The Workshop Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Julie Trude, November 26, 2019 6:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present: Sheri Bukkila, Mike Knight, Valerie Holthus, and Jamie Barthel

Councilmember absent: None

Also present: City Administrator, Jim Dickinson
Community Development Director, Joe Janish
Director of Public Works/City Engineer, Dave Berkowitz
Others

**PRESERVE AT PETERSEN FARMS PHASE 2**

Mr. Janish reviewed the history of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) at the Preserve at Petersen Farms. Mr. Janish explained the issue of the long cul-de-sac, access points to Phase 1, and emergency response access. The developer investigated options for an access point and took additional soil borings. The developer found that there would be a significant amount of material needing to be removed, putting financial burden on the developer and creating an environmental impact on the adjacent wetland. Mr. Janish stated the developer would like to discuss alternatives with the City Council. Mr. Janish explained staff cannot deviate from the approved plan without Council approval.

Darren Lazan, Landform, came forward and further explained the initial soil borings did not give a full picture of the soil where the road is planned to go. The additional borings showed 20 feet of unsuitable material, requiring a massive amount of digging and fill creating a tremendous cost and impacting the surrounding wetland. Mr. Lazan stated he has been in discussions with Anoka County to realign 7th Avenue to remove the dangerous curves. He indicated the County is receptive to a redesign, installing a roundabout and eliminating several dangerous access points. Mr. Lazan stated Phase 2 of the development will be redesigned to fit into the realignment of 7th Avenue. Mr. Lazan explained the impacts to existing and proposed neighborhoods. Mr. Lazan would like Council feedback regarding 7th Avenue and a secondary access point so they can move forward with revising Phase 2 and begin construction in the spring.

Councilmember Knight asked if the developer would demolish the farm buildings to create the connections. Mr. Lazan responded that the barns would cost half a million to demolish and if the
road would go through these structures, the County may share in the cost of removing the barns. Mr. Lazan stated the large barn buildings would ultimately come down for the development, and under the current plan the small ones would remain.

Mayor Trude addressed previous neighborhood concerns about access points to 7th Avenue and explained the revised plan would reduce access points and alleviate concerns.

Mr. Lazan explained the cost and impact the original road plan to connect the phases would have on the area and on the developer. Mr. Lazan showed a drone video of the land to the Council. Mr. Lazan described the walking trail and open space that would be added amenities if the plan were changed.

Councilmember Holthrus asked if pilings were an option through the wetland. Mr. Lazan stated pilings are not an option due to the soil composition and long-term maintenance issues.

Mr. Berkowitz stated the need for two access points to neighborhoods. Mr. Berkowitz is concerned the future connection will never be constructed. Fire Chief Streich stated the primary reasons for a secondary access is emergency response and diverting traffic during these incidents. Mr. Berkowitz stated long stretches of road without a secondary access point are rare in Andover.

Councilmember Holthrus asked about the likelihood the developer would be able to purchase the property to the south to build the second access point. Mr. Dickinson went through the ideal situation that would release the property for the project. Mr. Lazan stated it was a complicated process yet possible and the developer has already begun the process.

Mr. Lazan asked what the standards were for a secondary access point in new City developments. He stated past standards were one access point with a designated future access. Mayor Trude responded the City would like as many as possible without shutting down developments. Mr. Berkowitz stated it is staff’s concern that there would be many more developments without a secondary access point and determined staff would like more evidence that the second access point is feasible.

Mr. Dickinson asked Mr. Lazan for a best case/worst case scenario on cost. Mr. Lazan responded $500,000 to construct the access point in the PUD and stated he cannot recover the cost in all of Phase 2. Councilmember Holthrus asked about a land bridge and Mr. Lazan stated the land bridge option is even more expensive.

Mayor Trude stated she is comfortable with a future south access point.

Councilmember Knight asked about the impact on the existing homes if 7th Avenue was realigned. Mr. Lazan explained some would have their access to 7th Avenue diverted but it would give them safer access.
Mayor Trude asked Mr. Dickinson to clarify what staff was looking for from Council. Mr. Dickinson replied that staff is looking for direction on how the developer could start Phase 2 with a change of access points. Mr. Dickinson stated he would like to see some sort of right-of-way established on the property to the south so that if the property does get sold, the City can build a road through it for public benefit. Mayor Trude requested the proposal be run by the City Attorney to see if the easement can be added to the transportation plan and Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Dickinson stated the two options are 1) sticking with the original PUD or 2) allowing for a PUD amendment allocating a future southern access point. Mr. Dickinson stated staff would like to see criteria for a timeline on the development of the southern access point.

Mayor Trude requested staff take the legal issues regarding right-of-way to the City Attorney. Mayor Trude asked if it was possible for the Council to amend the PUD to evaluate moving forward with Phase 2 concurrent with the County redesigning 7th Avenue.

Councilmember Holthus asked if the PUD for Phase 2 must happen for the County to move forward with redesigning 7th Avenue. Mr. Dickinson replied Phase 3 impacts the roadway more than Phase 2. Mr. Lazan stated future phases are flexible and can show the realignment in the design.

Councilmember Holthus asked if the existing road across the wetland can be supported enough to allow for emergency access. Chief Streich replied if there was an accident that shut down the road for an accident, there is no place for residents to go. Chief Streich stated the road could be reinforced, however, at extreme cost and maintenance.

Jason Osberg, JD Landholdings, came forward stated the south connection could be several years down the road. He stated the south connection is a better option than building a road across the wetland. Mr. Osberg suggested the developer could construct a temporary access road if the southern connection is not built at the end of Phase 4. Mr. Osberg stated the conditions are favorable to move forward with realigning 7th Avenue and doesn’t want to miss out on this opportunity.

Mayor Trude stated she is happy that there is desire and discussions about improving the safety of 7th Avenue for current and future residents. Mayor Trude stated she would like to see Phase 2 move along however she does not feel Council has enough information to make a decision.

Councilmember Bukkila stated she would say no to a PUD amendment because of the lack of a solution to the problem. She stated the problem is being duplicated and not resolved. She suggested working on 7th Avenue and building off that proposal.

Councilmember Barthel stated he would decide to construct the road in the original PUD because it provides safe access to the neighborhood. He stated he must think about the future of the City and residents and planning for safety and emergency situations.
Mayor Trude stated the remainder of Andover has complicated topography and the traditional development grid does not fit in those areas. She stated rules have changed with wetlands and fill making development more complicated. Mayor Trude indicated future neighborhoods would look more like Phase 2 due to the topography.

Mr. Janish asked if Phase 2 can be reduced in size and if the design can be changed to minimize cul-de-sacs and long stretches of road. Mr. Lazan replied the land is not conducive to that design.

Mayor Trude stated Phase 2 didn’t look much different than Country Oaks which has railroad tracks on the east and wetland on the west.

Mr. Dickinson stated it appeared to be risky for the developer to apply for a PUD amendment at this time and clarified Council’s desire to get more detailed information about the likelihood of a southern access point.

Mary VanderLaan, Andover Planning and Zoning Commission came forward and asked if Phase 2 had to happen before Phase 3. She suggested Phase 3 move forward while the southern access point is being determined.

Mr. Lazan stated there are three issues at play: cost, environmental, and additional traffic impacting northern neighbors.

Mayor Trude asked if the originally planned road can be built at a different standard just for safety or if it must be built for year-round traffic. Mr. Berkowitz stated the road in the PUD is not feasible and the focus should be on the southern access point and determining how much the City gets involved. Mayor Trude would like to investigate the southern option.

The consensus of the Council is to get more information regarding if the City can gain right-of-way on that property and the probable timeline for building the south access. Council supports the realignment of 7th Avenue.

The Council recessed at 7:45 p.m. and reconvened at 7:55 p.m.

**DISCUSS 2020 MILL & OVERLAY COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENT METHOD**

Mr. Berkowitz reviewed the information in the staff report, explaining the Council is requested to discuss the proposed mill and overlay project for Jay Street NW and Martin Street NW from Station Parkway NW to Bunker Lake Boulevard NW and the mill and overlay of Jay Street NW from Bunker Lake Boulevard NW to Hanson Boulevard NW and the assessment method related to these projects.

Mr. Berkowitz explained the current process is to assess 25% of the cost to the property owner. Mr. Berkowitz stated this process will remain the same for residential property, however, staff is
requesting direction on how to proceed with the assessment method for commercial properties that do not have access to Jay Street but still benefit from the project. Mr. Berkowitz provided staff’s recommendation that properties along Jay Street are assessed on front footage basis. He stated it is fair to assess them for the improvements on Jay Street because businesses generate traffic on that road.

Mr. Berkowitz stated this would not affect the residential properties to the west but would affect the commercial properties. If the properties are assessed for Jay Street, they would not be assessed for the side streets in the future. Mr. Berkowitz explained if Council chooses to go that route, there is a chance the businesses will challenge it. Mr. Berkowitz read the City’s Assessment Policy to the Council and how staff is interpreting it.

Councilmember Bukkila stated since the businesses will not be assessed for 138th Avenue, the cost would fall on to the City. Mr. Berkowitz replied that is correct, the City would take on more of the cost of that road. Councilmember Bukkila asked if the City would get more from the assessment if they were assessed for 138th Avenue versus Jay Street. Mr. Berkowitz replied the City assesses commercial properties for the street width which results in a higher cost to some businesses and a no change for others.

Mr. Berkowitz listed the properties and the amounts they would be assessed if Council supported staff’s recommended assessment method.

Council consensus was to support the assessment process brought forward by staff.

Mr. Berkowitz stated staff is planning a meeting with businesses on December 10th to present the assessment method. Staff will meet separately with the Association and will discuss a way to assess that property. When staff has completed the meetings, they will develop a feasibility report and return to the Council with a proposal.

**2020 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT/2020 PROPERTY TAX LEVY DISCUSSION**

Mr. Dickinson stated the public hearing is on December 3rd. Mr. Dickinson reviewed information he will be presenting at the December 3rd public hearing, pointing out the adjustments to several items.

Councilmember Holthus asked what the median home value is. Mr. Dickinson stated the City was in the high $260’s for 2019 but does not have the final number from the County for 2020.

Mr. Dickinson stated he has received a few phone calls where property values have gone up significantly due to property improvements and one where a new homeowner bought a property that was previously on a disabled veteran exclusion.

**OTHER BUSINESS**
PRAIRIE KNOLL PARK

Mr. Berkowitz stated the Andover Football Association presented the Park and Recreation Commission with a plan to improve Prairie Knoll Park parking. The Park and Recreation Commission directed staff to prepare a rough cost estimate. Staff estimates the cost to be $350,000 - $400,000. Mayor Trude asked if the Association would contribute money for the improvements and Mr. Berkowitz stated he had no idea if they were planning to contribute. Mr. Dickinson suggested hiring Jason Amberg a landscape architect with WSB to do an analysis of Prairie Knoll Park to determine the best use of funds and space.

Council consensus was to hire Mr. Amberg with WSB.

SEPTIC SYSTEM COMPLIANCE TEST

Mr. Dickinson was approached by the Anoka Conservation District asked if the City was interested in having a compliance test for a septic system. Mr. Dickinson stated compliance tests already happen if a mortgage is involved. Mayor Trude stated they would rather give the information so the parties are informed and can negotiate if there are problems. Mr. Dickinson states the City does recommend the test to be done but does not require or enforce it. Mayor Trude asked for more information to be presented to the Council. Mr. Dickinson stated he would forward information to the Council for review.

RECESS

Mayor Trude recessed the City Council Workshop 8:45 p.m. to a Closed Session of the City Council to discuss the City Administrator Performance Review.

RECONVENE

The City Council reconvened at 9:05 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Holthus, Seconded by Bukkila, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shari Kunza, Recording Secretary