

May 1, 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 Planner Sherri Buss, City Administrator Neil Soltis and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund. Mayor Christine Maefsky and Council members Steve Kronmiller and Chris Ness were also in attendance.

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

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Loeffler, seconded by Hogle, moved to approve the April 3, 2018 meeting minutes as presented. The motion carried 5-0.**

### **PUBLIC HEARING: AMENDMENT TO CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR AM-TEC DESIGNS AT 2180 OZARK AVENUE. CONNIE SUTTON, APPLICANT (PC RESOLUTION 05-01-18-01)**

Connie Sutton, owner of Am-Tec Designs at 21080 Ozark Avenue, has requested an amendment to the existing Conditional Use Permit for expansion of the principal building and to move an accessory structure to a new location on the property of the steel fabrication business. A CUP amendment was approved for this business in 2015, but the applicant did not implement the proposed expansion, and is now requesting a similar, slightly larger expansion to increase the width of the building by 40 feet. The existing 50'x25' accessory structure will be moved to a new location near the west property line.

Planner Buss provided a summary of the staff report. The request meets the ordinance requirements for setbacks, lot coverage and the criteria for granting a CUP. No issues were identified with the request for the expansion and new site plan. A resolution granting approval was prepared with findings that the request is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan to support business activity and the request conforms to the regulations of the Industrial Park District. Buss explained that the conditions of approval included the original CUP conditions and past amendment conditions, including that the applicant obtain a grading permit and Watershed District permit if required.

Chair Squyres opened the public hearing at 7:04 p.m. There were no comments and the hearing was closed.

Commissioner Noyes asked why this business needs a CUP to operate in the Industrial Park zoning district. Buss explained that a specialty manufacturing business has the potential for impacts to neighboring residential properties and this gives the City the ability to regulate the operation with relevant conditions.

The Planning Commissioners were in consensus that the recommendation to approve the request is reasonable.

**Noyes, seconded by Amundson, moved to approve PC Resolution No. 05-01-18-01, Recommending approval of an Amended CUP for Am-Tec Designs at 21080 Ozark Court. The motion carried 5-0.**

The recommendation for approval will be presented to the City Council at their May 15, 2018 meeting.

### **DISCUSSION ON ORDINANCE REGULATIONS FOR LIVESTOCK**

At last month's Planning Commission meeting, a resident explained that the structure for keeping her chickens cannot meet the required 100' setback from the property lines because the lot is narrow, even though the livestock ordinance does allow the keeping of poultry for this sized property. Chapter 2, Section 4.15 allows a minimum of 1 acre for the keeping of chickens, but the structures housing the poultry must meet the accessory structure setback requirements for livestock.

Planner Buss provided information on regulations from other communities that permit keeping chickens on smaller lots. All cities researched require an administrative permit be obtained, with various performance standards such as neighbor notification and allowing female chickens only.

Commissioners directed staff to research the keeping of chickens on smaller lots less than an acre, with defined setbacks from neighboring homes and wells. Consensus was to not overregulate and to not use an administrative permit. Council member Ness said consideration on lake lots should be made for the potential of a chicken coop to exceed lot coverage and number of accessory structures.

### **PUBLIC HEARING: DRAFT 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Jane Kansier, Bolton & Menk, provided an overview of the past 1-1/2 years that she has been working with the City to develop the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Meetings of a Steering Committee and focus groups, pop-up meetings, a community survey, and an open house were all conducted to gather input for the goals and vision the community has for Scandia's long-term development. The Plan will shape land use patterns, and identify future needs for housing, parks and infrastructure. Kansier described the common theme residents expressed for preservation of rural and open space, with support for residential and commercial growth.

Kansier described the potential change to add Rural Center community designations for the areas on the west side of Big Marine Lake and in an expanded Village Center area. The remaining area of Scandia would remain as the current Diversified Rural designation. Rural Center designation allows for a mix of housing densities and commercial services surrounded by agricultural lands with density for housing of 3 to 5 units per acre and wastewater treatment centers to support the higher densities. The plan reflects the Met Council growth projection of nearly 600 new households by 2040, and Kansier stated that a sufficient amount of developable acreage was identified to meet this increase and retain the rural character of the City.

The Comprehensive Plan is made up of ten chapters and appendices of an action plan and surface water management plan. Chair Squyres explained that public comments may be addressed with each chapter as it is introduced.

Chair Squyres opened the public hearing at 7:55 p.m.

### **Land Use Chapter**

*Kristin Tuenge, 20595 Quinnell Avenue* said it looks like a good plan. She asked why the map on page 17 shows the Zavoral property as zoned for extraction when the mining operation has closed at this site. Kansier explained that this is the existing land use map. Page 20 shows the future land use as agricultural with an aggregate overlay for the purpose of the required identification of aggregate resources. The City does not have to zone these areas for mining, but only identify the underlying resource.

*Curt Hadland, 15280 Pilar Road*, said that comparing the maps on pages 10, 17, and 20 shows agricultural land as being taken away in the future, and this is not the way to go for the goal of preserving rural areas. It would be more reasonable to develop land along Highway 97 for growth. Adding higher density on agricultural land should be carefully considered if the City wants to get serious about ag preservation.

*Ann Rinckenberger, 14363 Oren Road*, showed her 10-acre parcel within the proposed Rural Center north of town and said that the open land there would have the potential for up to 300 homes; a loss to rural character and not having the infrastructure to support the increased traffic. She questioned how the increased density would support rural goals of the Comp Plan. Administrator Soltis explained that the idea to concentrate growth in one area preserves a higher percentage of existing agricultural land in the surrounding area, instead of spreading out the subdivisions. Larger developable parcels were identified in this area that could support the projected growth and connect to the business area. Rinckenberger said that the size of the Rural Center area should be scaled back. Commissioner Hogle noted that multi-family housing structures would account for fewer buildings.

*Mayor Christine Maefsky, 12521 Mayberry Trail*, said that there should be an orderly expansion from the Village Neighborhood, and the Rural Center is too large and overly ambitious; growth could initially occur at the outer edges and not be connected. With no changes to Scandia's community designation, the town can meet the Met Council's growth projection. The Rural Center would be a big change. The Plan should start with a modest goal.

Maefsky noted that the Rural Center on the west side of Big Marine Lake is due to the expectation to connect to the regional sewer system coming out of Forest Lake. Kansier said that the Met Council has described the potential for an express sewer line coming from Highway 61 with few connections. The Rural Center designation here sets the stage for a future study of this connection. Administrator Soltis commented that adding this designation opens the possibility for connection to regional sewer but this would not be an option if not included in the Comp Plan. Commissioner Noyes said this provides for an opportunity to solve the environmental problems of the Bliss sewer system. Chair Squyres stated that by concentrating development in the Rural Center, it sacrifices a little to save a lot that he sees as a common-sense growth pattern

and satisfies a need for housing. Maefsky said that small lots do not always necessarily mean affordable housing.

Written comments were read from Dominic Mitchell, 22770 Olinda Trail, member of the Steering Committee. He wrote that the Rural Center north of town is a dramatic expansion and does not serve to create a vibrancy to the existing Center, but rather encourages sprawl. He recommended that just part of the proposed Rural Center be defined that is still accessible to the City Center. Mitchell asked for justification of the population numbers provided on page 11. Kansier explained that the population numbers are determined by the Met Council based on their projected patterns of growth.

Commissioner Noyes said that it is not economically sound to develop out to the north/northwest area shown in the Rural Center. Chair Squyres and Commissioner Loeffler said the RC should be scaled back because it's encroaching into the Ag Core. Planner Buss noted that this area was identified for its reasonable developable land near the town center and communicates to developers that this area has potential for development. She said it could be scaled back and expanded in the future with a Comp Plan amendment if needed later on.

### **Natural Resources Chapter**

*Mayor Maefsky* asked for clarification about the mining areas shown on the map. Kansier explained that aggregate resource deposits must be identified on the land use map.

### **Resilience Chapter**

*Mayor Maefsky* said that language should reflect that the City is at Green Step 2 based on best practices implementation.

### **Housing**

*Curt Hadland* said that zoning is key to housing. The core should have smaller lots and offer city sewer and water services. This does not take up ag land and preserves natural features.

*Mayor Maefsky* said language should be revised to state the “city will continue to support accessory dwelling units”, not “develop an ordinance” because that has already been done.

### **Economic Competiveness Chapter**

*Mayor Maefsky* asked about the language in the introduction paragraph. Kansier clarified that the listed goals and objectives guide development of land.

Maefsky said reference should be made to the Architectural Guidelines for businesses to follow.

Maefsky asked if the employment by industry table should separate out agricultural jobs from the “all other” category. Soltis explained this is extracted from the Met Council census and data tables and found to be very low – less than 1%.

### **Parks and Trail Chapter**

No public comments were made on this chapter.

### **Transportation**

No public comments were made on this chapter.

### **Water Resources**

*Mayor Maefsky* noted that Sylvan Lake has been renamed Keewahtin Lake and needs to be corrected on the maps.

### **Implementation**

*Mayor Maefsky* stated that the earlier draft of this chapter contained goals and policies, many of which have been eliminated. *Kansier* said that they were moved to the individual chapters.

Chair *Squyres* asked if there were any more public comments to be made on the Plan.

*Roscoe Benoy, 18770 Langly Avenue*, questioned if creating a Rural Center on the west side of Big Marine Lake is equivalent to creating a second town at the edge of Scandia, as could happen at the RC at the north of town. These centers would benefit one area but create niches instead of spreading out development across Scandia. *Kansier* explained that growth is controlled and connected, and gives an orderly appearance when built outward. Commercial development would follow residential growth because it requires a population; for example the county park visitors and lake residents. Commissioner *Loeffler* stated that eventually the areas would become their own city centers.

Chair *Squyres* said that the western RC is being considered for the sewer problems and the City needs to keep its options open. Administrator *Soltis* said that the community survey showed most of these residents are shopping and doing business in Hugo and Forest Lake. As well, there exists a 40-acre area along Manning Trail zoned as Rural Commercial. *Kansier* stated that this is not large enough to attract large commercial development but rather convenience services.

*Benoy* asked if there would be a possibility of a future sewer treatment system expanding in Scandia towards the north to accommodate the City's growth, or if money is being put aside to plan for this. Chair *Squyres* said that expansion of a regional sewer system into Scandia is not practical nor feasible; community systems may exist on a smaller scale however. Commissioner *Amundson* said that the large costs of these treatment systems is a limiting factor.

*Tim Olson, Bolton & Menk Water Engineer*, explained that the Surface Water Management Plan is going to the three local watersheds for their review on the following day. The plan addresses road salt management and its critical effects to surface water. The Action Plan addresses the exploration of alternatives to road salt use.

There were no further comments and Chair *Squyres* closed the public hearing at 9:26 p.m.

Chair *Squyres* began the Commission's deliberation of the Plan asking if the Rural Center on the west side of Big Marine Lake should be designated as such and is it sized correctly. *Kansier* explained that this is the minimum needed to justify the cost of a regional sewer line connecting here. Administrator *Soltis* added that this change in designation establishes the potential for

sewer to be feasible. Commissioner Loeffler said he likes the idea but has reservations about future impacts.

*Council member Steve Kronmiller, 13450 188<sup>th</sup> Street,* stated that the Bliss sewer system is on the verge of demise. This designation is an option in trying to find a solution. Council member Ness agreed that this RC designation leaves the door open for a possibility for solving the sewer problems.

The Planning Commissioners concluded with consensus to designate a Rural Center on the west side of Big Marine Lake as shown on Map II-B, Chapter 2.

Commissioner Amundson left the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

In discussion of the Rural Center designation shown as the area to the north and northwest of the Village Center, the Commissioners agreed that the area is too large to encourage denser development in distant regions from the existing business district. Kansier explained that on a 40-acre parcel, excluding roads and septic area, approximately 40 homes could be built on ½-acre lots. For comparison, Administrator Soltis showed the Wyldewood Acres development to have 26 homes on 70 acres, which has community well and septic. Loeffler agreed that this is a well-laid out subdivision.

Chair Squyres indicated on the zoning map a reduced area for the Rural Center – ending at the top of the existing Village Neighborhood zoning district, west to Novak Avenue, and slightly south of Highway 97. Commissioners were in consensus to approve this reduced area.

In review of the Action Plan worksheets, one amendment was noted under Economic Competitiveness, Goal #2, Statement #2: “Work with outside agencies to assess and develop programs to assist small scale farming operations.”

**Loeffler, seconded by Noyes, moved to recommend approval of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan as amended with the smaller area of the central Rural Center designation and the amended language on page 18 of the Action Plan. The motion carried 4-0.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Loeffler, seconded by Noyes, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 4-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund  
Deputy Clerk