

CITY OF HERMANTOWN
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
March 16, 2021 Meeting Summary
7:00 PM

1. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Joe Peterson; Corey Kolquist; Valerie Ouellette; Samuel Clark; Shannon Sweeney Jorgenson; Beth Wentzlaff; Buckley Simmons; and John Geissler.

Members Absent:

Others Present: Eric Johnson, Community Development Director; Josh Bergstad; and Justin Otsea.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Beth Wentzlaff to approve the March 16, 2021 agenda as presented. Seconded by Samuel Clark. Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Samuel Clark to approve the February 18, 2021 minutes as presented. Shannon Sweeney Jorgenson. Motion carried.

4. PUBLIC DISCUSSION

None.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

5A. An application by Douglas Ahlberg for the construction of a 2,560 square foot garage (accessory structure) at 3881 Haines Road, which is located in an R-3, Residential zoning district.

This application was withdrawn by Douglas Ahlberg.

5B. An application by The City of Hermantown. for a Special Use Permit for the road project work associated with Lavaque Junction in a Natural Environment Shoreland Overlay Zone. The land area is all within a R-3, Residential, zoning district.

Eric Johnson, Community Development Director, informed the Commission that the City, as part of its Road Improvement Project process will be performing improvements to Lavaque Junction, known as Road Improvement District 547. The road construction work is anticipated to commence in mid April 2021.

The project consists of multiple work scopes over the 1-mile length. Starting on the Eastern end of Lavaque Jct., the first 1000+ feet is a full road reconstruction with a new watermain installation to loop the Lavaque Junction water system thru to Lavaque road. The remaining 4000' feet is a full depth reclamation of the existing asphalt surface. Along the entire project there will be stormwater ditching and driveway culverts replaced. There will also be some centerline culvert work associated with this work.

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

March 16, 2021 Meeting Summary

There are two existing natural environment shoreland areas which cross Lavaque Junction. The Special Use Permit identifies additional requirements associated with the grading and filling within shoreland areas in addition to the standard requirements for land alteration permits issued by the City.

Valerie Ouellette asked if there were would be an assessment attached the residents for this project.

Eric stated there would be an assessment that he believed to be approximately \$9,800.

Motion made by Shannon Sweeney Jorgenson to approve the application by The City of Hermantown. for a Special Use Permit for the road project work associated with Lavaque Junction in a Natural Environment Shoreland Overlay Zone. Seconded by Buckley Simmons. Motion carried.

6. CONTINUING BUSINESS

Eric shared the City's Planned Unit Development (PUD) survey results with the Commission, which concluded on February 14, 2021. The survey was sent to 56 people with 45 responding (80%). The survey went out to City Council members, Planning and Zoning Commission members, City staff, local realtors and developers and Hermantown residents. 37.5% of the survey group was comprised of Hermantown residents not counting Councilors, P&Z members or City staff.

Here is some associated data:

- 49% were in favor of mid density development (3-7 units/acre);
- 27% were in favor of high density development (greater than 7 units/acre);
- 24% only favored low density (3 units/acre or less).
- 13% were not in favor of apartments within the R-3 with the remaining 87% wanting some sort of control (height restrictions, density, location, access)

The survey results were forwarded to the ARDC who is using the information as part of their study. In addition, the ARDC is looking at the following communities to study their policies/ordinances when it comes to PUD's/multi-family housing: Hopkins, Sauk Rapids, Sartell, Oakdale, Cambridge, Mankato, East Grand Forks, Grand Rapids, Golden Valley and Duluth.

Staff is looking at either an April or May presentation/public hearing at Planning and Zoning with a June City Council meeting. The plan is to have an updated PUD ordinance in front of the Council in either late June/early July.

As part of a larger picture, staff is discussing a timeline for a Comprehensive Plan Update as well as possible new zoning district(s) which may further define requirements for development and identify a housing strategy for the City as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Due to the time associated with these types of documents (12-24 months), an updated PUD ordinance can serve as an interim document to address growth within the City.

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

March 16, 2021 Meeting Summary

Shannon Sweeney Jorgenson stated she had taken the survey and wondered how much the City is looking at all of this through a diversity, equity and inclusion lens when thinking about developments. She is unsure if the City has a diversity, equity and inclusion initiative, given the current climate of the country. She asked what considerations are being made in that regard.

Eric stated that this is no ordinance regarding that, however a goal of the PUD study is to identify items which can reduce the cost of construction which could lead to more diversity in the housing products and potential affordability within the City. He will ask Josh Bergstad to address this in this presentation which talks about social issues, etc.

Beth Wentzlaff asked if the Commission had previously done a study to determine, for example, here could be a park, or here could be a development, etc.?

Eric stated that the Commission had no recent study, only the zoning and a 20-year comp plan that briefly touches on some of those items.

Sam Clark stated that he is not opposed to development, and he believes the Commission is doing a disservice to developers by going from an R-3 zoning for most of the City, to an apartment complex and it is quite a jump and tends to make people not happy. He believes the current PUD process is so broad that a person can do almost anything just by doing an overlay.

Josh Bergstad, Principal Planner with ARDC Planning, introduced himself and his helping out on our PUD project. Josh introduced his colleague, Justin Otsea. Josh shared with the Commission the Hermantown Planning Commission: Planned Unit Development (PUD) Ordinance Review PowerPoint presentation.

Valerie asked about common open space.

Josh stated that common open space refers to an area set aside within a specific development to be used by, generally, the residents of the development.

Eric suggested that a work session be scheduled in April so that the Commission members could have ample time to review information and additional questions can be addressed at that time.

John Geissler asked once the Commission goes through this process, will a new ordinance or amendment to the ordinance need to be put forward?

Eric stated that it would probably not be a total rewrite of the ordinance, but more of an amendment to the ordinance.

Corey Kolquist asked if the City has started on the comprehensive plan.

According to Eric, the City has not.

Sam recommends that the Commission go through this process sooner rather than later.

A tentative work session on March 30th is being looked at by Eric.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Eric informed the Commission that the City would be purchasing credits for wetland impacts associated with the Keene Creek Park trail segment associated with the Trail Spur project. This is scheduled for the April 5 City Council meeting.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

9. COMMISSION MEMBER REPORTS

- Joe Peterson – None.
- Corey Kolquist – None.
- Valerie Ouellette – None.
- Samuel Clark – None.
- Shannon Sweeney Jorgenson – None.
- Beth Wentzlaff – None.
- Buckley Simmons – None.
- John Geissler – None.

ADJOURN

Motion made by Valerie Ouellette to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Shannon Sweeney Jorgenson. Meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Officiated by:

Transcribed by:

Joe Peterson, Chairman

Mary Melde, Administrative Assistant