

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS, MN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
April 20, 2022**

1. **Call to Order:** The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Women Liz Fairbanks.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were Deborah Humann, Colleen Sievert, Liz Fairbanks, Dustin Pavel, Tara Kelly, Christina Bass and Dean Becker. Absent: none.

Others in attendance: Kate Thunstrom- Community Development Director, Kevin Robinson - City Council, Beth Richmond – City Planner

3. **Adopt Agenda:** Motion by Sievert, second by Becker to approve the agenda. Motion carried 0-0.
4. **Approve Minutes:** Motion by Becker, second by Humann to approve the March 16, 2022 minutes. Motion carried 7-0.
5. **Public Comment:**

No one came forward

6. **Public Hearing:**

- a. Dollar General Site Plan

City Planner Beth Richmond gave an overview on the site plan for Dollar General. The site is between Highway 47 and Cree St. The parcel is 10.60 acres. The applicant is proposing a 10,640 square foot stand-alone building. The applicant is requesting review of a minor subdivision and site plan. The entire site is guided commercial in regards to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The site is zoned B2 General Business. The site plan does meet all the requirements. The building will be located in the center of the lot with parking on the north and the south. The main entrance of the building is proposed to be on the northeast corner facing 229th and highway 47. The site is surrounded on three sides with public streets. There are two accesses proposed for this location. The city requires 47 parking stalls and that is what the applicant has provided.

The applicant had originally thought that instead of building out all of the parking stalls that they would ask for proof of parking but has since decided to build out all the stalls. Because you did notice a public hearing for that we would like to open and close that to give anyone the opportunity to comment.

There are portions of the northern and southern parking lot to be in a utility drainage easement. That is something the City Engineer is in favor of as long as there is an encroachment agreement, that is put together between the applicant and the City.

Majority of the landscaping is proposed around the parking lot. There is a drainage and utility easement in that area, to remedy this, Staff is suggesting that you would allow the

landscaping as proposed with the consideration that the city would amend the code to allow plantings within easements with some constraints.

The loading area is on the west side of the building. There will be some screening that includes evergreens and some shrubs. There is a trash enclosure that is proposed to be fully screened along with mechanical equipment. There are trails proposed as well. Staff would recommend conditional approval would be that the applicant approve a pedestrian connection from the street to existing trail. The site will be served by city utilities.

The Planning Commission is asked to hold the Public Hearing for the CUP even though that is not on the table anymore and following that in discussion and take action, recommend approval, recommend denial or table the item and request additional information.

Staff is recommending approval of the Dollar General site plan with conditions.

Chairwoman Fairbanks stated some of her concerns about the other store in town.

City Planner Beth Richmond reminded the commission that their responsibility is to review the site plan. The physical elements of what you see and not the operation of the store.

Humann stated that she was concerned about traffic on highway 47. MnDot did not have any concerns about the traffic.

Fairbanks opened the public comment at 7:16 pm.

Sam DeLeo - 13 11th Ave N St. Cloud stated he is the project land surveyor and was there to answer any questions.

Fairbanks closed the public comment at 7:17 pm and asked for any further discussion.

Councilmember Robinson asked about the delivery area and was wondering about traffic and noise. Richmond stated that there is screening that will go in as evergreens and shrubs.

Robinson also asked if there were any concerns about snow dump area on the northeast section next to the wetland, Richmond advised that that was not a concern.

Robinson also asked about parking on the south side of the building if people would have to walk around the building. Robinson also asked about street lights and if they would be deflected as to not shine into the residents' homes. Richmond explained that, yes, the lights will shine down.

Fairbanks asked if they were voting on the site plan. Richmond stated yes.

Fairbanks made a motion to approve the Dollar General site plan with conditions with findings of fact as recommended by staff. Sievert seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

7. Regular Business Items:

a. 3009 235th Ave NW Concept Review

Beth Richmond gave an overview of the concept plan for a detached townhome development at 3009 235th Ave. This is currently a 7.81 acre parcel. The site currently includes one home in the southeast corner and a wetland in the northeast and the western half is vacant.

The concept include 24 residential lots. One of those would be the existing home that is on a 1.36-acre parcel. The remaining land would be divided between an outlot for the wetland and then 23 detached townhomes. The project would create a public street.

The site is currently guided for low density residential use by the Comprehensive Plan. That category is meant for detached single unit townhomes at a density of between two and three units per net acre. The density that is proposed is 4.3 units per net acre. This concept plan would need an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan likely to medium density residential which will allow a range of 3-7 units per net acre. This site is surrounded by both types of land uses, both medium density and low density. That is something that the Planning Commission should discuss, is if a Comprehensive Plan amendment in this area is something that makes sense. The site is currently zone R1 and that matches the land use guides of the Comp Plan. If the Comp Plan were to be amended, we would also be at a rezoning that is related to it. The R2 Base District is the closest match that we have.

The applicant is requesting a rezoning to a planned unit development. Planning Commission should look at what the benefits are to both the applicant and the City if a PUD was approved.

The proposed lots are 5,000 square feet. Which is a significant decrease from R1 and R2.

There is a public street that is proposed from 235th up to the northern border of the property. It shows 66 feet of right of way but this can be reduced to 60 feet which matches city standards. The City Engineer reviewed the road layout and provide comments. Supportive of intersection, the horizontal curves would need to meet the current specifications. Because the streets on the north side to abut a current undeveloped area this would be what the city would consider a temporary dead end with the opportunity to extend to the north in the future.

Sievert and Fairbanks asked a clarifying question related to location and parking.

Commission members discussed the concept plan and asked Richmond for clarification.

The applicant Christ Fritch answered questions from Commission members and advised that his brother built the City Center Villas in 2004 and those were the same size lots as well. They came up with this design because there isn't anything like it on the market.

Sievert asked the applicant what is the public benefit or the city benefit from the PUD?

Fritch responded with affordability. It would be cost effective with a higher density. It gives a more comparable product with the surrounding developments and the existing market.

Councilmember Robinson was concerned about parking. Richmond advised that it is a normal size public street. With the smaller lots the driveways may be smaller.

Fairbanks stated that with there being a homeowner's association there should be designated guest parking.

Councilmember Robinson asked about a park dedication allowance. Richmond advises that we don't discuss that at concept phase.

Fairbanks had concerns about traffic. Thunstrom asked if she was inquiring about Rum River Blvd or 235th. Chairwoman Fairbanks stated 235th and Rum River Blvd.

Richmond asked for clarification if the Planning Commission is in favor for rezoning. Richmond advised that it will go to the first council meeting in May for discussion.

8. Discussion by Planning Commissioners –

Commission Members discussed Pioneer Days.

- 9. Adjournment:** Motion by Kelly, second by Becker to adjourn. Motion carried 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm

Website Link to Packets and Minutes for the Planning Commission:

<https://www.stfrancismn.org/meetings>

Recorded by: Jenni Wida

DATE APPROVED: