

January 8, 2008

The Scandia Planning Commission held their regular monthly meeting on the above date. The following were in attendance: Chairman Chris Ness, Commissioners Christine Maefsky, James Malmquist, Kevin Nickelson, Peter Schwarz and TKDA Senior Planner Sherri Buss. Chairman Ness called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA, MINUTES

Administrator Hurlburt added to the agenda a brief verbal report on floodplain ordinance information. **James Malmquist, seconded by Peter Schwarz, moved to approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed unanimously.**

Peter Schwarz, seconded by James Malmquist, moved to approve the December 4, 2007 Planning Commission minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

BIG MARINE DEVELOPMENT, LLC – REVISED LANDSCAPE PLAN FOR TII GAVO

Big Marine Development, LLC has requested approval of a revised landscape plan for the Tii Gavo Open Space Conservation Subdivision. The original plan, prepared by Putman Planning & Design, was approved on June 5, 2007. The developer is proposing modifications which they feel are a better alternative to the ecological health of the site.

Jason Husveth and Ken Arndt, Critical Connections Ecological Services, were present to discuss the revised plan. The new plan reduces the proposed amount of native and non-native ornamental plantings, increases the use of native trees and restores the native plant communities, including about 22 acres of created prairie and savanna. Specifically, the number of trees and shrubs will be reduced from 422 to 249, with many being transplanted from on-site. The intent of reducing the number of trees was to take the monetary value of these trees and put it toward establishing native prairie in several on the outlots. The outlots currently are old fields with disturbed wetlands that are overgrown with non-native grasses such as brome and reed canary grass. A 5-year restoration plan is proposed to return the fields to native plantings. The developer is committing to covering the costs for the first three years, after which the Homeowner's Association would cover the maintenance costs.

TKDA Senior Planner/Landscape Architect Sherri Buss presented her report on the evaluation of the request. Ms. Buss recommends approval of the plan with a number of conditions. These conditions were incorporated into draft Resolution 01-08-08-01.

Commissioner Maefsky inquired how the transplanted trees are selected from the site. Mr. Arndt stated that selective thinning of healthy trees from the edges of the woodland are being transplanted into the savanna. A higher success rate can be obtained by using native trees that are adapted to the site. Councilmember Harnetty asked Mr. Husveth to explain the five year restoration plan. Mr. Husveth stated that the first year will involve herbicide and controlled burning, followed by seeding and installation of a forb enhancement mix. Wildflowers should bloom by year 3, with seeding throughout year 4. By year 5 the acreage should be well established.

The commissioners and councilmembers discussed the revised plan and suggested changes to the resolution which would guarantee the financial costs of the restoration plan for five years or until the restoration is complete (rather than three years), and allow for inspection reports by a qualified landscape architect for the first five growing seasons (a change from three growing seasons). Commissioner Schwarz felt satisfied with the presentation and stated that it may be better than the prior plan. Regarding a question of what if at the end of five years, things are not

going satisfactorily? Staff advised that the letter of credit can be extended and retained until the city inspector is satisfied that it is complete. Currently there is a \$177,000 landscaping letter of credit being held by the city. Commissioner Maefsky stated her approval of the plan and the need to carry out the plan as stated. Councilmember Peterson stated her approval of the plan. Councilmember Harnetty asked for Ms. Buss' opinion of the plan. Ms. Buss felt it to be a very good plan that fits the character of the area and benefits the long-term health of the land, but the "devil is in the maintenance". Mayor Seefeldt felt that this plan is consistent with restoring native habitat and a good move on the developer's part.

Peter Schwarz, seconded by James Malmquist, moved to recommend to the City Council to adopt draft Resolution 01-08-08-01 Approval of Revised Landscape Plan, Tii Gavo Major Subdivision with changes to conditions #2, #5, and #6 in which financial guarantees and inspection reports are extended to five years. The motion passed unanimously.

2008 MEETING SCHEDULE

The Planning Commission reviewed the 2008 meeting schedule. Meeting dates for the months of February and November were rescheduled due to conflicts.

Chris Ness, seconded by James Malmquist, moved to approve the 2008 Planning Commission meeting schedule as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORT ON FLOODPLAIN ORDINANCE

Administrator Hurlburt was recently notified that it is necessary for the city to adopt floodplain regulations in order to retain flood insurance for homeowners. Administrator Hurlburt is working with the DNR to select a model ordinance that will apply to Scandia. A draft ordinance is anticipated to come before the Planning Commission in March.

PLANNING SERVICES

Upon the retirement of City Planner Richard Thompson, Sherri Buss, Senior Planner for TKDA, introduced herself and welcomed any questions that the Commissioners or Councilmembers had of the services provided by TKDA. Replying to an inquiry on experience, Ms. Buss stated her natural resources experience with conservation and preservation ordinances and the fact that she is a certified landscape architect. Berry Farrington will continue to be involved with Scandia's planning issues and a representative of TKDA will be in attendance at monthly Planning Commission meetings. The council appointed Sherri Buss as Scandia's City Planner.

James Malmquist, seconded by Christine Maefsky, moved to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund
City of Scandia Deputy Clerk