

October 2, 2012

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 Jan Hogle, Tom Krinke, Peter Schwarz and Commission Chair Christine Maefsky. Commissioner Steve Philippi arrived at 7:05 p.m. Staff present: City Administrator Anne Hurlburt, Interim City Administrator Kristina Handt, City Planner Sherri Buss, Attorney Vince Stevens and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA, MINUTES**

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

**Krinke, seconded by Schwarz, moved to approve the September 4, 2012 minutes as presented. The motion carried 4-0.**

**VARIANCE FROM OHWL SETBACK AND CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A DETACHED GARAGE AT 19850 ORWELL AVENUE NORTH, LONNIE HOLMGREN, APPLICANT**

The Planning Commission continued a discussion on the application of Lonnie and Joyce Holmgren for a variance from the OHWL (Ordinary High Water Level) setback and the requirement that an accessory structure may not be located closer to the road than the principle structure. The applicants are also seeking approval of a CUP (Conditional Use Permit) to allow for the accessory structure at 19850 Orwell Avenue North to be two stories in height.

The Planning Commission conducted the public hearing at its September 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. The application was tabled so that questions raised at the hearing could be further investigated. The Planning Commission conducted a second site visit at the property just prior to this evening's meeting.

City Planner Sherri Buss presented information which addressed the neighbors' concern about the visibility of the garage. The applicants provided a photo which showed the height of the proposed structure approximately 10 feet lower than the height of the existing home. An aerial photo was included showing existing screening around the property.

Planner Buss noted that the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District offered no objections to the variance request.

Planner Buss explained that the application meets the criteria for granting a variance. The practical difficulties are not caused by the homeowner and are unique to the property. The proposed location seeks a balance between the effects on the view from the road and the view from the lake.

In approving the CUP, Buss explained the criteria that the second story will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity, nor diminish and impair

property values or scenic views. Buss noted that the structure is designed to look like a barn, in keeping with Scandia's rural character.

Commissioner Philippi stated that it would be hard to imagine the garage to be an egregious eyesore as the property has been beautifully developed. The garage will fit into the landscape and not diminish the neighbors' enjoyment of their property. Philippi noted that the second story is tucked into the gable and wouldn't have much more impact than a one-story structure. Philippi found the proposal to be reasonable.

Commissioner Krinke stated his agreement with the findings, but questioned if the evergreens which will be removed for the northeast corner of the garage should be replanted as a condition of the variance.

Commissioner Schwarz stated that he found no reason to deny the reasonable request.

Chair Maefsky stated that she could not see a significant impact to the neighbors' view and it appears to be well shielded, except for the view from the southeast. Maefsky suggested evergreens be planted for screening the view from this direction. Maefsky commented that the barn-like look is in keeping with the rural feel of the district.

Planner Buss stated that a condition to replace the evergreens in the northeast corner and to screen the view from the Yoch's direction could be added to the draft resolution.

Commissioner Philippi asked if a photographic image of a visual simulation of the proposed garage could be submitted to examine the view from the lot to the north, as the impact should be minimal. Planner Buss stated that this would be hard to ask of the typical applicant due to the technical requirements.

**Schwarz, seconded by Krinke, moved to recommend approval of the Variance from the OHWL setback and the Variance from the requirement that the accessory structure may not be located closer to the road than the principle building, based on the findings and conditions included in the Planner's Report. The motion carried 5-0.**

**Schwarz, seconded by Krinke, moved to recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit for the construction of a two-story garage, based on the findings and conditions included in the Planner's Report, with an added condition that evergreen trees be planted to provide screening to the northeast and southeast of the garage. The motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Holmgren stated that he will agree to plant the trees, but due to the marshy and dense area along the lake, it may be difficult to keep them alive. Planner Buss recommended that Mr. Holmgren submit a tree replacement sketch plan including placement and type for her to review.

The City Council will act on the recommendation at their October 16, 2012 meeting.

**WORK SESSION: CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS, PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA**

The Planning Commission moved into a Work Session for an overview on Conditional Use Permits and Public Hearing processes. City Administrator Hurlburt, City Planner Buss and Attorney Stevens led the discussion using LMC handouts and a question and answer format.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund  
*Deputy Clerk*