

April 1, 2014

The Scandia Planning Commission held their regular monthly meeting on the above date. Chair Christine Maefsky called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following were in attendance: Commissioners Sue Bies, Jan Hogle, Dan Squyres and Chair Christine Maefsky. Commissioner Steve Philippi arrived at 7:10 p.m. Staff present: City Administrator Kristina Handt, City Planner Sherri Buss, Attorney Andy Pratt and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund. Council member Chris Ness was also in attendance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA, MINUTES**

**Hogle, seconded by Squyres, moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously by those present.**

**Hogle, seconded by Squyres, moved to approve the March 4, 2014 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously by those present.**

**PUBLIC HEARING: VARIANCES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AT 18190 OLINDA TRAIL NORTH. QUINN AND LILLY WEIDALL, APPLICANTS. (RESOLUTION NO. 04-01-14-01)**

Quinn and Lilly Weidall are proposing to build a new single-family residence and detached garage on property they own at 18190 Olinda Trail North. A seasonal cabin, garage and shed will be removed. Variances are needed for lot coverage and to locate the new garage closer to the roadway than the principal structure. The parcel is approximately one acre in size and is zoned General Rural within the Shoreland Overlay District of Big Marine Lake.

Planner Buss presented the details of the request. The non-conforming lot is a long narrow parcel with an existing driveway which provides access for a neighboring parcel to the north and to the City's 201 drainfield. The neighbor has an easement for access but the City does not. Buss explained that lot coverage of 27.3%, which exceeds the 25% maximum allowed, is primarily from the gravel and bituminous driveway areas. If each parcel served by the driveway created its own access drive, the impervious cover would be greatly increased over the three lots. From this finding, Buss stated that it is reasonable that the proposed driveway is in harmony with the purpose and intent of the Comprehensive Plan. Buss noted that the applicants are proposing a modest two-story home and smaller garage to minimize impervious coverage. In addition, a portion of the driveway drains towards Olinda Trail and not toward the lake.

The unique shape of the lot limits the placement of the accessory structure to meet setback requirements. The location of the garage will be closer to Olinda Trail than the house, but at 1,300 feet from the right-of-way, should not be easily visible from the road.

Buss reported on comments received from the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District. The District requires the low floor elevation to be a minimum of 944.5 feet. Although the District is not in favor of granting variances for lot coverage, it recognized the difficulty of the lot configuration and agreed with the installation of rain gardens to treat runoff. A permit for stormwater management, buffers and erosion control will be required.

In summary, Buss recommended approval of the request with findings and conditions written into a resolution. The practical difficulties are not caused by the landowner and the required variances are the minimum action needed.

Chair Maefsky opened the public hearing at 7:17 p.m.

Administrator Handt reported that Gerald Glomb, adjacent property owner at 18200 Olinda Trail, sent a letter of support for the variance request.

There were no other comments and the hearing was closed.

Chair Maefsky asked Mr. Quinn to explain the reduction of 32 square feet from the existing driveway as proposed in the application. Mr. Quinn indicated on the survey that the shed and area of gravel will be removed and replaced with a rain garden.

**Hogle, seconded by Squyres, moved to recommend to the City Council approval of Resolution No. 04-01-14-01, Approving Variances for 18190 Olinda Trail, with the addition of language for a variance to locate the garage closer to the roadway than the principal structure (this was mistakenly left out of the resolution). The motion carried 5-0.**

This recommendation will be presented to the Council at their meeting on April 15, 2014.

**PUBLIC HEARING: MINOR SUBDIVISION TO CREATE TWO LOTS AT 23160 LOFTON AVENUE. SCOTT AND LISA O'DONNELL, OWNERS. (RESOLUTION NO. 04-01-14-02)**

Landmark Surveying, on behalf of property owners Scott and Lisa O'Donnell, have applied for a Minor Subdivision to create two lots at 23160 Lofton Avenue, a 30.5-acre parcel with an existing home. The plat Bruley Morgans is proposed to be divided into one 5-acre lot with the existing home, and a 25.5-acre lot that will be the site for a future single-family home. The property is located in the Ag Core District within the Shoreland Overlay of Nielsen Lake.

Planner Buss presented the staff report which found the request to be consistent with the land use goals of the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed lots meet the density of 4 dwelling units per 40 acres, along with lot size, frontage and buildable area requirements. Buss reported that County staff had no issues with roadway access onto Lofton Avenue.

Buss noted that the wetland areas and drainage easements are shown on the preliminary plat. The Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District indicated that the proposal meets wetland buffer requirements and that the applicants must obtain a wetland function and value permit.

Buss recommended approval of the request with conditions written into a resolution. Conditions to collect a park dedication fee of \$3,000 for the creation of Lot 2 and to record the final plat within one year were included.

Chair Maefsky opened the public hearing at 7:29 p.m. There were no comments and the hearing was closed.

Commissioner Hogle stated that the request was straightforward and she had no problems with it.

**Hogle, seconded by Squyres, moved to recommend to the City Council approval of Resolution No. 04-01-14-02, Approving a Minor Subdivision for 21360 Lofton Avenue. The motion carried 5-0.**

This recommendation will be presented to the Council at their meeting on April 15, 2014.

**CONTINUE DISCUSSION ON 4 DWELLING UNITS PER 40 ACRES ISSUE**

The Planning Commission began a discussion on the City's goals and ordinance requirements for density in the Ag Core and General Rural Districts at the January meeting. Planner Buss provided revised language that would clarify the density standard to mean 4 buildable lots per 40, not 4 dwelling units per 40.

Adopting a policy to clarify density standards was also offered but this was determined as a less effective way to make the intent clear. Attorney Pratt advised to not pursue development agreements with landowners that would deem lots as unbuildable.

The Commissioners and staff discussed various scenarios and analyses of the density issue. Questions about development rights, density goals and tax implications were debated.

Chair Maefsky concluded that it would be helpful to analyze the remaining property in the General Rural District that has the potential for development using the 4 buildable lots per 40 acre density, in order to get a handle on the extent of the issue. It was agreed to have staff assemble this information for discussion at the next meeting.

Chair Maefsky asked the Commissioners to review the Comprehensive Plan prior to the next meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund  
Deputy Clerk

