

August 2, 2011

The Scandia Planning Commission held their regular monthly meeting on the above date. Commission Chair Maefsky called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. The following were in attendance: Commission Chair Christine Maefsky, Commissioners Jan Hogle, Tom Krinke and Steve Philippi. Staff present: City Administrator Anne Hurlburt, City Planner Sherri Buss and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund. Commissioner Peter Schwarz joined the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA, MINUTES

Krinke, seconded by Maefsky, moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 4-0.

Krinke, seconded by Hogle, moved to approve the July 5, 2011 minutes as presented. The motion carried 4-0.

WORK SESSION ON DRAFT OF CHAPTER 3, SCANDIA DEVELOPMENT CODE – SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS (CONTINUED FROM JULY 5, 2011 MEETING)

The Planning Commission continued to review a draft of Chapter 3 of the Scandia Development Code (Subdivision Regulations).

At the July work session, the Planning Commission discussed the Parks Committee recommendation that the percentage of land dedication be set at 5% and that the cash in lieu of land dedication be increased from the current \$1,500 per residential unit to \$3,500 per unit. The Commission asked staff to research park dedication requirements of surrounding communities for further discussion at the July meeting.

This survey data was presented to the members along with a Park Dedication Needs Analysis. The document explained the calculation of appropriate dedication requirements based on key factors. These factors include park needs based on a capital improvements budget and the Comprehensive Plan and Open Space Plan; the “essential nexus” and “rough proportionality” to the need created by the subdivision; and that cash in lieu of land must be based on fair market value of the land.

The survey of park dedication requirements showed park fees in surrounding communities to be in the range of \$525 -- \$3,000 per residential unit created. City Administrator explained the basis of this as it pertains to density and urban versus rural subdivision development. Most urban communities are developing housing at densities of 3 to 5 units per acre or higher. Scandia has rural development at much lower densities (as in acres per unit). The Park Dedication Needs Analysis forecasted a range of \$2,689 to \$3,423 when collecting cash in lieu of land, based on growth forecasts and the value of estimated park needs.

The Commissioners discussed the justification of increasing the park fee to \$3,000, as this is closer to the mid-point of the recommended range. Commissioner Hogle felt comfortable with setting the park fee at \$3,000. Hogle stated that the figure can be justified based on the dedication analysis and the need to complete the Park Plan.

Chair Maefsky inquired if the Park Dedication Needs Analysis should be referenced some way in the ordinance. Administrator Hurlburt stated that this wouldn't be needed as the report will be part of the official permanent record and could easily be referenced if the need arose.

City Planner Buss explained how changes in land values are difficult to predict, and advised that setting a lower, more conservative, park fee would be appropriate. Buss stated that \$3,000 is a justifiable number and within reason.

Commissioner Philippi reasoned that subdivisions bring in additional needs for parks and trails and developers should be expected to pay their fair share. A \$3,000 park fee is reasonable and can be justified based on the figures of the needs analysis. Philippi recognized that trails are becoming an increased necessity in the community.

Planner Buss agreed that demand for trails is growing as the population ages. Commissioner Hogle stated that this was evident in the survey conducted when the Comprehensive Park Plan was being put together. The community rated the availability of trails high as related to quality of life.

Commissioner Krinke was in support of a 5% land dedication value, but felt that doubling the park fee from its current value was too high. Krinke suggested settling on a figure in the \$2,500 to \$2,700 per unit range.

Commissioner Philippi recommended that the ordinance be revisited regularly and adjusted with housing and subdivision activity. Land values also affect where the value of a park fee should be.

Chair Maefsky believed that community perception of an increase is important, but that \$3,000 is a fair value and can be backed up with the research of the land dedication needs and analysis. Surrounding communities have lower fees, but higher densities.

Schwarz, seconded by Maefsky, moved to recommend that Park Land Dedication Requirements be established as follows: That developers pay a cash fee of \$3,000 for each residential unit created in a subdivision (in lieu of land dedication), and that a land dedication requirement of 5% of the net area subdivided be established. The motion carried 4-1, with Krinke opposed.

The Commissioners reviewed the Engineering Standards document prepared by City Engineer Paul Hornby. The document provides for detailed technical standards for public improvements in new subdivisions. Administrator Hurlburt explained that strict guidelines need to be in place so that new roads are built to the best possible standards for the longest life possible, and shouldn't be a future maintenance burden. There are examples within the city of roads that are deteriorating due to substandard construction.

Commissioner Philippi agreed that it is vital that roads are constructed to the highest standards. The cost to rebuild deteriorating roads is greater than the budget can allow for.

City Planner Buss recommended that engineering graphics and detailed plates be added to the engineering standards document. This makes the road section requirements more clear. Administrator Hurlburt will request City Engineer Hornby make these additions.

Commissioner Maefsky asked for an explanation of park dedication requirements for commercial development. Administrator Hurlburt referred to Section 12.2 (1)(B) Non-residential Development. Park dedication requirements of each commercial development will be evaluated and negotiated between the city and the developer based on potential use. The need for park facilities would be dependent on what type of commercial business is developed.

The consensus of the Commission was to schedule a public hearing of the subdivision regulation ordinance for the September 6, 2011 Planning Commission meeting. Administrator Hurlburt will provide a red-lined copy and/or a list of the recommended changes within the next few weeks.

ADJOURNMENT

Schwarz, seconded by Krinke, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund
Deputy Clerk