

**CITY OF ISANTI  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
April 8, 2014**

**1. Meeting Opening.**

**A. Call to Order.**

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

**B. Pledge of Allegiance.**

Everyone rose for the pledge of allegiance.

**C. Oath of Office.**

Wayne Traver recited the Oath of Office as the new Planning Commissioner.

Achman informed the Commission that Michael Streiff III is no longer on the Planning Commission. Staff will be requesting to advertise for the vacant seat at the next City Council meeting.

**D. Roll Call.**

**Members Present:** David Englund, Sue Larson, Steve Lundeen, Kristi Gordon, Wayne Traver, and Cindy Lind-Livingston.

**Members Absent:** None.

**Staff Present:** Community Development Director Roxanne Achman

**Others Present:** Dennis Anlauf (Mille Lacs Oil Company), Carlo Galeazzi (representing the Arts and Science Academy).

**D. Agenda Modifications.**

Achman stated there were none.

**2. Approval of Minutes from March 11, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting.**

Englund questioned if there were any comments or changes to the minutes.

Motion by Larson, second by Lundeen to approve the March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.

Motion was unanimously approved.

**3. Public Hearings.**

**A. Request from SMR Acquisitions Company, LLC, on behalf of the Mille Lacs Oil Company, for a Variance to the required number of trees, the use of sod, the requirement of ornamental ground coverage and the amount of impervious surface within the parking perimeter for the property located at 391 Cherrywood St NE.**

Achman presented the staff memo and staff's recommendation to deny the variance request.

Englund opened the public hearing at 7:05 pm.

Dennis Anlauf approached the Planning Commission stating he would like to get something going on down there. There are about four trees there and it's been like that for seven years. Allowing for a variance for a couple of trees that aren't there right now, doesn't seem like a big deal. That's my personal opinion. Having wider access and narrowing down green space are just the way their plans are. They try to go by a cookie cutter plan. It doesn't seem like a big deal to allow for a little wider "in" and "out"; in fact I think it might be more beneficial for traffic. Does it alter code? Maybe so. With the seed it was recommended to be denied because it would set a precedent and would further require a look at code requirements. Well maybe that's the case. From a business point of view we are getting attacked with all kinds of expenses. Hydroseed may be a cheaper option. It may be something that is considered. I just don't see these as that big of points. If these don't go through, I still hope they come down and develop. I'd like to see the city say "We're business friendly". I'd like the City to at least consider the trees.

Englund asked how many trees were required for this lot.

Achman stated it was based on the frontage of the lot. This lot has three frontages. It's one tree per fifty feet of lot frontage. There are fifteen trees required. It was discussed with the consulting firm that a request for a reduced number of trees would be seen more favorably than a request to not install any new trees. The applicant went with the variance request to not install any additional trees.

Lundeen asked if there was a reason they were asking for a forty foot drive aisle.

Anlauf said he was unsure as to why the drive aisles were that wide.

Lundeen said he was curious because that will affect the storm water run-off. They're going to get charged per square foot. They're probably not really aware of it. I can see it being wider where they have their lowering ramp, but it doesn't make sense to spend more money on asphalt in the parking area. I'd like to see the business come here. Once you get it moving, something else will come in. But we do have our standards we have to go by. If we let one person do it, then someone else is going to come in and request something else.

Larson commented that one tree per fifty feet is not a lot of trees.

Anlauf agreed with Larson, but said it's more about visibility. He asked what kind of trees are supposed to be put in.

Achman answered that there are requirements listed in code and that the site plan has not come in yet for review of landscaping.

Larson informed Anlauf that it's going to benefit him if the requirements are fulfilled because that lot is going to look nice and his other lots will sell quicker.

Anlauf agreed with the sod requirement but he wasn't sure about the trees.

Lundeen mentioned how he hates to tell people they can't do things with their property, but if we don't set standards it's hard for people to follow.

Anlauf reiterated that trees cause a visibility problem.

Larson stated they worked long and hard to come up with an ornamental landscape requirement. It makes it much more appealing to go to a business that looks nice. You (Anlauf) need to go back to them (SMR Acquisitions Company) and tell them to submit their site plan with a request for a reduced number of trees. We don't want a barren lot.

Discussion ensued about the effectiveness of sod and hydroseed, and what was considered ornamental ground coverage.

Lind-Livingston indicated she'd like to see a compromise of some trees and some ornamental ground cover. She'd want to see some business come in and hate to see this as a deal breaker, but she also understands that we don't want to see it sitting on a bare piece of property.

Gordon stated she had two questions. Are they just trying to save their dollars? And if that's the case, why are they adding so much parking?

Anlauf answered that he believes it's more about the visibility.

Englund closed the public hearing at 7:29 p.m.

Larson wanted to make sure the applicant was aware of the storm water situation.

Motion by Englund, second by Larson to deny the request from SMR Acquisitions Company, LLC, on behalf of the Mille Lacs Oil Company, for a Variance to the required number of trees, the use of sod, the requirement of ornamental ground coverage and the amount of impervious surface within the parking perimeter for the property located at 391 Cherrywood St NE for the following reasons stated in the staff report. Motion was unanimously approved.

B. Amendments to Ordinance No. 445 Zoning, Section 17 Off-Street Parking and Loading, Subdivision 10 Number of Required Parking Spaces, specifically School Parking.

Achman present the staff memo with the staff recommendation to approve the request.

Englund opened the public hearing at 7:31 pm. There was no one to speak on the item. The public hearing was closed.

Motion by Lundeen, second by Larson to approve the Amendments to Ordinance No. 445 Zoning, Section 17 Off-Street Parking and Loading, Subdivision 10 Number of Required Parking Spaces, specifically School Parking. Motion was unanimously approved.

C. Request from the Arts and Science Academy for a Conditional Use Permit and Site Plan review to allow for a charter school in the building located at 903 6th Ave Ct NE, which is legally described as Lot 2, Block 1 Fairway Greens.

Achman presented the staff memo with the staff recommendation to approve the request, making specific mention of the conditions stated in the conditional use permit.

Englund opened the public hearing at 7:33 pm.

Larson pointed out that the schools plan is a good indicator of what a landscaping plan should look like.

Achman stated that the attached landscaping plan is existing and that the charter school will not be making any changes to the lighting and landscaping on site.

Englund closed the public hearing at 7:34 pm.

Motion by Larson, second by Lundeen to approval of the request from the Arts and Science Academy for a Conditional Use Permit and Site Plan review to allow for a charter school in the building located at 903 6th Ave Ct NE, which is legally described as Lot 2, Block 1 Fairway Greens. Motion was unanimously approved.

**4. Other Business.**

A. None.

**5. Discussion Items.**

A. None.

**6. Adjournment**

Motion by Lind-Livingston, second by Gordon to adjourn the April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014 meeting of the Planning Commission. Motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Dated at Isanti, Minnesota this 15<sup>th</sup> day of April 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

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Roxanne Achman  
Community Development Director