition of a ghost plat. Mr. Tracy referred to an email sent by Mary Sullivan asking eight specific questions about the development and requested that they be answered. He asked why the trees on the north property line were to be removed while the trees on the south are being preserved. Mr. Tracy asked where the sewer connection would be and why there is concern about a walking trail. Mr. Tracy stated he is concerned about changing the drainage ditches and what that would do to drainage in the area. He said the house near the railroad tracks shakes when trains go by and wants to know how the developer is addressing soil conditions. Mr. Tracy said Prairie Road is a highly used road during the sports season and the plan does not allow for expansion on Prairie. He said he is concerned about fatalities without road improvements. Mr. Tracy asked the Commission to address the people who came out to have space and with the addition of this development, they are impeding on neighbors to the north.

Terra and Shawn Smith, 14861 Prairie Road, came forward stating they own the house on the southern border on the east side. Mr. Smith said his main concern is the tree preservation along Prairie Road. Ms. Smith asked the Commission to take a look at the coniferous forest and stated there are many trees that will come down. Mr. Smith stated he is really sad to see the trees go. Mr. Smith said people walk, run, and bike along Prairie Road and asked if there would be a trail connecting to Prairie Knoll Park. Ms. Smith stated she is concerned about safety along Prairie Road between cars and pedestrians.

Amber Kerrigan, 14856 Evergreen Street NW, came forward on Zoom and said her children attend daycare down the street and she is concerned about the road going by the daycare. She said she moved to the neighborhood because it was established with larger lots and minimal traffic. She said she is concerned about the increase in traffic and safety for the kids.

Kristi Wekel, 15080 Evergreen Street NW, came forward on Zoom and stated her concern is the connection from the existing neighborhood to the new development. She stated that the connection to 150th is going to increase traffic trying to access University. She said the neighborhood streets were not built to accommodate 80 additional homes. Ms. Wekel informed the Commission that her neighborhood does not have sidewalks or streetlights. Ms. Wekel stated there is a section of land that borders the southeast corner that is heavily hunted and will be close to homes in the development. She said she has a concern about crossing Prairie Road to get to Prairie Knoll Park and it makes sense to have a safe connection or a park on the east side. Ms. Wekel asked how close the City is in achieving the density required by the Met Council in the Comprehensive Plan.

Andrea Raedel, 1114 168th Avenue, came forward on Zoom and said she takes Prairie Road to work. She stated it is already a busy road and she is concerned about additional traffic. Ms. Raedel asked about crossing lights and bike paths. She asked if there was room in the schools to house all the developments going in and asked why the City wasn't finishing current developments before starting new ones. Ms. Wekel said the school borders keep changing and kids are shifted to other schools because of the growth. She said Andover is losing its charm and small suburb feel. Ms. Wenkel stated she is worried that every beautiful area in Andover is going to be built with houses.

Steve Macglover, 14909 University Avenue, came forward and said his family owns a property on the north side of the two-acre bump out. He said there is a street stub proposed and feels there should be a cul-de-sac instead. Mr. Macglover stated nothing should be put on their property. He stated there are 80 acres of hunting land. Mr. Macglover explained his family has been in the area for generations. He stated he knows he can't stop progress, but this plan makes him sick to his stomach. Mr. Macglover said there are too many houses and too much traffic. He said there is a barbed wire fence along their property, and it will stay. Mr. Macglover said there have been people

trespassing on his property from other developments and he would like a fence installed instead of a barricade that says, “Future Development.”

Motion by Hudson, seconded by Volkenant, to close the public hearing at 8:17 p.m.

Motion was taken by roll call:

Volkenant - aye

Godfrey - aye

Hudson - aye

Loehlein - aye

Elias - aye

VanderLaan - absent

Koehler – absent

Motion carries 5 ayes, 2 absent (Koehler and VanderLaan)

Vice-Chairperson Godfrey asked staff and the developer to address the questions and concerns brought forward by the public.

Mr. Hellegers explained a ghost plat is something the City requires of a developer when submitting a plan to show how development can continue. He stated it does not lock anything in but shows where right-of-way could go and shows an ability to connect should the properties develop. He stated the utilities go to the property line and the developer places cul-de-sacs or street stubs until the neighboring properties develop.

Commissioner Volkenant asked if the neighbors to the north of the development have cause for concern that the street stubs are going to create access to their property. He stated he is concerned people may take their riding devices onto private property. Mr. Hellegers stated it would be trespassing. He said the City will put up a sign stating it is a temporary cul-de-sac. Mr. Hellegers said it gives the Tracy property more flexibility if they develop in the future. Mr. Hellegers stated the Macglover property may not need a temporary cul-de-sac. Mr. Volkenant stated the neighbors have legitimate concerns and no one knows when or if the neighboring properties will develop.

Mr. Hellegers addressed the trail concern and said the Parks and Recreation Commission will review the trail system. He stated this is a concept plan and more detail will come as the plan progresses.

Mr. Hellegers addressed the connection to 150th stating the developer is required to have two access points into the development. He said there is not another opportunity on the east side for access and 150th provides the second access point as well as access for emergency vehicles.

Mr. Hellegers addressed the comment about the Met Council’s density requirement. He stated the City is at the beginning of the process and the plan covers a 20-year span. Mr. Hellegers said the City reviews each development to ensure it is within the guidelines. He said if one development is short on density, it pushes it to other areas of the City.

Mr. Hellegers addressed the question about traffic on Prairie Road stating the environmental worksheet includes a traffic study to determine the impact on Prairie.

Mr. Hellegers said the Comprehensive Plan has been provided to the School District and it included this area as being developed. He said the School District knows of the increase in population.

Commissioner Hudson asked Mr. Hellegers to address the lack of buffering on the north side of the property. Mr. Hellegers stated City Code requires buffering for properties outside of the MUSA. He said the properties to the north are within the MUSA boundary so buffering is not explicitly required.

Commissioner Volkenant asked how the property owners to the north can create a buffer. Mr. Hellegers stated City Code requires 110 feet of buildable space and the builder may need to grade the lots to the property line. He stated trees can be replanted and additional landscaping put in. Mr. Hellegers said the public hearing process provides feedback to the developer that buffering on the northern edge is important to the neighboring property owners.

Commissioner Volkenant stated the trees to the southeast of Prairie Road are proposed to be removed and replaced with a temporary cul-de-sac. He asked if the plan could be adjusted to save some of the trees and potentially place a park in that location. Mr. Hellegers responded the Park Commission reviewed the plan and decided on park dedication fees in lieu of land. He reiterated tonight's process provides feedback to the developer that preserving trees in that location is important to the community.

Commissioner Volkenant asked if an underpass below Prairie Road is feasible. Vice-Chairperson Godfrey asked Mr. Hellegers to explain what the traffic and environmental studies entail. Mr. Hellegers stated the City is looking at an underpass by the railroad tracks and stated the City and developers are investigating its feasibility. Mr. Hellegers stated the City has not looked at an underpass on Prairie Road. He stated the City Engineer would look at the best and safest way to cross Prairie Road. Mr. Hellegers explained the environmental worksheet determines if the developer needs to do an environmental impact statement. He stated the traffic study looks at the impact on Prairie Road, intersections, and neighborhood streets. Vice-Chairperson Godfrey stated there are many items that will be studied and reviewed before the development gets to the next stage. Mr. Hellegers stated this information would be required before the Preliminary Plat.

Community Development Director Janish stated there were discussions about an underpass on Prairie Road however the elevation does not exist and would require Prairie to be raised.

He stated pedestrians would have access to a four-way intersection to cross safely.

Commissioner Volkenant stated it is unclear there are any stoppage points on Prairie Road. Mr. Janish replied traffic control has not been addressed yet, however, the EAW will research traffic volumes and determine if and where there should be a controlled intersection. Mr. Janish stated the sketch plan is a higher-level process where the City and developer are looking for feedback to determine if they want to go through the next steps.

Commissioner Elias stated she lives on the west side of the tracks and when a new development came in causing the removal of trees, her house shakes. She asked what kind of impact there will be on the stability of the houses. She stated she is concerned about safety with homes close to the tracks. Commissioner Elias stated she likes the trails but asked who maintains them. She said she would like to see a park on the east side of Prairie Road.

Associate Planner Griffiths addressed hunting concerns and stated properties 10 acres and larger are allowed to have hunting using a slug shotgun for deer. He said properties with 2.5 acres and up are allowed to bow hunt. Mr. Griffiths said as land is developed, it is removed from the hunting zone, but development does not automatically remove adjacent properties from the hunting zone. Mr. Griffiths explained that most properties outside of the site boundary will maintain their existing hunting rights until they choose to develop.

Mr. Griffiths addressed the question about finishing existing developments before starting new ones. He stated the City does not determine when these projects start. He said it is determined by the private property owner when they are ready to sell and develop.

Vice-Chairperson Godfrey asked Mr. Griffiths to address the water and sewer connections. Mr. Griffiths stated the water and sewer stubs were brought under the railroad tracks when the property to the east developed. Mr. Griffiths said the utilities will move from west to east.

Vice-Chairperson Godfrey asked Mr. Metzger if he has heard enough comments to move forward with studies and the project. She asked Mr. Metzger if he wanted to clarify anything.

Mr. Metzger replied that he has enough feedback to make some revisions and schedule time with City staff to bring forth a preliminary plat that is approvable. Mr. Metzger stated that when streets and utilities are stubbed to the undeveloped land it becomes much more valuable and may be developed sooner than later. He stated it is not standard practice to buffer between property that is zoned similar. Mr. Metzger said they can look at preserving trees on the northern line however they want to push the road connecting to Prairie Road as far north as possible to avoid disturbing the wetland and causing environmental impacts. He said trees can be planted after the homes are built and the northern property owners have the option to plant trees on their southern border.

Mr. Metzger stated the development is limited on upland and 50% of the property is wetland. He stated there are more trees on the southeast area of the development and they looked at preserving trees to establish premium lots.

Mr. Metzger addressed the concern about homes close to the railroad tracks. He said soil correction is key to making homes stable. He stated they have taken over 30 soil samples and will compact and engineer the soils to ensure the stability of the home. Mr. Metzger stated they will explore a landscape buffer between the homes and the tracks.

Mr. Metzger thanked the Commission and the public for their comments. He stated they will take the feedback and incorporate it into their design to return with a preliminary plat that is approvable.

Mr. Griffiths stated all comments received by letter or email were submitted to the Planning Commission and the developer. Mr. Griffiths addressed the unanswered questions submitted by Mary Sullivan. Mr. Griffiths said the density of the development is 2.9 net units per acre. Mr. Griffiths stated Ms. Sullivan, or any resident, can email City staff if any of their questions were unanswered.

Vice-Chairperson Godfrey stated the purpose of the public hearing was to elicit comments and concerns on the sketch plan. She stated as the developer will work through the next steps and will return with a preliminary plat where the Commission and public can provide additional comments. Vice-Chairperson Godfrey stated City staff will compile the feedback and will present it to the City Council on Tuesday, December 1. She thanked the public for their comments and concerns.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Griffiths updated the Commission on the plan the Commission reviewed at their last meeting.

Mr. Griffiths stated the Commission will meet on December 8. Mr. Janish stated there will be two items, an IUP and a potential sketch for a PUD.

No other business.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Hudson, seconded by Volkenant, to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 p.m. Motion was taken by roll call:

Volkenant - aye

Godfrey - aye

Hudson - aye

Loehlein - aye

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Elias - aye

VanderLaan - absent

Koehler – absent

Motion carries 5 ayes, 2 absent (Koehler and VanderLaan)

Respectfully Submitted,

Shari Kunza, Recording Secretary
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.