Planning Commission of Pine City, Minnesota
Minutes of Regular Meeting: 18 June 2019

Commissioners: Christopherson, D’Aigle, Jahnz, LeMier, Pettie, Scholin, Skluzacek
City Staff / Officials: Sauter
Absent: Bombard, Rydberg. Student Representative Chloe Johnson

Christopherson called the meeting to order at 6:30pm, with the Pledge of Allegiance. Minutes of the May 28th meeting were approved on a motion by Skluzacek, seconded by D’Aigle.

Public Hearing on Elan Shores / Yanik-Foster PUD Area Plan Approval Request: The Yanik Companies have applied for approval of a PUD Area Plan for their proposed development at 20 First St SE (PID 42.5022.000) in the MFR-2 district. Staff have prepared proposed findings of fact related to the proposal. This hearing was called to order at 6:32pm, to take public input on the proposed Area Plan. Sauter explained the proposal and her report. There were a number of questions raised by the DNR comments as to setbacks, lake vs. river, and especially allowable density. Sauter answered those to the extent she could, without further information from the developers, the DNR, and possibly a more extensive survey.

Jerry Zuber of Yanik commented, comparing the proposed development to an allowable single-family development of thirteen homes. He explained their analysis of the benefits and issues with each. The developers are asking for a waiver from the density, height, and setbacks as specified in the Shoreland Ordinance. He said that an EAW process would cost them $40,000, and he doesn’t want to do that if it appears they cannot be successful with the PUD. He would like the density approved prior to doing the EAW. Christopherson asked about the parking analysis, and how they justify providing few parking spaces than the ordinance specifies. Zuber responded with their experiences in similar developments. D’Aigle asked about the height restrictions, and Zuber said they were not certain how the height was intended to be measured, but they are looking into that.

Holly Wilson stated that she feels there are a lot of unknowns that need to be answered before moving forward. Jeff Wilson complained that no one from the developer had contacted the neighbors. He also stated that he much prefers the multiple single-family homes to the single multi-unit building. Earl Schuler said he didn’t think the proposed temporary road should be allowed, and objected to the Commission and the Council going against the wishes of the neighbors. He cast aspersions on the honesty of the Commission and the Council. Tommy Foster stated that he had done a lot of work on the proposal between the Commission meeting and the Council meeting, which could explain changes in votes. He also stated that many things will still change as the process proceeds. Rich Novy restated his opinion that this does not belong in the neighborhood. Since there were no further comments from those in attendance, Christopherson closed the hearing at 7:02pm.

Consideration of Elan Shores / Yanik-Foster PUD Area Plan Approval Request: Jahnz asked about allowable density, and how the DNR can have such a different opinion on that. D’Aigle expressed his discomfort with not having answers to a number of questions. Sauter explained the items she sees as still needed at this point. She said she believes the EAW process will answer most of them. Yanik stated that they are committed to taking the next step, including the EAW, if they get the Area Plan approval, including the density waiver. Pettie asked if the developer had worked on a project this close to water in the past, and Yanik said they had, giving some examples. There were questions and a discussion on timing of the EAW and the Area Plan approval. LeMier said she is clear that there is a need for this sort of development, and she appreciates the need for progress on the part of the developer, but she also struggles with the balance between community needs and neighborhood feelings. Following this discussion, D’Aigle made a motion to table this decision until there is more definitive information from the DNR on density. Pettie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of tabling.

Public Hearing on City Rezoning Request: Staff are suggesting the rezoning of several parcels along Main St S, to bring the zoning into agreement with the long-term and current uses, and to encourage desirable development of the area. They are recommending that PID’s 42.0018.000, 42.0018.002, 42.0019.000, 42.0020.000, and 42.0024.000 be changed from GB to MFR-2, and that PID’s 42.0016.000, 42.0018.001, 42.0025.000, and 42.0026.000 be changed from R-2 to MXU. Christopherson called the hearing to order at 7:33pm. Sauter explained a bit about this proposal and presented the proposed findings of fact. She explained the advantages to surrounding properties to have this take place, and the reasoning behind this proposal. She stated that making this change could improve the possibilities for redevelopment over the next fifteen to twenty years. Barbara Bell stated her opposition. She feels this will diminish the small town feel of the area. She also expressed concern over the possibility of extending Maplewood Lane. There being no further comment, the public hearing was closed at 7:47pm.

Consideration of City GB to MFR-2 Rezoning Request: After brief discussion, Skluzacek made a motion to adopt the prepared findings of fact and Resolution P19-12, recommending that the Council approve this rezoning as proposed, and modify the zoning map accordingly. The motion was seconded by D’Aigle, and passed unanimously.
Consideration of City R-2 to MXU Rezoning Request: The consensus seemed to be that R-2 zoning does not fit either current or likely future use for the parcel, and that MXU may be the best choice for it now. After brief discussion, Jahnz made a motion to adopt the prepared findings of fact and Resolution P19-13, recommending that the Council approve this rezoning as proposed, and modify the zoning map accordingly. The motion was seconded by Pettie, and passed unanimously.

City Council Feedback: Scholin reported that the Council had followed the Commission’s recommendations, approving the PC Senior Living final plat, the Hilltop Subdivision preliminary and final plats, the changes to TIF districts, and the award criteria at their June meeting.

Commissioners’ Concerns: There were none.

Staff Comments: Sauter expressed her efforts to get information back to developers as soon as possible, but that there are numerous difficulties in that, due to all the people who needed to provide the information to her, including several city staff and the developers themselves. She said there will be a special meeting on July 2nd related to the Immaculate Conception Church development proposal.

There being no further business, Christopherson declared the Commission meeting adjourned at 8:16pm.