



**PLANNING COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION  
ANOKA CITY HALL COMMITTEE ROOM  
Tuesday, October 18, 2016  
6:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Work Session of the Anoka Planning Commission was called to order at 5:58 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

Commissioners present:

Chair Don Kjonaas, Borgie Bonthuis, Manley Brahs, Karna Brewer, James Cook, Peter Rech

Commissioners absent: Sandy Herrala

Staff present:

Stephanie Rouse, Associate Planner

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**1. Discussion – 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue and North Street Land Use Plan Amendment and Zone Change**

Associate Planner Rouse introduced the three land use plan amendments and zone change proposals. She explained there were letters of intent and purchase agreements on each parcel and some were under review for the purchase agreement. She referenced the table on page three of the meeting packet and identified the necessary land use plan amendments and zone changes for each parcel to allow for the proposed uses.

Associate Planner Rouse discussed the history of the parcels. She mentioned the Greens of Anoka Redevelopment Master Plan identified a need for townhome development and senior housing and that these sites were identified as potential locations to fill the void. She explained the city was marketing the lots on Garfield Street and State Street for townhome development and the 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue site for commercial use.

Commissioner Brewer raised the question of spot zoning on the 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue and North Street property. Associate Planner Rouse advised the land in Coon Rapids to the east of the property is commercial use, to the south beyond the highway is industrial use, to the east is

medium density residential, and the land to the north is undevelopable because of the wetland. The proposed commercial use will extend the existing commercial designation east of the site and the wetland area will provide a buffer as it cannot be developed.

Commissioner Brewer commented that staff is not equipped to advise on how disturbing land will affect the water table. She brought up a case study done by the Metropolitan Council in which development had effectively dried up the water in the wetland to the point the wetland no longer existed. She worried the City is encroaching on the wetlands slowly with each development creating negative effects and without knowing how much parking or what the exact use is there is no way to know the effect.

Commissioner Bonthuis stated the area of the wetland is so large the development should not have a great effect on it. Commissioner Rech stated the DNR would have given input into the blue line (required wetland setback boundary) on the map on page six of the meeting packet and it should suffice to protect the wetland. The question was raised as to what the boundary line meant. Commissioner Brahs stated the project runoff of the built out site could actually help the wetland.

Commissioner Brahs agreed that selling the property to put it back on the tax role with caution is a good idea.

Commissioner Rech stated the site must be suitable to build because the developer has a purchase agreement and likely completed their due diligence with testing the soils for development of the land.

Commissioner Bonthuis said the project will improve conditions because it plans to take the runoff from the existing neighborhood to the west.

Commissioner Brahs asked what Eastview was, referring to page seven of the meeting packet. Associate Planner Rouse stated it was a concept plan done by the City a few years ago to identify what they would like to see at the location just north of the proposed commercial site along 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Chair Kjonaas said this would be a good time to learn from our mistakes from the Riverspointe townhome project. He stated the City should not allow short driveways and should pay attention to snow and parking issues. He said there is not enough parking at Riverspointe for overnight guest and these types of issues to be conveyed to the developers of the upcoming townhome projects. Additionally, the snow storage creates visibility and ice issues when it melts. There needs to be ample space for garbage trucks to turn around because it is a mess at Riverspointe.

Commissioner Rech stated the commission will see the plans and be able to comment when the site plan approval comes in and the developers will work with staff on the design before submitting.

Commissioner Brahs stated the development on the west side of 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue has long driveways and black topped areas for shared parking.

Commissioner Brewer stated we need to be talking to the people living in the townhome developments. She mentioned it is a good thing Commissioner Rech and Chair Kjonaas live in Riverspointe and can provide valuable feedback. She stated the interior roads in the townhome developments need to be up to city standards since they will be the city's responsibility. It was stated the townhome association is responsible for the maintenance of the interior roads.

The question of whether Coon Rapids had issues or concerns with the wetland and drainage to it when they approved the car dealership development arose. Discussion on the types of development on the Coon Rapids side of the wetlands arose.

Commissioner Rech hoped the DNR had a handle on the wetlands and keeps an eye on them. Commissioner Brewer brought up the land swap program where a developer can fill a portion of one wetland as long as another wetland is protected. Chair Kjonaas stated it is a two to one deal where if ten acres are filled, twenty acres need to be protected elsewhere. Commissioner Brewer made the observation the wetland at 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue looked very dry on the aerial map. Commissioner Rech stated it may look that way but was likely very wet. Commissioner Cook stated the area used to be a dump.

## **2. Discussion – State Street and Highway 10 Land Use Plan Amendment and Zone Change and Garfield Street Land Use Plan Amendment and Zone Change**

Commissioner Bonthuis stated she did not like the 55 foot lot widths. Chair Kjonaas stated these proposals will also have problems with garbage and snow plows.

Commissioner Brahs stated Parcel 17 is a nice area and should sell very well. Commissioner Rech stated it was close to Highway 10, but it was mentioned there would be trees to buffer the townhomes and there was a large elevation change down to the highway.

Chair Kjonaas asked what the golf course thought about the proposal. He said the manager of the course should be allowed to provide input and that members should be informed so they can give input and attend the meetings. He mentioned the previous proposals involved changing the fairways and greens. Commissioner Brahs observed the Parcel 17 site plan would not change the golf course. He stated Parcel 20 would not change the course either, but golf balls would likely land in the townhome yards.

Chair Kjonaas stated the commission would judge the screening when the site plan came in. He stated Greenhaven Parkway would extend to Thurston and changes would be made on Fair oak. Greenhaven Parkway would connect to Highway 10. Commissioner Cook did not want to lose the connection to the north. It was mentioned the Anoka Solutions plan should be kept at the forefront of decision making because it was a good plan. Associate Planner Rouse mentioned the roads through the neighborhood to the south were not yet defined and could change.

There was discussion concerning the addition at the Vista Outdoors site. It was mentioned that the semis parked along the east property line were going to be removed once the addition was done. Commissioner Cook stated the semis were not there earlier that day.

Commissioner Brewer stated developers were only looking at a portion of the whole concept and the City needs to be able to say where the roads are so the developers fit our plan, not the other way around.

Commissioner Brahs mentioned Parcel 17 and the parkway ran along the fairway north of Highway 10 and seemed close to the townhomes.

Commissioner Brahs stated the rentals could cause lots not to be bought because of their current condition. Commissioner Brewer stated some people may renovate the rentals if new construction goes up across the street. Chair Kjonaas stated that was not always the case.

Commissioner Brahs stated the City ran into rental problems years ago with people buying up homes and turning them into rentals, but the rental license program has been a real help. Commissioner Rech mentioned that Lennar decided to buy and build anyways and the City should not be afraid of the rental situation. It was mentioned that someone might come in to buy up all the rental lots.

Associate Planner Rouse asked for a general opinion from the commission on the three proposed zone change and land use plan amendments. All commissioners were amenable to the proposals. Commissioner Brewer asked staff to follow up with the DNR on the 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue project.

Associate Planner Rouse mentioned the other two items they would be seeing on the November 1<sup>st</sup> Planning Commission meeting agenda were the fence text amendment for allowable materials and a new text amendment for the B-1 zoning district. She stated as staff looked at the B-1 district for the proposed wellness center use, the code did not have it listed other than in the Main Street Mixed Use district because that section was amended in recent years. When the code was written wellness centers did not exist. The question arose as to what a wellness center was. Associate Planner Rouse advised a wellness center included

specialties such as chiropractic, acupuncture, and general practice combined.

Commissioner Brahs asked if staff had determined what a Soda Distribution Center was as was discussed at the October 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. Associate Planner Rouse stated Carolyn thought it was a prohibited use from the time when there was a bottling and soda making warehouse in the downtown area.

Chair Kjonaas advised the commission the Carlson variance case was withdrawn. Associate Planner Rouse confirmed stating the applicant sent an email to withdraw the variance extension because she did think she would have the construction started a year from now. Associate Planner Rouse stated staff was determining how the case needed to be voided and stated it may come before the Planning Commission or go straight to the City Council. Chair Kjonaas hoped the case would come before the Planning Commission.

With no further discussion the meeting was called to a close.

Time of adjournment 6:50 p.m.  
Submitted by: Stephanie Rouse, Associate Planner