

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE ST. CLOUD PLANNING COMMISSION

A meeting of the St. Cloud Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, May 14, 2013, at 6 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. Members present were Anderson, DeVine, Holtberg, Larson and Radaich. Andzenge and Ballantine were absent. City Council representative Goerger was present.

**Open Forum:** No one was present to speak at the open forum.

**Consent Agenda:** Anderson moved to approve the consent agenda as follows:

Acceptance of staff reports for May 14, 2013 as part of the official record

Approval of minutes from the April 9, 2013 Planning Commission meeting

The motion was seconded by DeVine and carried unanimously.

### **Miller Architects and Builders, Inc. on behalf of G.W. III, LLC / District Square PUD**

**Amendment:** Matt Glaesman, Planning Director, explained a request to amend the District Square Planned Unit Development (PUD). The applicant is proposing to construct a 43,000 sq. ft. office building on the southern portion of the development. In 2007, the property's PUD was amended to create the District Square Office Park. The original approved site plan contained a total of 122,000 sq. ft. of floor space divided between five buildings and 515 off-street parking spaces. Two buildings have been built to date representing three of the originally approved buildings. The approved site plan shows two future buildings to be constructed in the southeastern and southwestern corners of the property. The applicants are requesting to combine the two future buildings into a single structure centered upon the southern property line. The proposed building will have 42,742 sq. ft. of floor area, reducing the total floor area on-site by 8,452 sq. ft. of floor area from the original site plan.

Holtberg opened the public hearing and invited testimony. The following persons testified:

Brady Hickcox Miller Architects & Builders	He is representing the applicant. The new site plan shows a reduction in the overall floor area. The building is being moved an additional 33' from the southern property line than was originally approved. The
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change to the center of the property line also allows for fewer properties to be directly adjacent to the building.

Roger Gillson  
2109 13<sup>th</sup> St S

He stated his concern for several items. He supports the resolution prohibiting vehicular access to 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave S and 13<sup>th</sup> St S from the site. The development request is asking for a surplus of 114 parking spaces beyond the City requirement. A reduction of 114 parking spaces would significantly reduce the impact on the existing adjacent woodlands. He supports the recommendation to use a 'parking land bank' for a portion of the off-street parking. He supports the resolution stating that all exterior lighting must be fully shielded and directed downward, and he does not believe that is the case now. He supports the recommendation that the building be shifted 20' to the north of the property line. This would increase parking in the back and provide more buffer between the building and residents to the south. He supports the resolution stating that all buildings must utilize windows that minimize the emission of light from the building. The resolution also states signing restrictions which he supports. He requested that the developers work with residents to the south to build an appropriate screen between the site and homes, the cost of screening to be incurred by the developers. He requested that appropriate drainage be shown and approved by City engineers. He stated that reasonable care should be taken with timing, lighting and noise when snow is removed in the winter months. He stated he does not feel it is a good idea to clear cut 70-80 year old oak trees for a parking lot, especially for parking in excess. He asked for approval of the elimination or reduction of the east side parking lot.

Duane Fischer  
2205 13<sup>th</sup> St S

He stated he is in agreement with the statements made by Mr. Gillson. He stated he has tried to contact Mr. Winfield and Miller Architects to resolve some of the issues that have been raised, but he was unable to reach anyone. He likes the idea of one building instead of two; however, the building is very large. Due to the use of the building as a call center, there will be many people working, lights on at all hours, and cars coming and going frequently. He would like to see the building moved further north and have the parking in the back of the building. There will need to be a better buffer between the buildings and homes. He stated that opening the connection to 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave S should not be an option.

Ron Zenzen  
1204 24<sup>th</sup> Ave S

He stated he is in agreement with the statements made by the neighborhood. He stated the connection to 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave S should not be opened up to traffic. It will only increase the traffic in the neighborhood. He stated the parking lot already gets busy with people using the lot as a means to cut through to 25<sup>th</sup> Ave S. He stated that the buffer should be solid instead of using trees or a fence.

Loren Ennis  
1920 13<sup>th</sup> St S

He asked what type of business will be in the building and if the hours of operation are subject to change. He also stated his opposition to the opening of 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave S.

Nicholas Gaetz

He stated that Preferred Credit, a finance company, will be occupying

Preferred Credit, Inc. the building with a call center. The primary function is processing applications for the business. Current hours of operation are 6:30 a.m. until 12:30 a.m. The hours of operation are subject to change.

Terry Wotzka  
2023 Oak Dr, Sauk Rapids He works at the building to the west of the proposed building. He stated he is in agreement with the statements made thus far. He stated his concern with the northwest entrance onto Roosevelt Rd as there is no indication as to who has the right-of-way. He asked for the engineering department to look into how the safety of this intersection can be improved.

Ken Valley  
2200 13<sup>th</sup> St S He spoke in support of the requests made by Mr. Gillson and Mr. Fischer. There has been discussion dating back to 2007 that should be considered in making the final decision in order to allow the owner to develop the site as well as allow the residents to have their concerns addressed.

Jerry Bolin  
2101 13<sup>th</sup> St S He stated he is in agreement with the statements made by the neighborhood. He asked if this building will be the last built on the site.

There being no one else wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed. Glaesman addressed questions and concerns. He stated that there is a site plan that is included in the action which establishes the building, setbacks and parking standards. There is a provision that allows staff to deviate from those standards; however, any significant deviation would prompt a return to the Planning Commission. He stated he will work with the engineering department to determine a means to better control the access onto Roosevelt Rd. Staff is not advocating for access to 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave S, and the applicant does not see a need for that access. There is shared concern with balancing parking and tree covering. Staff made the suggestion of a 'parking land bank' with the understanding that the call center was not imminent, and the uses of the property were still undecided; however, it is now understood that the call center is the immediate use of the property, which calls for a larger employee base. A shortage of parking could impact the adjacent neighborhood with vehicles parking in the neighborhood and walking to the building.

Anderson asked if the business is relocating to the proposed building and if so, if parking is adequate in the prior location. Gaetz stated that the business is relocating from 3051 2<sup>nd</sup> St S where parking is not adequate. Anderson asked if parking at the previous location has been compared to the parking space at the proposed site. Glaesman stated that the previous site has not been

reviewed to determine supply. A comparison was drawn from experience in other cities with large call centers to determine appropriate parking. Radaich asked for clarification on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave S access. Glaesman stated that the access is currently is closed and will remain closed at this time. Goerger asked if there has been an attempt by the developer to meet with the neighbors. Glaesman stated the developer was asked to hold a neighborhood meeting which was held several weeks ago. DeVine asked about the drainage plans and if additional on-site water would need to be managed. Glaesman stated that the 2007 site plan addressed utility plans. DeVine asked about several concerns expressed regarding lighting, berms, fencings, etc. Hickcox stated that they are willing to work with the neighbors to improve the berms, lighting and to mitigate any light that may spill from the building. DeVine asked about the current status of the parking lot lighting. Glaesman stated that the lighting plan is consistent with the City's standards for light shed in a residential neighborhood. Goerger asked if the suggestions made at the neighborhood meeting are being seriously considered. Hickcox stated the suggestions are being considered. There is additional space on the first floor of the building which will require access and parking through the front entry. If the building is moved further to the north, it will take parking away from those potential businesses. Larson asked about vehicles using the parking lot as a short cut. Glaesman stated the issue is one of private property, and the City cannot address the issue. However, the property owners could address the issue themselves by possibly installing a barrier to restrict the traffic flow. Radaich asked if the location was the only one feasible for the building as far as relocating the utilities. Glaesman stated the revision does cause a significant change to divert a public water main. Detailed designs are not yet available, and discussions will need to continue to determine the process and costs involved.

DeVine made a motion to approve the site plan as submitted and emphasized the conditions. The motion was seconded by Radaich. Anderson expressed concern for tree preservation, but stated he will support the motion. Holtberg thanked all those who testified and reminded them that the Planning Commission will be making a recommendation to City Council. Glaesman noted that City

Council will hold another public hearing for this item. Any additional information will be passed on to the City Council. Holtberg called for a vote, and the motion carried unanimously.

**Miller Architects and Builders, Inc. on behalf of Greg Windfeldt / Vacation:** Matt Glaesman, Planning Director, explained a request for the vacation of a 30' wide drainage and utility easement that bisects Lot 1, Block 1, District Square Plat Two. The applicant is proposing to consolidate two buildings into one and locate it near the center of the lot, which would be located on the existing 30' wide drainage and utility easement. The City is the only entity that has utilities within the easement. There is an 8" water line that crosses the center of the applicant's property which will need to be relocated. There is also a 8" sanitary sewer line within the easement, a small segment of which will need to be removed to accommodate the proposed building. Specific details are not yet available, and the applicant is asked to provide the details as soon as possible to bring to City Council.

Anderson asked who will pay for the cost of moving the utilities. Glaesman stated that the Planning and Engineering Departments will suggest the costs be incurred by the developers. DeVine made a motion to approve the vacation. The motion was seconded by Radaich and carried unanimously.

**Jay Portz / Vacation:** Matt Glaesman, Planning Director, explained a request to vacate a 10' wide drainage and utility easement on the common lot line between Lots 3 and 4, Block 5, Sommersby Plat 2 to accommodate a home to be built over the lot line. The applicant will also have to combine the lots into a single zoning lot before a building permit will be issued. There are no utilities located within the portion of the easement to be vacated.

Holtberg asked if the properties would need to be re-platted. Glaesman stated the lots are within the same subdivision and can be combined by a written request. DeVine questioned the possibility of allowing the Zoning Administrator to make decisions on minor vacations. Glaesman stated that State law prohibits a vacation without a public hearing.

Anderson made a motion to approve the vacation. The motion was seconded by DeVine and carried unanimously.

**St. Cloud Area Planning Organization's 2040 Transportation Plan:** Matt Glaesman, Planning Director, introduced APO Senior Transportation Planner Angie Stenson to the Commissioners. Stenson presented an overview of the planning process and current status of the St. Cloud Area Planning Organization's 2040 Transportation Plan. Commissioners discussed the details of the project and how the City's Capital Improvements Project (CIP) coordinates with the APO's plan.

**Other Business:** Holtberg asked for an update on the placemaking efforts. Glaesman stated The Lakota Group will be in town for the remainder of the week for a Community Open House and storefront hours at The Black Box in downtown St. Cloud.

DeVine commented on the American Planning Association's National Conference that was held in Chicago, IL last month. DeVine, Andzenge and Ashley Skaggs of the Planning Department attended the conference. DeVine shared information on the topics and trends at the conference.

Anderson asked about the technology updates. Glaesman stated that GFOA has visited once and will be back in the coming months with recommendations.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

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Dick Andzenge, Secretary