

**City of Columbus**  
**Regular Planning Commission Meeting**  
**June 15, 2016**

The June 15, 2016 regular meeting of the Planning Commission for the City of Columbus was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Chair Garth Sternberg at the City Hall. Present were Commission members: James Watson, Pam Wolowski, Jesse Preiner, and Jody Krebs; City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko, Planner Dean Johnson, and Recording Secretary Karen Boland.

Also in attendance were City Council member Denny Peterson, Jim Faulkner, Byron Westlund, Ruth and Darwin Long, Mary Preiner, and Pat Preiner.

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

*Motion* by Krebs to approve the Agenda as presented. Second by Preiner. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL –REGULAR PC MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 1, 2016**

*Motion* by Wolowski to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2016 regular Planning Commission meeting as written. Second by Watson. Motion carried.

**WOODLAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION CONCEPT PLAN**

Commissioner Preiner recused himself from the PC at 7:12 p.m. for this discussion.

Pat Preiner introduced Byron Westlund, president of Woodland Homes, to talk about the townhome portion of the senior housing project, and Jim Faulkner of Faulkner Companies, to talk about the senior apartment and assisted living portions of the project. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the proposed site plan concept before moving to a preliminary plat.

Mr. Westlund said he has been working for the past nine months with the Rice Creek Watershed and the Army Corps of Engineers. There are now four proposed lots on the curve of 147<sup>th</sup>, due to of a recent finding that two of the ponds are not wetlands, because they are old, man-made trout ponds. The townhomes are individual lots. There will be an association that will manages yards, snowplowing, driveways, and the private drive up on the curve.

In response to the City Engineer's concern about the sight triangle for the private drive, there will be tree removal to meet that sight distance requirement. Next steps will be to design the preliminary plat and come up with the utility plans.

Planner Johnson said the revised plan looks fine to him. He confirmed that the public streets being proposed are 60 feet. The revised standards the City adopted a couple of months ago, regarding senior citizen products, had a minimum lot size of 5000 feet. The proposal here is for a minimum of 9000 feet. Design plans for the models should not be a problem. Mr. Westlund said they are looking at four different floor plans. In Block 2 there will likely be walkout lots. Block 1 and Block 3 will probably be slab on grades, but they will try elevation, pitch, and color differences.

Johnson said for this type of product we will combine the platting procedure with the Planned Unit Development (PUD). The PUD is part of a CUP. Ultimate application will include a CUP and the typical platting process.

Westlund's goal is to not have any waivers in the development.

Johnson said there will be two hearings on the same night, back to back: a preliminary plat hearing and a CUP hearing. A final plat would not have to come back to the PC unless there are changes.

The CUP is the mechanism that legally allows the PUD procedure that allows waivers of the standards.

Mr. Westlund was asked if they are done with the Army Corps of Engineers. He said they hope to coincide meetings with the Army Corps and the Rice Creek Watershed District and get permits. That process is moving forward.

Mr. Faulkner's company is building the two-story apartment building and the assisted living units. They are two distinct projects. The apartment building will run between 30-46 units, depending on the final determination and market study on sizes. There will be efficiencies to 3-bedroom units. Tuck-under garages were requested for some units and those should be able to be incorporated. There will be on-site visitor parking, and there will also be separate garages. It is a hybrid. They will meet all setback and planning standard requirements, with the exception of needing an easement for the road. They want to maintain the drive going in, and will need to discuss an easement. The style of the building will be coordinated with the style of the townhomes, as will the assisted living. There will be gabled roofs and detailing that will tie all three together.

Johnsons asked if there was an easement for the park access also, from the access to the well. Mursko said there is a park parking lot. She believes there are four parking spots designed in the driveway. That will need to be worked out.

The assisted living facility is standard with seven others Faulkner has built in the past. Parking is more than ample. The market is good. These parcels are pretty much complete with the Army Corps; there are still some decisions to be made by the Watershed.

It is hoped that both buildings would go up at the same time. Faulkner said the assisted living building may start a little earlier, because it does not have the complicated degree of land preparation. The apartment building will be done in conjunction with the townhome project. Westlund confirmed that the townhomes will be built all at once, not in phases.

Johnson asked about the range of units in the assisted living facility. Faulkner said the apartments will likely be a two-phased project. It will be in the 20-24 unit range. The assisted living facility will be between 30 and 32 units.

The hope is to begin building this year.

Mursko reported that she spoke to the Building Official and about building plans. If four are brought in and a pre-approved plan review is obtained, the builder would not be charged for the plan review repeatedly, as long as it was the same plan. There will obviously be some additions and updates, but the charge would be for the initial plan reviews. Mr. Faulkner said that is consistent. He said he intends to meet with the Building Official to see that plans meet the requirements and his interpretations of the Building Code. Mursko said that would be appreciated.

The consensus of the PC is that they approve of the concept plan.

Commissioner Preiner returned to the PC at 7:42 p.m.

## **ORDINANCE DISCUSSION CHAPTER 7A - CHICKENS**

PC members went through a worksheet from the Assistant City Attorney, Jake Steen, and looked at current regulations, to guide them as to what policy decisions need to be considered in amending the Code regarding the keeping of chickens within the City. The PC's answers will then be used to draft possible Code amendments.

The PC discussed issues of lot size, free range, roosters, coop standards, and commercial enterprises.

Mursko reported that most of the complaints she gets are from people who would like to have chickens on less than five acres. Our current ordinance requires someone to have five acres in order to keep chickens. On five acres they can have a maximum of 1000 chickens.

Other cities have chicken ordinances. Many allow them on small lots, many have coop standards, some restrict roosters. The University of Minnesota offers guidelines about coop standards and recommended roosting space per chicken. State law makes rooster fighting illegal; it is a felony. A public nuisance law is already in place to deal with some potential problems, but the bar is high. The State Department of Agriculture regulates the sale of eggs and the butchering of chickens. Commercial sale means you need a state license.

When Krebs goes before the CC next week she will share the details of the PC discussion thus far. The PC is looking at 16 chickens per acre, allowing proportionally smaller numbers on less acreage (e.g. 4 birds on ¼ acre, 320 birds on 20 acres); creating a building standard for coops that may also deter cock-fighting rings; developing coop design standards.

The PC will look at this issue again at a future meeting.

## **PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

There was no topic raised for discussion for Open Forum.

## **CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Mursko said there will be no PC meeting on July 6<sup>th</sup>. The next PC meeting will be July 20<sup>th</sup>. There will be an application, and continued work on the extraction/excavation chapter of the Code. There will also be application hearings at the August and September meetings.

Mursko reported that there is a fundraiser for Tom Hackbarth on Tuesday, June 21<sup>st</sup> at Running Aces. Mr. Hackbarth has been a legislative supporter of the City. He is on the GOP primary ballot. If he does not win the primary he will not be on the ballot in November.

She also reported that the conference committee for the capital investment bill read the bill yesterday. The 97 bridge project is still included in the bonding bill. There may be a special session in late July. The City is still making the effort to see this through.

Mursko handed out information on a law signed by Governor Dayton in May, requiring cities and counties to issue permits for a new type of land use allowing a specific type of temporary transitional housing for temporary family health care, unless the City or County opts out by September 1<sup>st</sup>. The charge for the permit cannot exceed \$100. The permit is good for six months with the option to renew for another six months. The written verification of need for assistance with two or more instrumental daily activities can come from a physician, physician's assistant or an advanced practice registered nurse licensed to practice in MN. Mursko said the City has an informal temporary housing opportunity in place. It is treated as an accessory building, but has to meet criteria so it's a permanent structure. Planner Johnson suggested checking with the City Attorney to find out if what the City currently has in place will qualify as "another standard" under this new law.

Absentee voting for the primary begins on Friday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. To vote absentee, a resident can come to the City counter during office hours or go on-line and have the ballot mailed to their home. The primary will take place on August 9<sup>th</sup>.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS' REPORT**

**PREINER COMMENT:**

Preiner encouraged attendance at the fundraiser for Mr. Hackbarth, as he has been a great supporter of community requests and local projects.

**WOLOWSKI COMMENT:**

Wolowski will be unable to attend the next PC meeting. She is supposed to present about that meeting at the July 27<sup>th</sup> CC meeting. Watson volunteered to cover the CC meeting.

**WATSON COMMENT:**

Watson asked if there is still a water meeting in Hugo on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Northeast Metro Water Summit will meet that evening at 6:30 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE - NEXT CC MEETING**

Krebs is scheduled to attend the City Council meeting on June 22, 2016.

*Motion* by Krebs to adjourn. Second by Watson. Motion carried.  
Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Karen Boland, Recording Secretary