Chairperson Evan Cordes called the Regular Meeting of the Vadnais Heights Planning Commission to order at 7:02 p.m. on June 23, 2020.

**ROLL CALL**

Evan Cordes, Chairperson Present
Linda Bigelbach Present (arrived at 7:20 p.m.)
Edward Caillier Present
Brian Carnes Absent
Curt Cooper Present
Martin Jokinen, Vice Chairperson Present
Joseph Stumph Present
Jerry Moynagh, First Alternate Present
Terri Dresen, Second Alternate Present

Also present: Nolan Wall, Planning/Community Development Director; Jeff Melcoch, Cable Producer, Council Liaison Youker.

Planning/Community Development Director Wall noted Commissioners Moynagh and Dresen would be participating as voting members this evening.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

“RESOLVED, to approve the June 23, 2020, Regular Meeting Agenda as presented.”

Ayes – 7 Nays – 0

The motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon motion by Commissioner Moynagh, seconded by Commissioner Dresen, it was

“RESOLVED, to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2020, Regular Meeting as presented.”

Ayes – 7 Nays – 0
The motion carried.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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

As no one wished to address the Commission, Chairperson Cordes closed the meeting to the public at 7:05 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Planning Case 20-009 – Dobbelmann Properties, LLC, Site Plan at 3391 Labore Road.

Planning/Community Development Director Wall provided a presentation with background information stating the applicant, on behalf of the property owner, is requesting site plan approval for construction of a new office-showroom building on the subject property. The applicant has a purchase agreement with the property owner and intends to construct an approximately 35,000 SF office-showroom building. The subject property formerly contained a non-conforming single-family residential dwelling that was demolished by the current property owner. A special use permit was granted in 2001 for construction of a 90’ tall monopole telecommunications tower, which will remain in its existing location in the northwest corner of the subject property. A site plan for an approximately 22,000 SF office-showroom building was approved in 2017, as part of Planning Case 17-011, but was not constructed.

Wall noted that the subject property is guided Industrial in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan as are all of the adjacent properties. The proposed uses are permitted and accessory uses, respectively, within the applicable zoning district. In addition, the property is included within a “redevelopment/infill area,” as noted on the Future Land Use Map. The proposed office-showroom use is a permitted use in the Industrial District, subject to conditions. The proposed site plan includes a row of parking spaces along the northern property boundary line. In order to meet the applicable standards, four additional spaces can be added to this area of the site to meet the parking requirements. The City Code requires 90-degree parking spaces to be 9’ wide by 19’ long, drive lane width of 24’, and curb cut no wider than 24’; the proposed parking facilities meet the applicable standards. In addition, the access driveway to the proposed parking lot is greater than 40’ from the nearest intersection and no parking spaces have direct access from the street, as required by City Code. The parking lot grade, surfacing, striping will be required to meet the applicable City Code standards and will be reviewed in greater detail as part of the building permit process. Wall noted that there will be additional review by the Watershed District. He spoke about future additions that would meet setbacks and summarized the Planning Commission’s options for consideration and said staff are recommending approval of the requests in this case.

Commissioner Moynagh inquired why the four additional parking stalls were not striped as it would affect future additions and result in the site being short of parking.
Planning/Community Development Director Wall said the parking stalls were on the very far north edge of the property and could add striping at that time and not impede any access.

Commissioner Dresen asked how many other sites the applicant has throughout Minnesota and if this would be the main site because if so, could affect traffic flow.

Dave Dobbelmann, owner of SOS Office Furniture, said they have been in business since 1976 in another location in St. Paul with their lease expiring in February 2021 and not being renewed. He said they had 24,000 square feet of showroom with a warehouse in St. Paul and would consolidate into one location. He shared their hope to bring on more sales staff and employees and at this time they have 8 employees and noted most traffic would be 15-20 people at a time as most representatives go offsite for space planning/bidding and that most traffic would be the employees.

Chairperson Cordes opened the public hearing at 7:16 p.m. and outlined the public testimony process in the virtual meeting format.

As no one wished to address the Commission, Chairperson Cordes closed the public hearing at 7:16 p.m.

Commissioner Dresen said she believed this type of business in this district would be a good business for Vadnais Heights and be a better fit for the applicant than their current location on Highway 280 and University Avenue.

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

"RESOLVED to recommend approval of the proposed site plan based on the following findings of fact:

1. The proposed use is permitted within the Industrial District, consistent with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, and brings the subject property into conformance with both.
2. The proposed development is compliant, or conditioned to be, with the applicable City Code Standards.

Chair Cordes asked about Ramsey Metro Watershed’s approval. Wall said that aspect was covered in staff comments and noted the Watershed has some permitting authority over the construction activity regardless if an additional condition was included but said the Commission certainly could add compliance with Ramsey metro Watershed as an additional condition. Cordes said he would make that applicable.

Upon motion by Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Dresen, the earlier motion was amended to add an additional condition #18 as proposed.

Subject to the following conditions:

1. A development agreement between the property owner, and all others with interests in the subject property, shall be entered into with the City, to be recorded
at the applicant’s cost with the offices of the Ramsey County Recorder and/or Register of Titles, prior to issuance of a building permit.

2. The proposed infiltration basins shall not encroach onto Ramsey County right-of-way.

3. Building and grading permits shall be submitted for administrative review/approval, prior to commencement of any construction activities on the subject property.

4. Driveway and right-of-way permits shall be submitted for review and approval by Ramsey County and provided to the City as part of the building permit review process.

5. A Fire Certificate of Occupancy shall be obtained annually from the Fire Department by the responsible party, in compliance with the City Code.

6. A sign permit shall be submitted for administrative review/approval, prior to any sign(s) being installed on the subject property.

7. No outdoor storage of materials, supplies, products, or equipment shall be permitted on the subject property without future approval of a special use permit, in compliance with the applicable Zoning Code procedures and standards.

8. The property owner shall establish a new/amended access easement agreement with the existing telecommunication tower leaseholder on the subject property.

9. Roof-top mechanical units shall be of a low-profile variety and ground-mounted units shall be adequately screened, to be administratively reviewed/approved as part of the building permit.

10. Building utility areas shall be adequately screened by plant material and/or fencing and shall not obstruct fire department connections or hydrants, to be administratively reviewed/approved as part of the building permit.

11. Existing vegetation proposed to be preserved shall be done so in compliance with the applicable requirements of Chapter 38, Article IV, Section 601(11) of the City Code.

12. Trash/recycling containers shall be screened on all four sides with the same materials and the doors must remain closed except when items are being placed into or taken out of the enclosure.

13. The off-street parking lot and driveways shall be constructed and operated in compliance with the applicable code standards, to be reviewed/approved administratively as part of the building permit.

14. A photometric lighting plan shall be submitted for inclusion in a subsequent development agreement amendment.

15. The landscape plan shall be revised to comply with the required standards, to be included in a subsequent development agreement.

16. Compliance with the conditions included in the Fire Department’s memorandum, dated 06/03/2020.

17. Compliance with the conditions included in the Director of Public Works/City Engineer memorandum, dated 06/18/20.

18. Subject to compliance with requirements of Ramsey Washington Watershed approval.

Ayes – 7 Nays – 0

The motion carried.
Planning/Community Development Director Wall noted this item would be before the July 21 City Council meeting for consideration.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

REPORTS

A. Council Liaison

Council Liaison Youker had nothing new to report and wished everyone a safe Independence Day holiday.

B. Planning Commissioners

Commissioner Moynagh noted that he and Commissioner Cordes are on the VHACF and in past month the organization has released, in the past month, $9,000 into community into human services and education much needed in post-COVID-19 atmosphere and it’s nice to have a partnership with personal, business, and non-profit communities.

C. Staff

Planning/Community Development Director Wall reported Commissioner Bigelbach joined the meeting at 7:20 p.m. He then shared the Willow Ridge East project on County Road D Circle hopes to have their certificate of occupancy issued later this week. He said the Aster Meadows project on Centerville Road/County Road F was undergoing a lot of traffic control work and proceeding nicely and that the Luther Cadillac project would not be moving forward this year due to the current business climate. Wall said the At Home Apartments Development Agreement was in progress and would be on the Council agenda in July for consideration but that the applicant may not do a lot of work this year. He then stated that the City Engineer had shared with him that the two local road projects Arcade Street and another off of Rice Street would begin soon.

Chairperson Cordes inquired about restaurants not returning due to COVID-19 impacts. Wall said that Foss Swim School and another tenant in Vadnais Square were delaying improvements due to the pandemic and that Mad Jack’s restaurant would not be returning but that Council approved an off-sale liquor license for Top Ten Liquors at the former Mad Jack’s location that could possibly include a wine tasting and cheese venue as well. He said staff are working with potential users for the Garceau Hardware site and that a closed session for a possible project on the Staeheli property on County Road F on Thornhill and Clover once public will move forward. He added the City was still processing many building permits for windows, roofs, and decks, but that some larger projects had been delayed.
NEXT MEETING

The next Planning Commission meeting will be held on July 28, 2020.

ADJOURN MEETING

Upon motion by Commissioner Cooper, seconded by Commissioner Moynagh, the meeting was adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Sorensen

TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.