

# PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES CITY OF GRANT

March 21, 2011

**Present:** Glenn Larson, Tom Stangl, Bob Tufty, Terry Derosier, Loren Sederstrom, Mark Wojcik and Becky Siekmeier

**Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** City Planner, Jennifer Haskamp; City Clerk, Kim Points

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Larson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. OATH OF OFFICE, TERRY DEROSIER, LOREN SEDERSTROM, MARK WOJCIK AND BECKY SIEKMEIER

The Oath of Office was taken by new Planning Commissioners.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Commissioner Derosier to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Sederstrom seconded the motion. MOTION carried unanimously.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES, JULY 19, 2010

**MOTION by Chair Larson to approve the July 19, 2010 Minutes, as amended. Commissioner Stangl seconded the motion. MOTION carried with Commissioner's Derosier, Sederstrom, Wojcik and Siekmeier abstaining.**

6. NEW BUSINESS

**Election of Chair and Vice Chair** – Chair Larson advised in March of every year nominations are made for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Commission.

**MOTION BY Commissioner Wojcik to elect Commissioner Sederstrom as Chair and Commissioner Siekmeier as Vice Chair. Commissioner Derosier seconded the motion.**

**MOTION by Commissioner Stangl to nominate Commissioner Larson as Chair and Commissioner Siekmeier as Vice Chair.**

Commissioner Larson explained typically nominations are made separate for each as opposed to motions.

Commissioner Tufty nominated Commissioner Larson as Chair.

Commissioner Stangl nominated Commissioner as Vice Chair.

Commissioners Sederstrom and Larson both commented on why they should be elected Chair of the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Larson nominated Commissioner Tufty to Vice Chair.

**Commissioner Sederstrom was elected Chair. Commissioner Siekmeier was elected Vice Chair.**

**Appointments/Volunteers** – The following volunteers were appointed:

Oak Wilt – Mark Wojcik

Weed Inspector – Tom Stangl

Browns Creek Watershed District – Terry Derosier

Valley Branch Watershed District – Becky Siekmeier

Rice Creek Watershed District – Bob Tufty

Carnelian-Marine Watershed District – Bob Tufty

**ISD #832, Conditional Use Permit Request, Improvements to Existing Outdoor Stadium/Improvements and Expansion of Existing Tennis Courts and Ball Fields** – City Planner Haskamp advised the Applicant, AJA, Inc., on behalf of Independent School District #832, is requesting approval to amend the existing Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the athletic fields located on 80(X) 75th Street North and 8678 75th Street North. The site is currently developed with a high school stadium, high school, middle school and several athletic fields that serve both the school and the greater community. This request is to amend the existing CUP to include the following improvements and additions:

Stadium improvements: the application includes new bleachers, a new concession stand and two new ticket booths. The majority of the stadium is under the jurisdiction of the city of Mahtomedi and is currently going through their site plan review process. Only the improvements located in the City of Grant are proposed as a part of this CUP,

Tennis courts: The applicant is proposing to resurface the existing 6 tennis courts on the site and to add two additional tennis courts.

Baseball fields: the addition of two tennis courts results in the need to retrofit an existing baseball field to a softball field which includes adjustments to the fencing and other field improvements. One new baseball field is also proposed as a part of his application.

City Planner Haskamp reviewed the staff report as well as the draft conditions related to the amended CUP for stadium improvements and athletic field expansions. She advised the draft conditions are consistent with City Ordinances and pointed out that the current CUP runs with the land so previous conditions, such as the variance, are part of the CUP and there is no issue with those.

Mr. Dave Ray, Anderson Johnson, came forward and stated he has worked on this project for about ten years. He reviewed the overall campus plan noting the details relating to the stadium and tennis court additions.

City Planner Haskamp advised the Environmental Studies will be at the City office and are available for review.

Chair Sederstrom opened the public hearing at 7:42 p.m.

Mr. Wally Anderson, 80<sup>th</sup> Street, came forward and asked when the public hearing notice was published in the newspaper. He stated more screening is needed and the last screening plan was very sparse. He asked that the sound that will be carried into Grant be addressed.

Mr. Steve Willard, Jamaca, came forward and stated that a lot more screening that was promised than actually done. He stated they were also promised to consult the neighbors regarding Pine Trees. No one was ever consulted so promises that were made in the past have not been adhered to. He requested that the School District be held to the conditions this time.

Ms. Karen Sweezy, Jamaca and County Road 12, came forward and stated she does hear everything when a game is going on at night. She stated everyone in the area has wells and asked if it will affect the water table and create a fire hazard.

Mr. Steve Bohnen, 9224 60<sup>th</sup> Street, came forward and asked if the water main coming into the school is an adequate size. He indicated he would like that issue resolved with the City of Mahtomedi.

Mr. Kevin McTigue, 8495 80<sup>th</sup> Street, came forward and stated the area used to be heavily wooded and that is no longer the case. He stated he is a supporter of the School District but is concerned as access to the Gateway Trail has already been cut off twice and there will now be more traffic. That creates a problem with horses and maintenance and repair of the gravel road. He stated he does not believe what the School District is telling residents and the value of his home will go down. The project is a huge infringement on his property and eventually the whole field area will have lights that impede the rural character of Grant. He suggested the field face to the south instead of north.

Mr. Larry Lanoux, Keswick Avenue, came forward and inquired about the water line and if the size was shown when it went out for bid.

Mr. David Bueller, 8635 80<sup>th</sup> Street, came forward and stated acres of trees were wiped out in 2005. He encouraged that more trees be planted. The development is very damaging and causes a lack of access to the Gateway Trail. He stated there needs to be an access to the trail.

Mr. Mike Serkowski, 8537 80<sup>th</sup> Street, came forward and expressed concern regarding buffering. He stated he plan seems to smash everything into the west end and asked if consideration would be taken to expand it to the east. He added there is going to be a lot of additional noise.

City Planner Haskamp advised that additional landscaping and plantings, as well as a berm could be incorporated into the plan.

Mr. Willard came forward again and stated that the residents were lied to in the past. Lip service was given and trees that were promised were not planted so there is obvious reluctance.

Mr. Dave Thorson, Program Manager for the project, came forward and stated the neighborhood meeting that was held was to hear the issues of the residents. Those issues have been responded to and are included in the plan.

Mr. Anderson stated that this is an amended CUP that covers the whole property. A meeting was held and information was received, but the School District did not take the comments.

Mr. McTigue stated that five years from now there will be an increased use in the fields and that need to be looked at. The plan needs to address long term uses due to the increased noise. The field should be turned to the south.

Mr. Serkowski stated that residents should have had the opportunity to provide input prior to the plan being developed.

**MOTION by Commissioner Derosier to close the public hearing at 8:17 p.m. Commissioner Siekmeier seconded the motion. MOTION carried unanimously.**

Mr. Ray advised they would have to take a look at turning the field to the south. The

possibility of berming could be studied but that may shorten the field. There is no impact to the wetlands.

City Planner Haskamp outlined the options that include the recommendation of approval with additional conditions relating to issues the residents have raised or not move forward at this time with this portion of the overall plan.

Mr. Ray stated he would go back and look at whether or not the School District fulfilled their obligations from the previous CUP.

Mr. Bob Hagstrom, Gateway Trail Association, came forward and stated he had reviewed the plan at the last meeting. The concern is over safety and the trail access. A good solution would be to have an easement that would allow access to the trail and also increase property values.

**MOTION by Commissioner Tufty to recommend approval to the City Council based on the outlined conditions as well as additional conditions relating to berms, pine trees, lighting and noise issues and a horse access along the north property line to the Gateway Trail. Commissioner Siekmeier seconded the motion.**

**Commissioner Siekmeier added a friendly amendment to include a meeting be held between the School District and residents along 80<sup>th</sup> Street prior to the next Council meeting. Commissioner Tufty agreed to the friendly amendment.**

Commissioner Larson stated he would like to see the details of a landscaping plan and too many questions have been raised during the public hearing. He advised he would like to see the plan come back to the Planning Commission for further review.

**MOTION carried with Commissioner Larson voting nay.**

**Elementary School Site Plan** – City Planner Haskamp advised the Applicant submitted the full elementary school package, including sodum improvements and field expansion, on February 16, 2011. The application was made a few days prior to the regularly scheduled PC meeting in February, and at the request of existing PC members, the Applicant attended a workshop with the PC on February 22<sup>nd</sup> to be introduced to the project. Additionally an Open House was scheduled and held on March 26 which was publicly noticed. The Applicant worked through the process with the other agencies

prior to making the submittal. They sought preliminary approval from Rice Creek Watershed District (RCWD), and worked through some of the issues identified by the DNR regarding the Gateway Trail, and Washington County transportation, Watershed District (RCWD). This report includes the draft comments and review from each of these agencies (attachments C through E). Representatives from Washington County are in attendance to answer questions regarding their review and proposed conditions and recommendations. The Applicant, AJA, Inc., on behalf of Independent School District #832, is requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the construction of a new elementary school at 8673 75<sup>th</sup> Street North.

City Planner Haskamp reviewed the staff report advising no recommendation is being made tonight.

Mr. Joe Gustufson, Traffic Engineer, Washington County, came forward and reviewed the County's report advised a traffic impact study was completed. The County is in agreement with those findings. He referred to a drawing as well as the traffic model outlining the left had turning movement into the site. He stated he believes the plan is proposing the best option for additional access into the site.

Mr. Ray came forward and reviewed the proposed site plan. (Narrative)

Chair Sederstrom opened the public hearing at 9:57 p.m.

Mr. Larry Lanoux, Keswick Avenue came forward and commented on the bid process the School District utilized, their fee schedule, legality of process and the County indicating the City would have to pay for any signal lights that are put in. He also commented on the justification for realigning the Gateway Trail and the open enrollment issue that costs the residents of Grant extra dollars.

Mr. Wally Anderson, 80<sup>th</sup> Street, came forward and referred to the intersection at 80<sup>th</sup> Street that was included in the traffic study. He asked who paid for the improvements for the access at the Church property noting that he believes something should be able to be worked out for two accesses on County Road 12. The biggest concern is the Jamaca

access which is between two properties.

Mr. Bob Hagstrom came forward and emphasized the value of the Gateway Trail. He stated it was build for pedestrians, bikers and horses. There is the opportunity here to save a state park. He encouraged the Planning Commission to claim it and a much higher priority should be placed on that.

Mr. Tom Vachen came forward and stated a lot of trees have been planted and everyone needs to be aware of that if a berm is put in place or a trail is developed. He stated the Jamaca access is a bad idea and he has concern regarding the finishing of the fence.

Mr. Louie Cheltear, Jamaca Avenue, came forward and stated he presumes the School District has land for access on their property and the traffic could go to 80<sup>th</sup> Street.

Mr. Jerry Lindquist, 7241 Jamaca, stated the water flow is a problem and it will go to his property. It is not in the Rice Creek Watershed District and he can't take anymore. His property is almost a pond now and it used to be a pasture. The traffic is already bad.

Ms. Kendra Bachman, 80<sup>th</sup> Street, and clarified the information provided regarding a necessary different rout, one way and two way traffic and the estimated drop off time.

Mr. Steve Willard stated another issue is the left had turn near his driveway. People tend to pass on the right and he has been rear ended in his own driveway. The situation is going to be very unsafe and it will destroy the trail. He suggested one ways only for the bus traffic. Out going traffic will out to 80<sup>th</sup> but not County Road 12.

Ms. Heidi Humback came forward and expressed concerns regarding safety and asked for the cost to develop and maintain the driveway. Tax dollars should be saved and there is more continuous traffic on 12. Screening is very important and what about lighting being on for 24 hours.

Mr. Jeff Schafer, 8688 Jamaca, commented on the traffic study and questioned some of the findings. He stated drop off times are closer to an hour and a bus entrance off of 12

would be better.

Mr. Steve Bohnen, 9220 60<sup>th</sup> Street, came forward and stated two driveways off of County Road 12 would be better. The area is in a sink hole and plugging would damage systems. The Core of Engineers needs to be contacted. If there is an access at Jamaca it should be for buses only. He asked if the County wants an access there or if they are demanding it. The open enrollment state average is 4% and this district has 19%.

Mr. Lanoux stated the plan for the district is to merge all three classes so they should do it now with O.H. Anderson as there is enough land there. He encouraged everyone not to vote for the operating levy.

Mr. Anderson asked if the setbacks are being considered and stated the graphic provided this evening is a disgrace.

Mr. Kevin Donovan, 9920 Heron and Chair of the School Board, stated the comments made this evening are important and will be listened to and put in the plan as best they can.

Dr. Wolak, Superintendent, stated they are doing the best they can for the children and that is his charge. Quality education is important and it is the pride of this area. Next year's open enrollment is at 26% and 55% were turned down. The District would not have as many programs available if there was not open enrollment. Tax dollars for every student follow that student. Non-resident students only get the state aid which is an average of \$6,000.

Mr. Willard stated sometime we have to say enough for the kids.

Ms. Kathy Anderson, 80<sup>th</sup> Street, came forward and stated the major issue is screening. She urged the School District to have everything in place prior to any approvals.

**MOTION by Commissioner Derosier to table the public hearing to the next meeting. Commissioner Tufty seconded the motion. MOTION carried unanimously.**



**7. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business to address.

**8. NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

The next Planning Commission Meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 18, 2011, 7:00 p.m.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by Commissioner Wojcik to adjourn the meeting at 10:43 p.m. Commissioner Siekmeier seconded the motion. MOTION carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Points  
City Clerk