

March 6, 2018

The Scandia Planning Commission held their regular monthly meeting on the above date. The following were in attendance: Commissioners Greg Amundson, Jan Hogle, Travis Loeffler, Tom Noyes and Chair Dan Squyres. Staff present: City Administrator Neil Soltis, City Planner Sherri Buss, City Engineer Ryan Goodman and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund. Council member Chris Ness was also in attendance.

Chair Squyres called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

**Loeffler, seconded by Noyes, moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 5-0.**

Chair Squyres noted a correction to page 3 of the February 13, 2018 minutes. **Noyes, seconded by Loeffler, moved to approve the February 13, 2018 meeting minutes as corrected. The motion carried 5-0.**

### **PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE AMENDING THE DEVELOPMENT CODE CHAPTER 3, SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS, SECTION 12 – PARK DEDICATION REQUIREMENTS**

Planner Buss explained the changes made to the park dedication requirements as discussed last month based on a request from the City Council. The exemption from payment of park fees for lot splits resulting in 20 acres or larger would be removed since the creation of a new lot impacts the demand for parks and trails in Scandia. Buss also noted the deletion of language from the current ordinance that allows for developers to request a deviation from park dedication requirements. However, the ordinance would continue to allow a deviation from the fees for a development that provides low-income housing.

Chair Squyres opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m. There were no comments and the hearing was closed.

Commissioner Hogle stated that there is no evidence to show that lot splits resulting in lots that are 20 acres and larger create a demand for park facilities. She said that it would make more sense to collect the park fee at the time a building permit is issued. Commissioner Loeffler questioned if this is a loophole for the city to make more money.

Planner Buss explained that communities collect park fees at the time of subdivision for administrative and recordkeeping purposes and to avoid fees going uncollected.

Administrator Soltis and Planner Buss explained the mechanism for creating an outlot at the time of subdividing that specifies no development on the parcel and gave the example of the recent Manthey subdivision. Park fees are not collected on outlots. If an owner chooses to subdivide the outlot(s) in the future, the park dedication requirements would apply at that time.

Commissioners Hogle and Loeffler said this would satisfy their concerns for property owners who break up large tracts of land for inheritance purposes or for other reasons with no intentions of building on the lots.

**Loeffler, seconded by Noyes, moved to recommend approval of the ordinance amending Chapter 3, Subdivision Regulations regarding applicability and park dedication requirements as presented. The motion carried 5-0.**

The City Council will receive this recommendation at their March 20, 2018 meeting.

### **DISCUSSION ON VMU-B ZONING DISTRICT**

Planner Buss explained that the City's EDA and Council requested they review the uses and lot standards in the VMU B zoning district, based on inquiries received after the closing of Chikos restaurant. Chikos was a tenant in a stand-alone building located on a 2.5 acre parcel that also includes a separate multi-tenant building. The minimum lot size in the VMU B District is 2.5 acres. Potential restaurant owners are interested in the building but obtaining financing for improvements is difficult since they cannot own the building. Buss presented options that would permit businesses in the VMU B District to allow for separate ownership of buildings on a common parcel.

Buss explained the commercial condominium form of ownership that would allow a property to have multiple businesses but would require an Association to be set up to deal with issues such as common areas, parking lots, and septic systems. There are legal processes to follow and this would not require a change to the city's code.

Buss noted that Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) are permitted by Chapter 2, Section 7.0 of the development code and would allow flexibility from city zoning and subdivision standards. This section indicated that PUDs are permitted in the VMU B zoning district; however, in Chapter 2, Section 2 regulations for the VMU-B zoning district, PUDs are not listed as a conditional use unlike the Village Neighborhood, Rural Commercial, and Industrial zoning districts. A minor change would be needed to the code to clear up this discrepancy regarding zoning districts.

Buss explained a third option to make changes to the VMU B District by allowing smaller lot sizes, changes in the boundaries or to other standards that would make it easier for businesses to expand and develop.

The Commissioners agreed that the commercial condominium and PUD approach are worth exploring but recommended that the EDA study the third option and provide direction for specific goals and ideas for changes to the code.

### **REVIEW DRAFT CHAPTERS OF THE 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

#### ***Water Resources Chapter -- Wastewater Section***

Engineer Goodman presented the draft chapter covering the wastewater portion of the water resources chapter. Most residents have on-site septic systems that are permitted by Washington

County, currently numbering 1,394 systems. There are 3 public wastewater treatment systems serving multiple lots and structures; the Bliss and Anderson-Erickson around Big Marine Lake and the Uptown System serving the village businesses.

Goodman explained that future focus should be on solving the high nitrate levels in the Bliss system, discuss if there is an appetite for expanding the A/E system, and to pursue a potential connection to the west with a hub to Forest Lake. Council member Ness indicated that this was discussed in the Wastewater Committee and that he would like to see the City get out of the septic business and supported the idea of connecting to a Metropolitan sewer system for users on the west side of the lake.

### ***Public Water Supply***

Engineer Goodman presented the section on water supply. As with wastewater systems, most residences and businesses have private wells. The DNR operates 2 observation wells in Scandia, and the well on the east side of Big Marine Lake is showing a downward trend in the water level. A map on page 22 showed surface and groundwater interaction with aquifer recharge areas highlighted. Goodman noted that protection of these areas must be considered to prevent contamination of groundwater drinking sources.

Goodman explained that it is questionable for Scandia to be included in the DNR's NE Metro Groundwater Management Area when the city's aquifers do not flow to the south. It was reasoned that the DNR used the County border instead of directional water flow, and this question could be raised with the Met Council.

It was noted that Tii Gavo and Wyldewood Acres subdivisions have shared community wastewater systems, and Commissioners recommended these systems be added to the wastewater supply section.

### ***Implementation***

Jane Kansier, Bolton & Menk consultant for the Comp Plan, explained the implementation chapter being prepared for the Comprehensive Plan. The format ties into the goals of each chapter to create specific action items for their implementation, providing direction for "what needs to be done to meet the goals of the Comp Plan".

The Commissioners were given an exercise to prepare action items for the plan, and discussion began with Land Use. Updating the zoning map and ordinances was identified as an action item. Planner Buss explained the purpose of a zoning study to identify large parcels and areas of preservation. Chair Squyres stated that preserving open space was at the top of the list for residents who completed the survey, and creative and practical ideas should drive the study of where and what tools to use to attain this goal. It was decided to combine land use goals #2 and #3 into sub-groups of goal #4, and these could be the zoning study to look at what to preserve and where affordable housing would fit.

The goal to permit the continuation of current mining activities will meet the state statute that must be included in the comp plan to allow extraction of aggregate resources.

The Commissioners will continue to identify action items for the plan and provide their input to Administrator Soltis before the April 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, for further discussion and refinement.

**FUTURE AGENDAS**

The April 3, 2018 agenda will have public hearings for 2 variances and the ordinance update to shoreland management.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund  
Deputy Clerk