

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS, MN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
NOVEMBER 16, 2022**

1. **Call to Order:** The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Women Fairbanks
2. **Roll Call:** Present were Dean Becker, Liz Fairbanks, Gail Genin, Dustin Hingos, Tara Kelly, and Dustin Pavel. Absent: Deborah Humann.

Others in attendance: Colette Baumgardner, Community Development Director; Beth Richmond, City Planner; and, Kevin Robinson, City Council.

3. **Adopt Agenda:** Motion by Pavel, second by Fairbanks to approve the agenda. Motion carried 6-0.
4. **Approve Minutes:** Motion by Pavel, second by Becker to approve the September 21, 2022 minutes. Motion carried 6-0.
5. **Public Comment:** None
6. **Public Hearing:**

a. Enchanted Meadows

Richmond reviewed the staff packet and applicants requests for a Comprehensive Plan amendment, rezoning to Planned Unit Development (PUD), and preliminary plat for the Enchanted Meadows residential development which includes 20 single-unit detached residential lots, a public street running north from 235th Ave NW, and an outlot in the northeast corner of the property. She discussed the Planning Commission's role in this request and similar requests. She stated the Commission is tasked with determining if this development is appropriate. She was happy to answer any questions.

Commission asked how many more houses will be in the development than there would have been if the zoning changes are approved. Richmond stated it would be a small number, likely one lot.

Commission asked about the curve in the road and if it will be in the yards of the homes there and if this will restrict the homeowners from putting things in their yards. Richmond shared that the easement is just for the front yards of these areas and any houses would be behind the easement. She added quite a bit of the sight line easement is where the sidewalk is as well. Commission asked where the mailboxes would be for these houses, if they were to be in front of each home. Richmond stated she assumes it will be a cluster box. She added Staff is not concerned about this curve causing a problem for those who own these homes.

Commission asked about changing Code to allow black cherry trees for landscaping. Richmond stated there would like be 5-10 black cherry trees planted in this development.

She shared that City Code has common trees listed and for unique trees they discuss whether or not the tree is appropriate with a landscape architect. Commission was concerned with these being fruit bearing trees.

Commission asked about the distance between the homes for the side yard setback. Richmond stated it would be 12 feet total between each home. Commission asked if this has been increased since the first discussion of this development. Richmond explained that it increased from 10 feet to 12 feet. Commission asked if the backyard setback had changed. Richmond stated the applicant is not asking for flexibility and would be able to meet the current standards, which is 30 feet.

Commission asked about parking and if this would be an HOA. Richmond stated this will be a public street and will be treated as such for parking and plowing.

Commission asked about the exteriors of the homes and if they will be different colors. Richmond stated there will be different colors.

Commission asked about the pine tree that is against the line of sight easement and asked if this will be moved. Richmond stated this is something that can be discussed.

Public Hearing opened at 7:25 p.m.

James Ellefson, 23564 Heather Street, asked if these will be custom homes. The applicant stated they will be custom homes. Mr. Ellis asked for the approximate square footage of the homes. The applicant stated they will be approximately 1400 square feet and up.

Kathy Ellefson, 23564 Heather Street, asked if the house that is currently in this location will be torn down. Richmond stated they will not tear this house down. Mrs. Ellefson asked how much of the yard will stay. Richmond explained where the new lot lines would be and showed where the new outlot would be as well. Mrs. Ellefson asked if the pond and wetland area was staying. Richmond said yes. Mrs. Ellefson asked where the berm would be. Richmond stated it is on the far west side. Mrs. Ellefson asked if these are considered low income housing. Richmond stated they are market rate houses. Mrs. Ellefson asked if the pole barn and pine trees in the yard of the house that is currently on the lot will stay. Richmond shared those are proposed to be removed. Mrs. Ellefson asked if this is a City development. Richmond stated this is a Brothers Development project.

Kristine Vogtlin, 23787 Rum River Boulevard, expressed concern with how close the homes are and how this is significantly different from the neighborhoods around this area.

Mr. Ellefson shared his concerns with the size of the homes going in and that it could lower his property value. He asked if these homes will have full basements. The applicant stated they were not sure yet, they will either be crawl space or full basement.

Mrs. Ellefson asked if the farmer who owns the land next to the existing house sold any of their land. Richmond stated this homeowner would have gotten a letter and would have contacted the City if there were any concerns.

Chad Gieske, 1018 285th Lane NW, Zimmerman, the son of a resident who lives at 23610 Heather Street, expressed a concern with the drainage and wetland area behind the existing homes as well as traffic concerns in this area.

Public Hearing closed at 7:37 p.m.

Applicant addressed the Commission to answer questions related to drainage and storm water. He shared everything in regard to drainage has been looking at by the City Engineer. He also addressed the road and traffic concerns.

Commission asked the applicant about the concern of this development lowering home values of the homes around and asked for feedback from other similar developments and the price range of these homes. The applicant shared the materials that will be used on the exterior of the homes and stated they did not have the numbers yet for cost.

Commission discussed the need for a stop sign in this area for safety. Richmond stated this will be a controlled intersection.

Commission asked about park dedication. Richmond stated a park dedication fee will be charged per lot. She shared there is not a park planned for this area and they would be looking at cash in lieu of land.

Commission asked about the zoning for the land to the north and to the west. Richmond stated the developments to south and the east are both zoned for low density residential, and the north and the west are planning for higher density development.

The applicant shared that numbers will fluctuate but the planned cost of these homes is between \$350,000 to \$360,000 without basements.

Commission asked if parking RVs or other large vehicles would be allowed in line of sight areas. Richmond stated the developer is leaning towards two car garages and she does not know about the RVs being parked and stated she will explore this more.

Commission stated there will be another opportunity for the public to voice their concerns at the City Council meeting when this is discussed.

Motion by Pavak, second by Kelly to recommend approval of the Comprehensive Plan amendment for the Enchanted Meadows project with conditions and findings of fact as recommended by Staff. Motion passed 6-0.

Commission reiterated that this will come forward again for discussion with the City Council and asked when it will be discussed. Richmond stated there are still a number of items that are putting this on hold and it will not go to Council until Staff has received all the information needed.

Motion by Pavel, second by Fairbanks to recommend approval of the rezoning to PUD with conditions and findings of fact as recommended by Staff. Motion passed 6-0.

Motion by Pavel, second by Fairbanks to recommend approval of the preliminary plat for the Enchanted Meadows project with conditions and findings of fact as recommended by Staff. Commissioner Hingos added a friendly amendment to limiting fruit and spruce trees in the development and removing trees from the easements. Motion passed 6-0.

7. Regular Business Items

- a. New Planning Commission Members
Chairwomen Fairbanks welcomed Gail Genin and Dustin Hingos to the Commission.

8. Planning Commission Discussion

Commission discussed the availability of Commissioners for the next meeting in December.

9. **Adjournment:** Motion by Kelly, second by Becker to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Website Link to Packets and Minutes for the Planning Commission:

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

Recorded by: Colette Baumgardner

DATE APPROVED: