

City of Excelsior  
Hennepin County, Minnesota

Minutes  
Planning Commission

Monday, July 27, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chair Harrison called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: DiLorenzo, Hersman, Holste, Noll, Craig, Harrison

Commissioners Absent: Wallace

Also Present: City Planner Becker and City Attorney Staunton

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) Planning Commission Meeting of July 7, 2020

Motion by Holste, seconded by DiLorenzo to approve the meeting minutes of July 7, 2020. Motion carried 6-0.

4. PUBLIC HEARING

**a) *246 West Lake Street Conditional Use Permit to Allow a Pool (PC No. 20-6)***

Craig felt that the pool changed the essential character of the area. Noll had the same concern. Hersman pointed out the fencing surrounded the property on the sides and front of the property and wondered why additional fencing would be required. Mike Randall, applicant, had pointed out that it is unusual to require a conditional use permit for a pool. Craig wanted to know the height of the wall of the fireplace and television. Randall said that the height of the wall was designed by the landscaper. Drew Torrence, Landscape Designer of the project, clarified that the height of the wall was four feet, six inches tall and was meant to provide screening for both the property owners and neighbors. Noll asked about the proximity to the neighbor's house. Torrence clarified that this was the best spot for a pool in terms of contours. The requirement of fencing was discussed.

Harrison opened the public hearing. Jeanna French, 220 West Lake Street, spoke regarding the proposal. She does not feel that this is the best place and that there are other flat areas on the property. Peter Hartwich, 186 George Street, wanted to know if the owners of the property had spoken with the neighbors regarding the placement of the pool. He believes that the house was built in excess. He also wanted to point out that it seems that the Council has general distrust of the decision-making abilities of the Planning Commission. Susan Bowers, 193 West Lake Street, doesn't believe that Torrence's claim that this is the flattest part of the property. Janet Krueger, 220 West Lake Street, was concerned that the trees are not fenced. Harrison closed the public hearing.

Torrence had clarified that the owners of the property were not sure of the size of the arborvitae they were planning to install, but there was intention to screen the pool from the neighboring property.

Craig was concerned with the size of the wall and the television. Hersman wondered if the pool could be pushed back further away from the adjacent property. Noll struggled with the television and with the lack of discussion with the neighbor. Holste feels that the biggest disruption was the vegetation that has been removed and that there should be a condition that there be additional screening. DiLorenzo felt that most of the issues that have been brought up do not have to do with the pool itself. Harrison wishes that the owners had a conversation with the neighbors. DiLorenzo moved to approve with the following conditions: that the yard be enclosed with at least three sides of the fence, that the arborvitae be installed that are at least eight feet tall, that a conversation be had with the neighbors regarding the wall and the television and the placement of the pool. Motion seconded by Holste and carried with a vote of 5-1. Craig dissenting because of the impact the pool could have on the neighbors; she believes that it should be required that the owners have a conversation with the neighbors. Harrison wanted to clarify where the arborvitae would be placed, and DiLorenzo suggested that they be placed to screen the pool.

**b) *Good Neighbor Guidelines***

Becker presented the report. Harrison went through all of the changes to the Residential Review Process and verified that the commission still was in agreement of all of the changes. Noll felt that Guideline #7 should perhaps include pools, and it was suggested that the wording should be changed to "locate decks, balconies and other structures." Harrison questioned the portion regarding preserving existing tree canopy, and it was felt that the changes proposed to the tree preservation

ordinance at previous planning commission meetings was sufficient and that the language within the guidelines regarding tree preservation was sufficient. Harrison opened up the public hearing. Hartwich hopes the residential review process will go forth. Greg Miller, 335 College Avenue, went over a number of observations he has. Harrison closed the public hearing. Motion by Craig, seconded by DiLorenzo, to recommend to Council discussed ordinance amendments and good neighbor guidelines. Motion carried 6-0.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

*a) Sketch Plan Review for 10 Water Street (PC No. 20-7)*

Gary Kraemer of John Kraemer and Sons introduced the application. Charlie James, property owner, spoke regarding the proposed development. Neil Weber, project architect, explained the project further. Holste asked if the space that is going to be given to the Chamber and Historical Society, etc. is going to be accessed from Lake or Water Street, and Weber explained that the space would be accessed from the turret. DiLorenzo wanted to know if the applicant was planning on working in collaboration with the City and the architects working on the Commons. Weber said that would be in the next stage of the process. Craig brought up concerns about the height and the setbacks. Weber said that the perspectives from the lake showed that it will not be very impactful. Craig asked if affordable housing was considered, and John Adams, realtor, had said that they have looked at possibly having a range; that some would be attainable and some higher end. Harrison wanted to know the height of the theater and if the applicant had considered a partnership with them. Harrison wanted to ensure that there was a sufficient amount of commercial space at the street level of water street.

DiLorenzo left the meeting at 10:18pm.

Hersman felt that the building was too large in scale. She feels that the building is too large for too few people. Adams had pointed out that the fourth story would likely not be visible from the street but would be visible from the lake. Harrison is not opposed to the condo use but wants the mass and scale to decrease. Holste felt mass and scale was going to be the biggest issue. Noll felt that it would be better to have less of the similar materials. He is recommending sectioning out the building so that it appeared to have parts that are independently standing. Harrison is happy for the increased tax base, partnership with the Chamber, etc. She feels that it is too massive from the street. Craig feels that the tower is not as appropriate on a residential pursuit as it may have been on a hotel.

Minutes

Planning Commission

July 27, 2020

Page 4 of 4

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Hersman, seconded by Noll, to adjourn at 11:00 pm. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Becker  
Planning Director

DRAFT