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**REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
VADNAIS HEIGHTS PLANNING COMMISSION
JULY 23, 2019**

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OPEN MEETING

Chairperson Evan Cordes called the Regular Meeting of the Vadnais Heights Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. on July 23, 2019.

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ROLL CALL

Evan Cordes, Chairperson	Present
Dave Anderson	Present
Linda Bigelbach	Present
Edward Caillier	Present
Brian Carnes	Absent
Martin Jokinen	Present
Joseph Stumph	Present
Curt Cooper, First Alternate (voting member)	Present
Jerry Moynagh, Second Alternate	Present

Also present: City Council Liaison Youker; Nolan Wall, Planning/Community Development Director; Sara Woolf, Landform; Kim Tramm, Tramm Development; Jennifer Kaplan, Mohagen Hansen Architecture Interiors; and Jeff Melcoch, Cable Producer.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon motion by Commissioner Jokinen, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, it was

“RESOLVED, to approve the July 23, 2019, Regular Meeting Agenda.”

Ayes – 7 Nays – 0

The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Commissioner Caillier, seconded by Commissioner Cooper, it was

“RESOLVED, to approve the minutes of the May 28, 2019, Regular Meeting as presented.”

Ayes – 7 Nays – 0

The motion carried.

50 **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

51 Chairperson Cordes opened the floor to the public at 7:05 p.m. for questions and
52 comments on items not on the agenda.

53
54 No one wished to address the Commission, Chairperson Cordes closed the meeting to the
55 public at 7:05 p.m.

56
57 **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

58
59 A. Case 19-011: Tramm Development, LLC – Conditional Use Permit for PUD Overlay
60 District and Site Plan Review at 379-403 Commerce Court

61
62 Planning/Community Development Director Wall introduced the City’s appointed
63 consulting planner Sara Woolf from Landform who would present the item.

64
65 Ms. Woolf said the applicant/property owner is requesting approvals to construct three
66 structures containing 13 garage-space condominiums on the subject property that
67 included a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Planned Unit Development (PUD)
68 Overlay and a garage-condominium use in the Office-Business Zoning District and Site
69 Plan approval. The applicant/property owners own portions of the subject property,
70 which is part of a Common Interest Community (CIC), known as the Oak Knoll Business
71 Park. The intent of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) Overlay request is to allow for
72 the development of a garage-condominium use. The use, which is not explicitly allowed
73 within the applicable zoning district, would permit for individual ownership of garage
74 units for use as offices, hobby areas, workshops, studios, and the like.

75
76 Ms. Woolf said that the applicant initially applied for a zoning text amendment to allow
77 garage-condominiums as an allowed use in the Office-Business (O-B) District. Upon the
78 recommendation of staff, the applicant withdrew their application and is now seeking a
79 conditional use permit for a PUD overlay, including site plan review. Staff recommended
80 the alternate approach because they felt that the use is appropriate for this site due to its
81 location and unique conditions but is not well suited for the O-B District as a whole. The
82 applicant requires flexibility from the following applicable City Code standards as part of
83 the PUD Overlay District process that included use, wall signs, and freestanding signs.
84 The Oak Knoll Business Park was approved approximately 12 years ago. Two office
85 condominium structures were constructed, and additional basement foundations for seven
86 units were poured but remain unfinished today. As part of this proposed development, the
87 foundations will be removed, and the concrete will be recycled where possible. The
88 originally approved project is no longer seen as viable from the standpoint of the Oak
89 Knoll Business Park or the applicant.

90
91 Ms. Woolf said that the applicant is requesting approval for 21 parking stalls which were
92 based on an office use with no overnight parking allowed in front of the condominiums.
93 She spoke about building height of 31 feet 2 inches with gabled roofs and is compliant
94 with the standards. She then shared the proposed architecture drawing that included
95 yellow, green and orange colored elevation accents. She noted the surrounding area has
96 more of a general residential feel and that the Commission may wish to review the
97 proposed color scheme as part of their review.

98

99 She reviewed the proposed landscaping plan of 23 existing trees that the applicant plans
100 to keep and this will give the applicant a credit with no buffer requirements in an
101 industrial area and said the trees to be retained were good and 20 additional trees would
102 be planted around the site and 40 shrubs. She referred to the 4% landscaping requirement
103 in the parking aisles and the need for calculations as well as the Watershed's
104 requirements for additional buffer plantings along the wet land area so this is included in
105 the conditions as well.

106

107 Ms. Woolf shared the proposed lighting plan that includes eight additional lighting
108 elements throughout the site and the agreement with adjacent land owners to allow them
109 to be installed on adjacent property.

110

111 Ms. Woolf said the grading and utility plans were not very detailed because of the City's
112 request for review as a new use through a PUD application which accelerated the timeline
113 so the final review would occur when the agreement is signed. She said the applicant is
114 requesting signage flexibility from Code with one monument sign which meets the
115 setback requirement but freestanding signs must be at least 75 feet apart from an existing
116 sign and there is one within that distance but staff feels comfortable with the request
117 based on visibility. She said the applicants is also proposing unit signs on the building
118 which will say the number of each unit and individual units signs next to each door, while
119 the numbering was acceptable staff are recommending that the individual tenant signs be
120 denied because this is was not a retail use and suggested window signs instead as allowed
121 by Code.

122

123 Ms. Woolf summarized the three variance items requested through the PU overlay was
124 use, wall signage, and 75 feet between the freestanding signs then spoke about the
125 association documents for the users so they know what uses were allowed.

126

127 Commissioner Cooper asked what type of tenants would use this space. Ms. Woolf said
128 she believed the tenants would include hobbyist working on vehicles, home occupations
129 with a need for space, and other craftsman-type users.

130

131 Commissioner Bigelbach asked about the term garage condominium. Ms. Woolf said
132 people would own the unit instead of renting and would be similar to normal garage
133 space but could include a mezzanine but not livable space although a restroom would be
134 included in the units.

135

136 Commissioner Cordes asked about hazardous materials with vehicle work and other
137 trades that could result in dumping near wetlands. Planning/Community Development
138 Director Wall said that staff have had discussions internally regarding those types of
139 operations that may occupy the space, but the intent is that the Fire Department do an
140 inspection before any tenant occupies space.

141

142 Commissioner Caillier said vehicle storage was an allowed use and that pick-up and
143 deposit of goods was not clear. Ms. Woolf confirmed that vehicles parked overnight
144 must be parked in a unit and not outside and that sprinkling was required.

145

146 Wall noted that the fire department is requiring that the buildings be entirely sprinkled.
147 Commissioner Moynagh asked that future inspections occur based on use changeovers
148 from tenant to tenant to ensure that appropriate changes are made for types of tenants.

149
150 Commissioner Bigelbach asked if this type of development is in any other neighboring
151 cities. Ms. Woolf said there are some in Medina and Columbus that have buildings with
152 similar uses but some were more of the “man-cave” storage unit options.

153
154 Chairperson Cordes opened the public hearing at 7:28 p.m.

155
156 No one wished to address the Commission, Chairperson Cordes closed the public hearing
157 at 7:28 p.m.

158
159 Kim Tramm, Tramm Development, thanked staff for their assistance and said the project
160 solves problems at the site because there have the buildings have been sitting empty for
161 years. This project could result in a vibrant operating concern. He explained the garage
162 condo concept as a mini-warehouse with units smaller and individually owned and in one
163 site.

164
165 Mr. Tramm said it will be a beautiful building and the color scheme is interesting and
166 while other color palettes could be considered. Office condo is a warehouse type space,
167 smaller and in one segment and can have individual owners. He said he may have a
168 problem with any restriction on hours of operation. He said it could be onerous to
169 prohibit access to property that an owner owns. He agrees that people should not be
170 living there, because they are not residential units, but a person may want to stay late to
171 work on a project. There are no prohibitions on access to neighboring properties.

172
173 Commissioner Jokinen asked what the targeted price range is per unit. Jennifer Kaplan,
174 Mohagen Hansen Architecture Interiors, said they do not have a target price in mind at
175 this time.

176
177 Commissioner Jokinen asked if high voltage electrical would be included in the units and
178 spoke about noise and fire hazards. Ms. Kaplan said each unit would have its own
179 building permit process review by the fire department, so each product and each piece of
180 equipment will be evaluated by the Fire Department.

181
182 Commissioner Cordes asked about uses and accessories and issues such as abatement,
183 installation of drains, removal of hazardous waste, etc. what guarantee the City would
184 have that the City would not be left to clean up any contamination. Ms. Kaplan said
185 storage was not residential but commercial and would be evaluated annually by the Fire
186 Department to see what is happening in the spaces. Planning/Community Development
187 Director Wall said references to future second tenants could be included in some of the
188 association documents.

189
190 Commissioner Jokinen asked if sublets could occur. Mr. Tramm said lots would be
191 determined by price and tenant type and that sublets could occur. An owner of a property
192 could lease it out.

193

194 Commissioner Caillier asked about phasing of the project. Mr. Tramm said the intent
 195 was for three buildings over three phases but probably completed within one year.

196
 197 Commission Liaison Youker asked how many similar products have been built by
 198 Tramm before. Mr. Tramm said this was the first of this product but that they had
 199 constructed office condos before.

200
 201 Planning/Community Development Director Wall shared areas of code that could address
 202 automobile use that included Sections C-1A District and C-2 as conditional uses with no
 203 vehicle sales, all indoors, fencing, trash dumpsters, and no work from 7AM-7PM in the
 204 C-1A District which is more of a residential area. He said this would not be the same use
 205 or was already not allowed in this zoning district but that staff could review again to
 206 ensure. The C-2 District does allow for automobile service stations as a conditional use.

207
 208 Commissioner Cordes said he is concerned about storage and disposal of fluids in the
 209 adjacent wetland. Wall suggested adding language in the association documents which
 210 would be in accordance with State Fire Marshal and Department of Agriculture.

211
 212 Commissioner Cordes noted the language would prevent units turning into garage
 213 operations for car repair. Ms. Woolf said the association documents included regulating
 214 sales of products off site. Wall said a condition in the association documents would be the
 215 first line of defense against non-compliance and that the site would operate on a
 216 complaint basis and have an annual inspection by the Fire Department.

217
 218 Commissioner Stumph spoke about the co-existence between competing uses. Mr.
 219 Tramm noted that these would be large units and that he does envision monitory of use
 220 internally through association documents. Tramm said that he thinks the association will
 221 be the governing body.

222
 223 Chairperson Cordes confirmed notice was sent to surrounding property owners. Wall
 224 responded yes.

225
 226 Upon motion by Commissioner Jokinen, seconded by Commissioner Stumph, it was
 227

228 “RESOLVED, to recommend approval of Case 19-011 for the Conditional Use Permit
 229 and site plan requests based on the following findings of fact and conditions from staff:

- 230 1. The proposed development will achieve a majority of the Planned Unit
 231 Development Overlay District’s general requirements and standards.
 232 2. Flexibility from certain applicable City Code standards, as part of the Planned
 233 Unit Development Overlay process, is justified and allows for reasonable
 234 development of the subject property without negatively affecting the surrounding
 235 area.
 236 3. The proposed use is acceptable, with conditions, on the subject property and the
 237 PUD Overlay approval process ensures non-proliferation throughout the Office-
 238 Business Zoning District.

239
 240 Subject to the following conditions:

- 241 1. The applicant shall comply with the following:

- 242 a. *Intent*: The intent of the garage-condominium units shall be for offices and
 243 services for professions, businesses and hobbyists. There shall be no sales
 244 from the site and no employees. The following activities are appropriate and
 245 fit the intent of the use:
 246 i. Offices.
 247 ii. Workshops.
 248 iii. Studios.
 249 iv. Hobby Areas.
 250 v. The pickup and deposit of goods and/or property in storage.
 251 b. *Prohibited uses*: The following uses are explicitly prohibited:
 252 i. Conducting retail sales of any kind.
 253 ii. Employees on site, besides the unit’s owner/renter.
 254 iii. Residences.
 255 iv. The keeping of animals, including boarding or breeding.
 256 v. Outdoor storage: all goods and property stored in a garage-condominium
 257 unit shall be stored in an enclosed building. No outdoor storage of boats,
 258 RVs, vehicles, etc., or storage in outdoor storage pods or shipping
 259 containers is permitted.
 260 vi. Storage of hazardous materials.
 261 c. *Parking*: No overnight or extended parking shall be allowed outside the units.
 262 d. *Hours of Operation*: Garage-condominium facilities located in the O-B
 263 district shall not operate or allow tenant access between the hours of 10:00
 264 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.
 265 e. *Signage*: Window signs on garage-condominium units shall be regulated in
 266 Association governing documents to ensure appropriate visibility into units
 267 and aesthetic quality. All signs proposed to be installed on the subject
 268 property will require a Sign Permit(s) to be administratively
 269 reviewed/approved.
 270 f. *Common Space*: Common spaces must be maintained by an Association.
 271 Maintenance of open spaces shall be outlined in Association governing
 272 documents and shall include provisions for snow plowing and shoveling.
 273 g. *Noise*: The use shall abide by noise regulations and standards found in the
 274 City Code.
 275
 276 2. The applicant shall comply with the City Engineer’s memo dated July 17, 2019.
 277 3. The applicant shall comply with the City Attorney’s memo dated July 2, 2019.
 278 4. The applicant shall comply with the City Fire Department’s memo dated June 24,
 279 2019.
 280 5. The applicant shall comply with the Vadnais Lake Area WMO memo dated July
 281 1, 2019.
 282 6. The applicant shall revise and resubmit plan sets as part of a subsequent
 283 development agreement to the City to show:
 284 a. Dimensioned elevations for all proposed buildings.
 285 b. The percentage of landscaping in relation to the parking area to comprise at
 286 least 4% of parking area.
 287 c. Compliance with VLAWMO pertaining to wetland buffer plantings.
 288 d. Revised lighting plans OR a written agreement between the property owners
 289 allowing lighting to be installed on adjacent property.

- 290 e. Trash/recycling container locations, designed in compliance with applicable
- 291 code requirements.
- 292 7. The applicant shall provide lighting fixture cut sheets and pole details to ensure
- 293 cut-off fixture requirements are met.
- 294 8. The applicant shall provide material samples of all proposed building materials
- 295 for review and approval by the City.
- 296 9. The applicant shall submit the CIC Plat to the City for preliminary and final plat
- 297 review/approval, prior to issuance of any building permits.
- 298 10. The applicant shall provide Association Governing documents for review and
- 299 approval by the City, including rental policies and maintenance of open spaces.
- 300 11. The following shall be filed by the applicant, at their cost, with the offices of the
- 301 Ramsey County Recorder and/or Register of Titles, prior to any mortgages, liens,
- 302 or similar interests:
- 303 a. Resolution evidencing approval of the severance from the CIC plat.
- 304 b. Declaration of Conversion of Common Elements to Ownership or Severance
- 305 from the Oak Knoll Business Association HOA.
- 306 c. Any and all plats subsequently recorded with Ramsey County pertaining to
- 307 the subject property.
- 308 d. Plat documents shall be in recordable form and shall be submitted to the City.
- 309 12. In the event there are any new mortgages or other interests in either property,
- 310 signed original consents shall be required.
- 311 13. Drainage and utility easements shall be filed by the applicant, at their cost, with
- 312 the offices of the Ramsey County Recorder and/or Register of Titles.
- 313 a. Applicable existing easements shall be vacated.
- 314 b. The new easements shall be filed concurrently with the plat.
- 315 c. The easement documents shall in recordable form and shall be submitted to
- 316 the City for review and approval.
- 317 14. The applicant and all parties with interest in the subject property shall enter into a
- 318 development agreement with the City, approved by the City Council and recorded
- 319 against the property, that assures that elements of the applications proposed by the
- 320 applicant or imposed by the city shall be carried out, prior to issuance of a
- 321 building permit.
- 322 15. Prior to release of the remaining escrow funds, the applicant shall provide a
- 323 recorded copy of the easements and plat to the City.

324
325 Upon motion by Chairperson Cordes, seconded by Commissioner Cooper, it was

326
327 “RESOLVED, to amend the earlier motion to make an addition to Item 1bvi by
328 adding “use of hazardous materials must comply with State and Federal
329 regulations and be subject to inspection.”

330
331 Ayes – 7 Nays – 0

332
333 The amendment carried.

334
335 Upon motion by Chairperson Cordes, seconded by Commissioner Jokinen, it was

336

337 “RESOLVED, to amend Item 1d, hours of operations, to restrict tenant access
338 between the hours of midnight and 5:00 a.m.”

339

340

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0

341

342 The amendment carried.

343

344 Commissioner Stump asked why we would not go back to how the code reads and have
345 the hours of 7 pm to 7 am.

346

347 The amendment carried.

348

349 The main motion carried unanimously.

350

351 **NEW BUSINESS**

352 **B. Case 19-013: City of Vadnais Heights – Subdivision Ordinance Amendments**

353

354 Planning/Community Development Director Wall said staff recommends the Planning
355 Commission review the proposed amendments contained in DRAFT Ordinance 734 and
356 provide direction on any additional revisions with formal public hearing noticed for the
357 August 27 regular meeting. The City is proposing amendments to Chapter 32 of the City
358 Code concerning subdivisions. He said while processing recent applications, staff has
359 identified several potential amendments to the subdivision process. The proposed
360 amendments are intended to bring this chapter of the Code into a similar format as the
361 zoning sections, update language to be consistent with state statutes, and streamline the
362 review process for certain requests.

363

364 Wall noted that staff have worked with the City Attorney and Assistant City
365 Administrator on the park dedication sections and the Parks, Trails, and Recreation
366 Commission was introduced to the issues at their July meeting. Staff recommends the
367 Planning Commission review the proposed amendments contained in DRAFT Ordinance
368 734 and provide direction on any additional revisions prior to next month’s public
369 hearing.

370

371 Wall reviewed the proposed amendments for minor subdivisions including definitions to
372 include ownership, add lot line adjustments and survey exemption, variances in reference
373 to unusual hardships, renumbering some sections and updates to general requirements.
374 He said the sketch plan review process would allow for Park Commission review but not
375 trigger statutory review and that park dedication determination of amounts and process
376 with preliminary plat consistent with procedural language and combining of multiple
377 sections with final plan review, additional plat requirements, and park dedication
378 language clean-up.

379

380 Chairperson Cordes spoke about inconsistencies with Line 18 and suggested adding “the
381 City Council can at its discretion determine whether park dedication should occur” to
382 indicate waiver of policy decision. He spoke about how commercial abuts residential and
383 the five percent of car lots dedicated as park land was not necessary at this point in the

384 City’s development and should be up to 5% or 10% and not at the discretion of the
385 Council. Commissioner Jokinen asked if line 652 should be xvi? Wall responded yes.

386

387 Commissioner Jokinen stressed the importance of park dedication and not having funds
388 go to the General Fund.

389

390 Chairperson Cordes said he has been impressed with work to replace equipment when
391 needed and suggested inserting the word “use” after “only” on Line 646.

392

393 Wall spoke about the memo he provided to the Parks Commission on the fee schedule
394 and other surrounding communities park dedication fees during the building process at
395 the time of plat.

396

397 Commissioner Jokinen spoke about how other cities in the past could require park
398 dedication fees from signage and asked what process was in place to ensure both property
399 owners of minor subdivisions were in agreement. Wall outlined how the application was
400 signed by both property owners and how property reports were received for title searches
401 which acknowledged understanding which was why staff was comfortable with
402 relinquishing formal approval and eliminating the public hearing requirement to
403 streamline the process.

404

405 **OLD BUSINESS**

406

407 None.

408

409 **GARCEAU CORNER TASK FORCE UPDATE**

410

411 Planning/Community Development Director Wall said the Garceau Corner Task Force has
412 completed three meetings with the first meeting included introductions and a site tour, the
413 second meeting included presentations on the property background, environmental
414 contamination, and tax increment financing from staff and consultants, and then the third
415 meeting included a developer roundtable and discussion of commercial/office redevelopment
416 scenarios and financial analysis. He said staff was pleased with the facilitation of the process
417 so far and that subsequent meetings will focus on residential redevelopment scenarios and
418 formulating a recommendation to the City Council. He added that Commissioners Bigelbach
419 and Jokinen and Councilmember Youker all serve on the Task Force and can provide their
420 feedback at the meeting. He said financial impact development scenarios were reviewed
421 with commercial office retail and a local restaurant owner who provided input about
422 those types of businesses and also discussed senior housing and open space options. Wall
423 noted that the fourth meeting will include an analysis of strengths, weaknesses,
424 opportunities and threats with ultimate recommendation to the City Council, adding they
425 are using a facilitator to help the process and ensure active collaboration and engagement.

426

427 Commissioner Bigelbach said she was impressed with the process, cooperation and open
428 forum, as no idea is a bad idea. She said the tour was interesting as it showed the hardware
429 store could be usable with a new roof for future grocery or restaurant and that the hardware
430 store appeared to be structurally sound. She said one take away was the location for a
431 destination restaurant could be difficult.

432

433 Commissioner Caillier asked when the results would be before the Planning Commission.
434 Wall said results would not occur until fall and that an update would be given at the next
435 Commission meeting as well.

436

437 **REPORTS**

438

439 A. Council Liaison

440

441 Councilmember Patricia Youker had nothing to share at this time.

442

443 B. Planning Commissioners

444

445 Commissioner Moynagh invited the community to attend the Vadnais Heights Area
446 Community Foundation barbeque on September 12 at Koehler's Meadows Park, sharing
447 their non-profit mission of education, human need and cultural activities.

448

449 C. Staff

450

451 Planning/Community Development Director Wall shared about three upcoming
452 construction projects: Willow Ridge East will begin construction in August, Aster
453 Meadows will soon close on the property and construction will begin soon, and the
454 Luther Cadillac project will start late this fall.

455

456 **NEXT MEETING**

457

458 The next Planning Commission meeting will be held on August 27, 2019.

459

460 **ADJOURN MEETING**

461

462 Upon motion by Commissioner Bigelbach, seconded by Commissioner Cooper the
463 meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

464

465 Respectfully submitted,

466

467 Cathy Sorensen, *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*