



Central Region Headquarters
1200 Warner Road
Saint Paul, MN 55106

June 9, 2021

Elizabeth Mursko, City Administrator
City of Columbus
16319 Kettle River Boulevard
Columbus, MN 55025

Re: St. Clair Lakes Preliminary Plat Review

Dear Ms. Mursko:

Thank you notifying DNR of the June 2nd Planning Commission Public Hearing and providing us with a copy of the meeting agenda and packet. With respect to the St. Clair Lakes preliminary plat and Conditional Use Permit application, we understand that the Planning Commission recommended approval of the application with the Findings of Fact and Recommendations outlined in the staff report dated May 25th.

Based on our review of the May 25th staff report, we are pleased to see that the City is incorporating DNR's concerns. These include, but are not limited to, the following items:

- Finding that the revised preliminary plat includes no individual lots or building encroachments into the 75 feet shore impact zone (SIZ).
- Recommended condition of approval requiring submission of a Shoreland Management Plan consistent with the August 8, 2018 Settlement Agreement, prior to any site disturbance.
- Recommended condition of approval requiring submission of City-approved homeowner association documentation for common area ownership and maintenance.
- Recommended condition of approval requiring acknowledgement by the DNR that the final plat and Shoreland Management Plan are consistent with the August 8, 2018 Settlement Agreement.

With respect to the revised preliminary plat, we would like to share with you the following concern:

- The proposed building pads on Lots 1-4, Block 2 and Lot 3, Block 1 are located very close to the SIZ boundary. Of particular note is the building pad for Lot 1, Block 2, which directly abuts the SIZ boundary on two sides. We ask the City to consider how the SIZ will be maintained in a natural state over the long-term while accommodating future residents' needs for exterior building renovations, and also how to handle resident desires for yards or gardens given the limited space available in these lots.

We also reviewed draft versions of the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&R) and the St. Clair Lakes Homeowner's Association Bylaws. We received these draft documents directly from developer Jamie Jensen on May 26, 2021. To ensure that the commonly-owned SIZ is protected and maintained in a natural state in accordance with Shoreland Management Plan, we recommend that the City Council include the following condition in project approval:

The homeowner association documentation shall include a direct reference to the Shoreland Management Plan.

DNR expects that this property will be developed in a manner equally protective of Howard Lake as both (1) the prior Sanctuary at Howard Lake development plan and (2) the associated Settlement Agreement, as these were developed together. We look forward to the next steps in the process:

- DNR review of the final plat and Shoreland Management Plan for consistency with the Settlement Agreement. We expect that the Shoreland Management Plan will include a civil drawing with clearly marked limits for vegetation clearing, excavation, and grading/filling in accordance with the Settlement Agreement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dan Scollan".

Dan Scollan, DNR Area Hydrologist

CC: Dan Petrik, DNR Shoreland Program Manager
John (Jack) Gleason, DNR Hydrologist Supervisor