

5.03: Public Hearing: Consider Resolution #15-04-092 Granting Preliminary Plat Approval to Harvest Estates, a Major Plat; Case of G S Land, LLC

Public Hearing

Chairperson Levine called the public hearing to order at 7:12 p.m.

Presentation

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the staff report stating the purpose of this case is to review the official Preliminary Plat prepared by G S Land, LLC for the redevelopment of the former municipal campus located at 15153 Nowthen Boulevard NW as a 44-lot single-family residential development. It was noted each of the lots meet or exceed the City's residential lot requirements. The site is currently owned by the City of Ramsey, which has approved a Purchase Agreement to sell the site in two (2) phases to G S Land, LLC. It was noted the Commission has reviewed a previous sketch plan and approved a recommendation to rezone the property from Public/Quasi-Public to R-1, Residential (MUSA) and a land use change from Public/Quasi in the Comprehensive Plan. Staff explained that Fire Station No. 2 currently operates from the existing building on the site. The Final Plat will be proposed in two phases to allow the Fire Department to be located at 5650 Alpine Drive, adjacent to the site until the construction of a new Fire Station 2 is completed. It was noted that a temporary cul-de-sac would be needed and that a connection to Nowthen Boulevard would not be granted. The fill needs for Phase II were discussed. Staff reviewed the plat in further detail and recommended approval of the Preliminary Plat of Harvest Estates.

Citizen Input

Commissioner Bauer requested further information on the purchase agreement.

Community Development Director Gladhill noted that the former municipal campus would be sold in two phases and Phase I would be sold in 2015.

Chairperson Levine asked when the access to Nowthen Boulevard would be closed.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained that the access point will remain open as long as Fire Station 2 remains open. After that time, the access point to Nowthen Boulevard will be cut off and no longer be available.

Commissioner Bauer saw no reason to eliminate this access point.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated the Council had concerns with the cost of the local road connection. He reported that the overall safety of County Road 5 was also a concern. He explained that a study could be completed to address the safety of this roadway but would take a year to complete. He indicated that the Commission could make a recommendation to the Council regarding this access point.

Commissioner Nosan expressed confusion why it would cost the City more money to keep the access point as is.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained the local road connection would require maintenance, noting public road standards would have to be met. In addition, the City would need to buy back a parcel through a property acquisition. He indicated that peak traffic may also require turn lanes on County Road 5.

Commissioner Andrusko questioned the expense of leaving the access point open.

Community Development Director Gladhill estimated that the land acquisition would be several hundred thousand dollars plus additional capital maintenance expenses.

Commissioner Brauer asked if a barrier would be placed at the access point during Phase I.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated the turning movement would have a barricade to eliminate traffic from driving through the site.

Further discussion ensued regarding the alignment of an access point to County Road 5.

Commissioner Brauer expressed frustration with how Anoka County was dictating the traffic projections. He felt this was not fair to the City of Ramsey.

Jason Johnson, 5545 152nd Avenue NW, explained he recently moved from St. Paul to Ramsey. He opposed the proposed development and expressed concern with how the additional traffic would impact 152nd Avenue. He suggested that a park be placed on the old municipal campus.

Robert Hartman, 5475 151st Avenue NW, questioned the price range of the new houses. He inquired what the size of two outlots shown on the plan. Mr. Hartman believed that access to Nowthen Boulevard should be maintained as Helium would not provide enough access to the residential traffic. Mr. Hartman questioned how many accidents have occurred at the Nowthen Boulevard access to Ramsey Elementary School. Mr. Hartman also questioned if the closure of Nowthen Boulevard would create a public safety issue on Helium Street.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported zoning code does not dictate the price range of homes, but rather sets regulations on building materials, design and lot sizes. Based on his conversations with the applicant, he believed that the homes would be similar in price to The Meadow development. He then discussed the size of the outlot, which was actually approved with a previous development, not the current request.

Jeanne Hannin, 5545 152nd Avenue NW, stated she moved to Ramsey from St. Paul to get away from the noise and light pollution found in other communities. She did not believe that 44 homes would fit in her backyard. She discussed how the increased traffic would adversely impact her neighborhood. She wanted to live in peace and quiet and feared that she would be living in a construction zone for the next three or four years, noting a concern over potential increased crime due to theft from the construction site. She noted concern about additional maintenance needs for

existing roads. She questioned if the City would require streetlights, City water, sewer and sidewalks in the new development. She questioned if sidewalks would be required to construct on existing roads in existing development. She expressed a great deal of frustration with how this new development would negatively impact her neighborhood. She noted that she moved out of St. Paul to get away from the noise and she would do the same with Ramsey.

Commissioner VanScoy requested clarification from staff on the process, which led the municipal campus being zoned residential.

Community Development Director Gladhill discussed the history of the municipal campus site. He explained zoning this site for low density residential was made after a great deal of thought after previously considering a data center. He noted that sidewalks were not being considered by the City along existing roads. He indicated that City water and sewer would be provided to the development.

Michael Piza, 15129 Helium Street, asked if homes would be built before or after lot sales. He believed that a large number of houses were being stacked along 152nd Avenue. He feared that this would be a safety concern for children trying to reach the school without proper access.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained there would be a combination of home sales with a buyer and other sales on spec. He reported that the City could not control how the properties were sold. He indicated that a trail connection would be created to Nowthen Boulevard through Alpine Drive to access the school. He then discussed the residential lots sizes within Harvest Estates.

Kent Cunningham, 15211 Helium Street, had hoped that green space would have been included in the development. He questioned how this was being addressed by the City.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported the City has a master park and trail plan that breaks the City into districts. He commented that Solstice Park and Alpine Park were already located within this district of the City. He stated that trail connections would be improved to these parks rather than creating a small tot lot within the development.

Matt Crampton, 5710 152nd Way, asked what the lots behind his home would look like. He was concerned how the elevation difference would impact his property. He recommended that the City police this site while being constructed to ensure that miscellaneous construction debris was not allowed to remain on site. He noted existing construction debris left on site from the previous development.

Community Development Director Gladhill indicated the stormwater pond would remain in place along 152nd Way. He discussed how the new homes would look behind 152nd Way noting the lots were slightly larger which meant the homes would be further apart. He reported that code enforcement officers would react to any complaints received at City Hall.

Phillip Kryzaniak, NIK Management representing the developer, noted the homes would range in price from \$250,000 to \$350,000, which was similar to the surrounding homes. He did not believe

the proposed neighborhood would be a deterrent as the lot sizes were larger than required by the City. He explained that only one builder was being selected and that he had a long-standing professional relationship with this builder.

Commissioner VanScoy was pleased by the layout of the development. He requested further information on the density for the proposed development.

Mr. Kryzaniak reported that City standards would allow him to have 3 units to the acre or 61 lots on the site. He indicated he was proposing to build 44 homes on larger cul-de-sac lots.

Community Development Director Gladhill discussed how the City calculated net density noting right-of-way was removed from this calculation. He also noted that the City is not proposing to regulate minimum home prices.

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to close the public hearing.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Levine, Commissioners Bauer, VanScoy, Andrusko, Brauer, Maul, and Nosan. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

Chairperson Levine closed the public hearing closed at 8:33 p.m.

Commission Business

Commissioner Bauer expressed concern with how access to Nowthen Boulevard was being lost within this development.

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to recommend the City Council adopt Resolution #15-04-092 granting Preliminary Plat Approval of Harvest Estates – Phase I with no change made to the Nowthen Boulevard access until Phase II was considered by the City.

Further discussion

Commissioner Andrusko asked if it was common to consolidate access points within residential neighborhoods.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported this was the case as this would limit congestion and improved safety.

Further discussion ensued regarding the Nowthen Boulevard access point.

Commissioner Andrusko believed that access management would improve safety along Nowthen Boulevard, given the high level of speed along this roadway. He reiterated that the current access point to Nowthen Boulevard was not up to code and was not engineered to manage the increase in traffic. It was his opinion that the developer's solution was ideal and should be pursued.

Commissioner Bauer commented the school and church had much higher traffic counts than the new neighborhood would.

Commissioner Nosan did not understand why it was better to force traffic to Highway 47. She was thoroughly against the proposed traffic flow and believed the access point on Nowthen Boulevard should remain open.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported that this was the last opportunity for the Planning Commission to review the request. He noted that the Council would consider the final plats for the two phases separately.

Commissioner Bauer misunderstood how the parcel was being platted. He explained that his motion would be to approve Phase I of the Harvest Estates Plat.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained that this would entitle the developer to 32 lots within the development at this time. It would then be the hope that the remaining 12 lots would be developed at some point in the future, but there was a risk to the developer.

Assistant City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama reported that Phase I of the development coincides with the Purchase Agreement and the remaining lots would remain outlots for development in the future. He questioned what the risk to the developer would be on the remaining 12 lots.

Community Development Director Gladhill indicated there would be added risk to the developer, but reiterated that the Planning Commission was a recommending body to the City Council.

Chairperson Levine questioned if the motion on the floor would breach the current Purchase Agreement.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated there was a potential that the motion would conflict with the Purchase Agreement.

Assistant City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama reviewed the approval process for the Preliminary and Final Plats of Phase I and II. He noted that this evening the applicant was requesting Preliminary Plat approval for both Phases I and II, while the Commission was suggesting approval of only Phase I. He commented that the Final Plat of Phase II could not be approved until after the property for Phase II was closed. He did not believe the intent of the Purchase Agreement would be broken by approving only Phase I of the Preliminary Plat. The only change would be the entitlement assumed by the developer. He indicated that the Commission was not proposing to change the lot sizes or design of Phase II. He questioned if the developer supported moving forward in this manner.

Community Development Director Gladhill commented that there would be added costs to hold a second public hearing for Phase II of the Preliminary Plat approval process.

Commissioner Andrusko called the question. There was no second and discussion continued.

Commissioner Brauer was unclear what the existing road would look like if the access point were to remain open.

Community Development Director Gladhill reviewed the alignment of the roadway with Nowthen Boulevard.

Commissioner Brauer was in favor of approving Phase I and II of the development with the stipulation that the access point to Nowthen Boulevard remain open.

Commissioner Bauer noted he could amend his motion to approve the Preliminary Plat for Phase I and II requiring that the Final Plat have 152nd Lane maintain the connection to Nowthen Boulevard.

Friendly Amendment

Commissioner Bauer amended his motion to approve the Preliminary Plat for Phase I and II of Harvest Estates requiring the Final Plat have 152nd Lane maintain the connection to Nowthen Boulevard.

Friendly Amendment

Commissioner Brauer suggested that this amendment also include the following language: That the City maintain existing access to Highway 5 until further study can be made of the traffic consequences with Nowthen Boulevard at which time a decision will be made about the closure of the road.

Commissioner VanScoy questioned how and when a determination would be made. He stated he could support the proposed modification.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained that a determination would be made prior to approving the Final Plat of Phase II.

Commissioner Bauer and Commissioner VanScoy supported this friendly amendment.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated the proposed amendments were consistent with the developer's plans for the project.

Randy Hedlund, Hedlund Engineering, wanted to see the preliminary plat approved for all 44 lots. He explained that the current alignment would allow for a connection to Nowthen Boulevard.

Assistant City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Brama indicated there could be a gap in time between the demolition of the fire station and work on Phase II.

Community Development Director Gladhill believed that this issue could be resolved at a staff level.

Motion by Commissioner Andrusko and seconded by Commissioner VanScoy to call the question.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Levine, Commissioners Andrusko, VanScoy, Bauer, Brauer, Maul, and Nosan. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

Friendly Amended Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Levine, Commissioners Bauer, VanScoy, Andrusko, Brauer, Maul, and Nosan. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

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