

July 7, 2015

The Scandia Planning Commission held their regular monthly meeting on the above date. The following were in attendance: Chair Christine Maefsky, Commissioners Walt Anderson, Jan Hogle, Travis Loeffler and Dan Squyres. Staff present: City Administrator Kristina Handt, City Planner Sherri Buss and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund. Chair Maefsky called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA, MINUTES**

Chair Maefsky added an announcement of a climate change workshop to the agenda. **Loeffler, seconded by Squyres, moved to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried 5-0.**

Commissioner Hogle asked that the June 2, 2015 minutes be clarified by adding language specifying that agriculture must be the primary use in the Ag Preserves District to the last sentence on page 4.

**Loeffler, seconded by Anderson, moved to approve the June 2, 2015 minutes as amended per Hogle's comments. The motion carried 5-0.**

#### **CITIZENS' CLIMATE LOBBY – MAEFISKY ANNOUNCEMENT**

Chair Maefsky announced that the St. Croix Valley Chapter of the Citizens' Climate Lobby will be hosting a workshop on climate change at the Scandia Community Center on July 11<sup>th</sup>. The public is invited to attend.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING: MINOR SUBDIVISION AT THE SOUTHWEST END OF 218<sup>TH</sup> STREET. RONALD NECHODOM, APPLICANT. (RESOLUTION NO. 07-07-15-01)**

Planner Buss presented the request of Ronald Nechodom to subdivide a 9-acre parcel from an existing 39.72-acre parcel located on the southwest end of 218<sup>th</sup> Street, known as German Lake Estates. The property is zoned General Rural within the Shoreland Overlay of German Lake, a natural environment lake. Mr. Nechodom plans to develop the property with a single-family residence.

Buss explained that the proposal meets the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and the underlying zoning requirements. The lot has one-acre of buildable land and is 300-feet in width, which meets the road frontage requirement. A septic area was identified and Buss stated that the applicant will need a County permit for septic installation. The Carnelian-Marine Watershed commented that a permit from their agency will need to be approved and permanent buffers established within the German Lake shoreland and around the wetlands for compliance with the Wetland Conservation Act.

Buss stated that park dedication is required for the new subdivision, and the City has the option of obtaining park land or collecting the \$3,000 fee. Since the property is not within a Park Search Area, the Commissioners could propose collecting the park fee.

Buss concluded with a recommendation to approve the subdivision and presented a resolution with 8 conditions, such as obtaining the required permits and recording the new parcel with the County within one year.

Chair Maefsky opened the public hearing at 7:12 p.m.

Administrator Handt noted that the written comments received from John Lindell were responded to with an explanation that the subdivision is in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and Shoreland Regulations.

There were no public comments and Chair Maefsky closed the hearing at 7:13 p.m.

A discussion of lot sizes within natural environment lakeshore confirmed that the minimum lot size is 5 acres and meets the DNR's approval. The Watershed will determine the extent of buffers as this can differ for each water body.

Commissioner Hogle recommended that park fees be collected in lieu of park land. The Commissioners were in agreement that condition #5 remains as presented for the collection of \$3,000 before the final plat is approved.

**Hogle, seconded by Squyres, moved to approve Resolution No. 07-07-15-01, Approving a Minor Subdivision for German Lake Estates on 218<sup>th</sup> Street North. The motion carried 5-0.**

The recommendation to approve the minor subdivision will be presented to the City Council at their July 21, 2015 meeting.

#### **DISCUSSION OF CHANGES TO THE SIGN ORDINANCE AND SCANDIA ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES RELATED TO SIGNAGE**

Planner Buss provided information on sign guidelines and regulations with examples from neighboring communities in response to the EDA's request that the City's sign ordinance be updated to better support businesses in the Village Area. Each issue was identified and discussed for potential changes.

Buss explained that the sign regulations in the development code require that signs in the Village Area and Rural Commercial districts be compatible with the Architectural Design Guidelines. Susan Rodsjo chaired the committee that developed the Guidelines which were adopted in 2009, and was present at the meeting to join in the discussion. Rodsjo commented that the goal of the Guidelines is to retain the historical nature of the community and discourage the use of elements that take away from historical integrity.

The first issue identified by the EDA is the prohibition of banners and pennants, and encouraged their use to advertise community events over a longer period of time. Buss reported that most communities allow banners for a temporary amount of time. Stillwater allows them only for non-commercial purposes. The Commissioners concluded that banners could be allowed to

promote community events up to 30 days before the event through 4 days following the event. Rodsjo suggested that the definitions of banners and pennants be added to the development code, and that photos of acceptable examples be added to the Guidelines. Chair Maefsky stated that more discussion is needed to further address the commercial use of banners.

The second issue identified by the EDA is the prohibition of portable signs, such as the portable sign used by the Lions Club to promote various events. Buss stated that portable sandwich boards are allowed, but it was noted that it would be difficult for the Plaza businesses to make use of these due to the large setback from the highway.

It was proposed that community events be allowed use of portable signs. Commissioner Hogle asked if there is a definition for “community event”. Planner Buss offered to research this from other communities and bring back a definition. Discussion of the Farmers Market operating as a business concluded that the term could be written as “business sponsored community event”.

Administrator Handt relayed the concern that the current limit of 3 signs advertising a community event should be removed; the EDA proposes no limit due to the Scandia’s large area. Chair Maefsky stated that the number allowed could be determined by the event. Commissioner Hogle requested that the definition of an “abandoned sign” be added as contained in Forest Lake’s code.

Rodsjo stated that the bright yellow portable sign used by the Lions is not consistent with the desired historical look and suggested a sign more in line with one used by Abrahamson’s Nursery. Planner Buss suggested that visual examples be provided in the Guidelines with use of colors that fit the desired effect.

A third issue identified for amending is the permit requirement for temporary signs. Administrator Handt stated that she does not see the need to monitor garage sale and community event signs and it adds extra work for staff. Buss noted that Scandia is the only community she knows that requires permits for garage sale signs.

Chair Maefsky thought there is value in having an applicant obtain a garage sale sign permit as it give legitimacy to their sale and acknowledgment that they are following the law. More discussion followed and it was decided to strike the permit requirement for temporary signs but keep the regulation on size limits.

The EDA also requested that the guidelines be amended to permit signs with animation. Forest Lake allows changeable electronic copy signs but Osceola and Stillwater prohibit dynamic display signs. Much discussion followed on aesthetics and character and why they have been prohibited. Commissioner Loeffler stated that there should be some compromise for businesses to draw customers into their stores by use of advertising signs. Maefsky suggested the business owners be asked to explain their desired requests and the City could work with them. Administrator Handt stated that off-site signs are needed.

**Maefsky, seconded by Squyres, moved to not allow animated signs and to encourage businesses to bring their ideas as to what would work for business promotion. The motion carried 5-0.**

Planner Buss offered to research how other communities handle off-site signage for businesses that are removed from highway frontages. Administrator Handt noted that the corner of Highway 97 and Oakhill Road (Lilleskogen Park area) has been identified as a potential location for a city-owned sign that businesses could be advertised on. It was agreed that signage should have a distinct and common look for cohesiveness throughout the City.

Planner Buss will bring a draft of the proposed changes to the Development Code and Design Guidelines for further review at the next meeting. Commissioner Hogle recommended that requirements for political signs be updated to reference the State Statute 211B.045.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Hogle, seconded by Anderson, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 5-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund  
Deputy Clerk