

CITY OF ISANTI

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

TUESDAY, April 19, 2022

Immediately following the 7:00 P.M City Council Meeting;

1. Meeting Opening

- A. Call to Order: Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:52 p.m.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance
- C. Roll Call: Members present: Jeff Johnson, Steve Lundeen, Jimmy Gordan, Paul Bergley, Dan Collison, Arissya Simon.
Members Absent: Alexander Collins
Staff present: Community Development Specialist Ryan Saltis, Community Development Director Stephanie Hillesheim, Finance Director Mike Betker, City Clerk Jaden Strand
- D. Agenda Modifications: None
- E. Adopt the Agenda
Motion to adopt the agenda by Lundeen, second by Collison motion passes 6-0.

2. Meeting Minutes

- A. Approval of Minutes from the March 15, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting motion by Lundeen, second by Simon motion passes 6-0.

4. Public Hearing

- A. Request by Duane Halvorson for approval of a Minor Subdivision Plat under City Ordinance 740, said request is to split PID 16.029.2300 into three parcels.
Saltis presented the request for a Minor Subdivision Plat for Halvorson Acres. It was explained that the current vacant parcel of 16.8 acres is proposed to be split into 3 separate parcels with two of these parcels of roughly 1.5 acres near 6th Ave NE and the remaining 12.5 acres to the east. The objective of the lot split is to provide two developable parcels near 6th Ave NE and rezone to commercial sites. A representative of the applicant, Grant Lindberg was present at the meeting and available to answer questions regarding the plat. Lindberg explained that he is working with surveyors to correct comments made by the city engineer and give legal access to the parcels. Lundeen asked what Lot 3 is intended to be in the future. Lindberg said that this parcel has underlying issues as far as wetlands, buried fiber optic cables, and access issues onto the county highway to the north of the site. He pointed out that with the large easements and delineated wetland area, the usable lot area is minimized.

There was no one from the public present for resident comments and the public hearing closed. Mayor Johnson pointed out that the city has always been willing to help land owners sell or develop their property. Motion for approval of the Minor Subdivision Plat with conditions listed in the staff report dated 4-19-2022 by Lundeen, second by Bergley, motion passed 6-0.

B. Request by Semler Construction Inc for approval of a Planned Unit Development Preliminary Plat under City Ordinance 740, said request is for a 53-lot housing development named Rum River Villas located at PID 16.111.0600.

Saltis presented the request for a Planned Unit Development for Rum River Villas. Mayor Johnson opened the public hearing. A surrounding property owner, Monroe Lindgren of 27830 University Ave NW asked if the roads platted in the original preliminary plat are null and void. It was explained that these roads have been adjusted slightly from the original plat and there may have been some preliminary grading of these roads in the past based on the county map shown. Lindgren asked if there would be another access to the county road from the future development. City staff pointed out that there will not be another access to the development at this time, but are asking the applicants to plat a right-of-way on the south border in case the driveway becomes a road in the future.

Kurt Carpenter, a family member of a resident at 1300 Maplewood Ave SW asked if the preliminary plat extended the existing street of Maplewood Ave to the south. Staff confirmed that the street network will extend south and meet in a “U” shape to the south. Carpenter commented on the high amount of housing units proposed on the plat, that the houses would be right on top of each other.

Jason Zerwas, a resident at 27900 University Ave NW was wondering what Outlot B is intended to be on the plat. Saltis explained that this outlot is suggested to be platted as Right of Way in case the land to the west developed, and the parcel would not be landlocked. CD Director Hillesheim mentioned that this outlot is giving half of a right of way and the other half would come from the surrounding property if it is developed.

Planning Commission Member Arissya Simon mentioned that she has comments from her and her neighbors regarding the development. Arissya commented she has concerns of the lot sizes being inconsistent with the rest of the Rum River Meadows development and that there are currently no lots on this side of town with lot sizes this small. Arissya also commented that the original preliminary plat was shown to have less houses than the proposed plat and that there will be added traffic to the neighborhood.

Jake McCarty, a resident at 1307 Ironwood Ct SW wrote a letter to be read at the Planning Commission Meeting. The letter mentioned that the density proposed reflected a district that is closer to amenities or a downtown district. The vacant land in question is currently zoned R-1 and the proposed plan exceeds the density range of 0-3 units per acre for this zoning district. The letter mentioned cause for concern for the safety of Whiskey Rd SW and that a need for a roundabout on this section of road

might be inevitable. Having several more neighbors would also result in needing fencing and more property line agreement forms from new homeowners.

Dan Peterson, a resident of 1206 Maplewood Ave SW commented on the speed limits of the County Rd and the safety of the neighborhood with added traffic. Mayor Johnson pointed out that the City Council has discussed the speed on Whiskey Rd a few times but that consulting a traffic study could ultimately raise the speed limit instead of lowering it.

Mayor Johnson closed the public hearing. Mayor Johnson stated that he believes that the proposed plat is too many homes for the area. The original preliminary plat showed 36 homes on larger lots. Mayor Johnson asked staff if there were any other housing developments with similar lot sizes in the city. City staff pointed out that there are at least three areas which have lot sizes similar to what is being proposed, in Heritage Estates, Villages on the Rum and Moline Loop. Saltis pointed out that the applicants are proposing 7.5 ft side setbacks and there are areas in the city which have been approved for 5 ft side setbacks. Mayor Johnson pointed out that the original preliminary plat guidelines are more in line with what should be done with the land, with larger lot sizes and setbacks. Planning Commissioner Collison pointed out that these are the new land owners proposing the plat and not the original developers who created the plan for the 36 single family lots.

Arissya commented that when she and her neighbors purchased their homes around 2017 on the cul-de-sac, they were shown the original preliminary plat of the development and told that it would happen in roughly 5 years. Mayor Johnson said it seems deceiving if these homeowners were told one thing and then will end up with something completely different.

Mayor Johnson asked if Jimmy Gordon had any input on the proposed development. Jimmy stated that he would have to side with the property owner in that they should be able to do what they want with the land. Jimmy pointed out that the housing market has changed a lot from 2017 when the houses were being sold on Ironwood Ct, and now the housing types proposed are selling faster to a different demographic of people. Jimmy explained that personally he would like to see larger lots similar to existing houses in the area but in the end, he says that he wouldn't let that fact get in the way of letting the property owner do what they see best fit with the land.

Steve Lundeen pointed out that he would not like to see so many homes proposed on this land. The other lots in the area were set to specific standards in which they must abide by, meaning they should be held to the same standards. Steve also stated that the increased traffic in the area is not safe for kids in the neighborhood.

Mayor Johnson reiterated that he would not like to see 53 houses crammed on this land, and that it is too dense. He stated that 25-30 houses seem more reasonable based on the area.

Brian Krystofiak from Carlson McCain, a representative of the applicant and Patty Koljonen of Semler Homes were both present at the meeting and available for questions from the Planning Commission. Brian stated that he understands that the

land was originally platted for 36 homes in an R-1 District, but the plat has expired since it was approved back in 2004. Brian mentioned that the reality of today's housing market is much different in that they don't do many 80 ft wide lots anymore because of feasibility of the projects based on costs. Mayor Johnson asked Planning Commission members who live in that neighborhood when their houses were built. Simon and Lundeen commented 2017 and 2018. Brian asked if these houses were part of a new development. Mayor Johnson responded by saying that they were part of a new development and were easy to sell. Brian said that there is a big difference in the housing market from 2018 to today.

Planning Commission Member Bergley mentioned that he believes that if they were proposing 25-30 houses it would seem a little low and that he would like to see the original number of lots as was shown on the original preliminary plat. Bergley agreed with the Planning Commission that he believes 53 houses is too much for the area.

Brian asked if there could be a happy medium if they discussed with staff. He mentions that the product that the builder offers wouldn't make sense to have the same size lots as the rest of the area. Mayor Johnson stated that he would beg to differ with Brian's statement and that if they build it, they will come. Arissya mentioned that as of right now the housing market might demand these types of houses but the market has been changing year to year. She stated that she could speak for most of the people in the cul-de-sac in that they knew a development would happen, but were prepared for a 35-house development or something similar and not a 53-house development. Mayor Johnson said that if he had bought a house in the existing surrounding development, he would feel deceived.

Mayor Johnson asked city staff what direction the Planning Commission needs to take for the proposed development. CD Director Hillesheim said that the Planning Commission needs to take action or give a recommendation for the proposed preliminary plat. Mayor Johnson asked if it is feasible that they take a step back and revisit this. Hillesheim answered that it is possible to postpone if that is the Commission's recommendation. Mayor Johnson asked Brian if they can work with city staff to come up with a plan that better fits the concerns of the public and the Planning Commission. Brian said that it would be possible to work with staff to accomplish this.

Planning Commission member Collison requested to keep the zoning district R-1 similar to the houses surrounding it. Bergley made a motion to table the proposed preliminary plat and was seconded by Collison. The motion to table the proposed preliminary plat was passed 5-0. Simon abstained her vote.

5. Other Business: None

6. Discussion Items: None

7. **Adjournment:** Motion by Lundeen, 2nd by Bergley to adjourn, motion passed 6-0, meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Ryan Saltis, Community Development Specialist