

**CITY OF ISANTI  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 8, 2008**

**1. Meeting Opening**

**A. Call to Order**

Chair Duncan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance**

All rose for the pledge of allegiance.

**C. Roll Call**

**Members Present:** Jeff Duncan, Ralph Johnson, Dave Englund, Sean Stevens, Jeff Kolb, Steven Rask and Ross Lorinser (came in at 7:05)

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Lisa Krause, City Planner and Trudi Breuninger, Administrative Assistant

**D. Agenda Modifications.**

None.

**2. Approval of Minutes of March 11, 2008**

Motion by Stevens, second by Kolb to approve Planning Commission minutes of March 11, 2008. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. Public Hearings**

**3A. Conditional Use Permit request for Steve and Stephanie Lindell to permit the extraction, grading, or filling of land involving the movement of earth and materials in excess of twenty-five (25) cubic yards, which would permit the construction of a pond on the property located at 802 Winsome Way NE.**

Krause stated the petitioner; Mr. Lindell is looking to construct a detention pond located within the northwest corner of his property. The City Engineer had reviewed the proposed survey and noticed that there appeared to be delineated wetland within the northeast corner of the property. Further clarification showed no fill would be in the delineated wetland.

Staff recommends approval of the Conditional Use Permit for the movement and alteration of land on the property located at 802 Winsome Way NE, to allow for the grading of a pond within the northwest corner of the property, with the following conditions: (1) The petitioner shall abide by the rules and regulations of the Wetland Conservation Act. The petitioner shall not place any fill within the delineated wetland area located within the northeast corner of the property; and (2) The petitioner shall meet any additional requirements as stipulated by the City Engineer and or City Administrator.

Public Hearing opened at 7:03p.m.

Krause read letter from Isanti County Zoning Office.

Johnson asked where the wetland is located.

Krause pointed it out on the survey of the property.

Lindell said the intention of the ponding would be to allow better flow of water away from home and driveway and for a buffer if any future developments come in on adjacent property. Lindell stated that basically, it was a balance site. Lindell stated that no fill would be brought in to the site; all dirt will come from the pond and be spread on the property.

Lorinser asked about the potential of flooding on abutting property.

Lindell said that he is the lowest point in surrounding area.

Johnson asked Lindell about the depth of the pond.

Lindell responded, as deep as he can he would like to get his yard as flat as possible. Lindell stated that it is currently drawn at 7 feet which would allow for about 3 feet of water to stand in the pond.

Public hearing was closed at 7:11 p.m.

Motion by Johnson, second by Kolb to approve the Conditional Use Permit as recommended by staff. Motion carried.

Lindell added that he wanted to do this a year ago but needed a grading permit. Lindell stated that the city needs to review the policy because 25 cubic yards is not a lot of dirt. Lindell stated that his math chart showed that everyone would need to get a Conditional Use Permit. Lindell showed how anything over 1/8 of an inch of dirt covering 8000 square feet of impervious surface would required a Conditional Use Permit. Lindell feels that this type of permit is something staff could issue like a fence, deck, building permit instead of wasting time and money on public hearings.

Kolb agreed that the ordinance should be looked at.

3B. An ordinance amending Ordinance No. 176: Zoning Ordinance, Section 4, 5, and as well as any other associated Sections, to include provisions for Detached Accessory Garages.

Krause presented the Commission with the background stating in the past the City has permitted properties that do not have an attached garage to construct a detached accessory garage on the property, providing the detached accessory garage did not exceed the size of the foundation of the home. Krause stated that this is not written within our ordinances and staff has not continued to permit the construction of detached accessory garages. Krause stated that the current zoning ordinance permits accessory structures, but the maximum size is capped at 240 square feet.

Krause provided a draft ordinance that would amend the zoning ordinance for R1, R2 and R3 to include provisions for detached accessory garages in instances where the property does not have an attached or detached garage.

Duncan questioned the placement of the revisions since R1 and R2 have already been revised and R3 is currently being worked on.

Krause stated they would be modified prior to the final approval of the full ordinance.

Johnson stated that the 240 square feet was for a shed. Krause stated that she believed anything up to 120 square feet is considered a shed and anything over that would fall under the accessory structures size requirement listed.

Stevens questioned if the lot can accommodate an accessory structure, meeting the setbacks and impervious surface area why wouldn't it be allowed for all properties.

Krause stated that is what the Housing Task Force is working on.

Lorinser questioned if someone is building a new home and is required to build an attached garage but also wants to build a detached garage for a shop; R2 and R3 won't allow it based on the size of the lot, but R1 would. Lorinser suggested that there be a height requirement not to exceed height of the house.

Public Hearing was opened at 7:25p.m.

Lindell stated that in other cities he works in nobody can be in the setbacks, then they take your house and garage and driveway and sidewalks and percentage for green space and if the space allows for it, then why not allow it.

Kolb question if the ordinance states anything about green space.

Krause stated that the maximum lot coverage is 25%, the remainder has to be pervious surface.

Kolb stated that the city should address "green space" in the ordinance as well, so someone doesn't pave their yard.

Krause reiterated what has been stated. Krause stated that the Commissioners were recommending across the board to allow detached accessory structures, whether you have an attached or detached garage. Krause stated that the detached structure could not exceed the square footage of your foundation. Krause questioned if that was correct.

Lorinser stated then based on the size of lots in R2 and R3 it would not be allowed and in R1 they would have to meet the criteria for setbacks, green space, building codes and size of structure.

Krause stated currently ordinance states "not to exceed foundation size".

Lindell added that the garages should match the house in siding, roofing, etc.

Stevens stated that the language was already stated in the ordinance.

Kolb stated he would like to see the ordinance cleaned up a little to include green space.

Stevens addressed having a second garage on a lot that can accommodate it for toys and a shop.

Krause stated that staff could work on it to address the items and concerns.

Public hearing was closed at 7:35 p.m.

Motion by Johnson, second by Stevens to table this issue and have staff re-work the ordinance with the suggestions discussed, have the Housing Task Force review it and bring back to Planning Commission. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **4. Other Business**

##### **4A. 2008 Zoning Code Update (i. Draft R-3A, R-3B, and R-4 & ii. Draft Recreational Commercial District)**

Krause stated the Housing Task Force has divided the R3 district into two separate districts. R3A Low Density Multiple Family District which would permit up to 6 units per acre and the R3B Medium Density District that would allow up to 10 units per acre.

Stevens questioned whether there was a need to divide it up so specifically. Krause responded that the Housing Task Force is trying to address what is already in the Comp Plan.

Lorinser said that they streamlined it from other Ordinances they looked at from other cities to make it easier to read and understand and creates buffer zones. The R3 district in the current ordinance is unclear on what can be built within the district.

Krause stated that developers come in and use the R3 district and are confused on what is required.

Johnson stated the more it is split up, the more confusion it is going to cause.

Lorinser disagreed saying it was be specific what uses would be permitted in that district and certain densities.

Johnson stated that people could come in and request a zoning change to any parcel.

Commission members expressed frustration with developing a Comp Plan to only have it changed by Developers coming into town to rezone.

Englund stated that Greater Minnesota Housing had issues with zoning.

Lorinser responded that Greater Minnesota Housing wants smaller affordable housing and doesn't feel the Planning Commission or City Council would agree. Lorinser stated that Greater Minnesota Housing also expressed issues with the R1 district.

Lorinser stated that's why Developers are on the subcommittee and the ideas of what works and what doesn't comes from their input in other cities and other projects they have worked on. Lorinser stated that there are going to be exceptions, the policies are only on paper and we don't know what the grades or water tables are to determine that only slabs can be built in a development.

Krause stated they are trying to meet the two densities in the Comp Plan or the City has the option to change that item within the Comp Plan. Krause stated that removing one of the density ranges would result in one district. Krause stated that the Housing Task Force is trying to avoid

having that contradiction in the Comp Plan to go back to 6 saying they would allow up to 10 units but the ordinance says they can have only 6.

Krause stated that it is used in other communities. Krause stated that what has been proposed is more forward than what is currently being used. Krause stated that the final say is on the Planning Commission and City Council. Krause requested the Planning Commission's opinion on whether they want to see one district or two districts.

Krause went on to the R4 district being multi family 6 the most dense district; up to 12 units per acre. Krause pointed out on the zoning map which areas would be affected by the R4 district, currently there is not vacant land zoned R4.

Lindell stated that there should be a buffer between the R1 and R3 districts and that should be the responsibility of the R3 property owner / developer.

Krause responded that there is a transitional lot requirement that will add additional setbacks requirements proposed within the draft ordinance.

Lorinser said they discussed planting trees as a choice of the property owner.

Lindell questioned who would be responsible for planting and maintaining. Lindell stressed that it shouldn't be a choice it should be a requirement for the buffer of the districts.

Lorinser said the land with additional setbacks is the buffer.

Krause added that when developer comes in the City could ask for the landscaping to be done.

Lindell added that the city should follow the Comp Plan because people make decisions on buying property based on the Comp Plan.

Krause moved on to Recreational Commercial District, stating that the area would cover the golf course area. Krause stated that the Bus/Ind Sub-Committee felt there should be options for the property owner should the golf course fail and open it up to additional recreational type uses.

Duncan asked why archery ranges, indoor motorized go-carts and paintball selected to require a Conditional Use Permit. Krause responded that it is probably noise and danger.

Stevens questioned RV Parks.

Krause stated it would be a campground.

Englund elaborated on services being provided.

Kolb stated even around the BMX park people may be interested in parking an RV there for events.

#### 4B. Draft County Comprehensive Plan

Krause stated that the County Comp Plan is scheduled for a public hearing on May 8<sup>th</sup> at the County Planning Commission meeting. Krause stated that staff is looking for comments or

concerns to pass onto the County Commission regarding any issues the Commission may have with the proposal.

Lorinser questioned if there was anything that contradicts the City's Comp Plan. Krause responded that staff has submitted concerns to the County regarding the plan. Krause stated that Ms. Vita has also expressed some concerns regarding the Commercial and Industrial areas.

Kolb stated that the statistics are from 2000 or older and are already outdated. Kolb stated that so much growth has happened since 2002.

Roger Bergman stated his concern about transfer development rights, where the land has 2 prices; the land value and the development rights value. Bergman stated that in the current plan a farmer can transfer his development rights all into one corner and make a unit there and leave the rest for farming or open space but it had to be under one ownership. Bergman stated that now they are talking about making it county wide so someone up in Dalbo can sell their development rights to someone who wants to build elsewhere.

Bergman stated that the problem is who decides what the price will be. Bergman stated that the farmer can sell the development rights and the developer is the one that walks away with the profit because the farmer just depreciated his land. Bergman also stated that the County is looking to put together a computer model of what areas of land are good and which are bad. Bergman stated that the issue with that is they are going to use the FEMA maps to determine. Bergman stated his land was in the flood plain and was the highest land and the low land was not.

Planning Commission consensus was to express concerns regarding the statistics in the Comp Plan.

Krause requested that the Commission review the plan and send any additional concerns regarding the County Comp Plan to herself or Ms. Vita.

## **5. Discussion Items**

### **5.A. Business-Industrial Subcommittee Update**

Krause stated they began to discuss the mixed-use district. Krause stated that the discussion focused on the proposed rail station and that it has been indicated that the rail stop is not going to be in Isanti which will change the mixed use district in downtown area because you need the station to support the density and uses found in the mixed use district. Krause stated that the sub-committee is looking to find another scenario for that area.

Stevens stated that there are other mixed uses that would support the necessity of a mixed use.

Krause responded that you need the rail station to support that density and particular types of uses: foot traffic, commuter parking, etc.

Lorinser asked the reason the rail station not coming to Isanti.

Krause didn't know the rationale.

Johnson stated that he believes it is going to be on the north side of Cambridge.

Johnson stated that transportation is a big deal and wants to create a park and ride. Johnson stated that most park and ride areas are always full. Johnson stated that people are either car-pooling or companies are transporting employees in or express buses transport them into downtown areas. Johnson felt that developing a park and ride would help the community businesses.

General discussion on park and rides: in Cambridge, on 610, East Bethel, Wyoming and Columbus Township that always appear to be full.

#### 5.B. Housing Task Force Update

Krause stated the Housing Task Force will begin to review the Planned Unit Development portion of the zoning ordinance which will take a couple of meetings to finish.

#### 6. Adjournment

Motion by Stevens, second by Lorinser to adjourn Planning Commission meeting at 8:20 pm.

Dated at Isanti, Minnesota, this 8<sup>th</sup> day of April 2008.

Respectfully Submitted,

---

Trudi Breuninger  
Administrative Assistant