

6.03: Public Hearing: Consider Preliminary Plat and Zoning Amendment for Lynwood Subdivision on PID #20-32-25-44-0003 (Project No. 21-122); Case of Lennar

Public Hearing

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 7:59 p.m.

Presentation

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the Zoning Amendment to rezone the R-3 Residential (High Density) portion of the subject property to R-2 Residential (Medium Density) but does not support rezoning the R-1 Residential (MUSA) – 80 area to R-1 Residential (MUSA) – 65. Approval of the Zoning Amendment needs to be contingent upon approval of the CPA. Staff recommends approval of the Preliminary Plat with the following contingencies (which have been incorporated into the draft resolution):

- Approval of the Zoning Amendment to rezone R-3 Residential (High Density) to R-2 Residential (Medium Density)
- Approval of the CPA
- Approval of Anoka County for second access onto Armstrong Boulevard
- Full compliance with density transitioning requirements
- Modifications to ensure compliance with all bulk standards of the applicable zoning district(s).

Chairperson Bauer asked if these should be considered as two separate actions.

City Planner Anderson confirmed that he would recommend taking two separate actions.

Chairperson Bauer referenced the comment from the Metropolitan Council related to livable community eligibility and asked for clarification.

City Planner Anderson stated that the action of the Council did not include identification of other areas to guide as high density.

Chairperson Bauer asked if the City would risk eligibility for funds if this Comprehensive Plan amendment were approved without adding additional high-density housing.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl noted that was already decided by the City Council. She stated that this conversation is related to the rezoning and preliminary plat as the Council has already acted on the Comprehensive Plan amendment and decided not to reguided additional land.

Commissioner Peters asked if there is guidance on whether trees last longer on flat land or berms. He stated that in his neighborhood trees were planted on a slope and half of them are now dead.

City Planner Anderson commented that there is a technique that can be used to place trees on a berm. He stated that it is not unusual for there to be some mortality with plantings, noting that

regular watering is a factor when being established. He stated that it is feasible and practical to plant on a berm.

Commissioner Peters stated that if there are plantings on a berm would that reduce the ability for homeowners to put features on their property.

City Planner Anderson commented that backyards would terminate at the start of the transition corridor and therefore it would not have an impact on what can be done on private property. He stated that the density transitioning corridor would need to be placed in its own lot under separate ownership to avoid that situation.

Commissioner VanScoy asked who would own the transition corridor.

City Planner Anderson stated that in this instance it sounds like the HOA would maintain ownership of that area.

Commissioner VanScoy asked how it would work if there was not an HOA.

City Planner Anderson stated that another option would be for that land to be deeded to the City once installed and established. He stated that in this scenario it would be likely that the HOA would own that parcel.

Chairperson Bauer asked if the City Council provided input on the 80 foot lots versus the 65-foot lots.

City Planner Anderson stated that the Council would prefer to see the property remain as 80 foot lots as a transition into the existing developed neighborhoods.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that it was an overwhelming consensus that the property remains at 80-foot lots. He asked the Commission to also support the 80-foot-wide lot requirement to avoid the situation where the Commission supports 65-foot lots only to get to the Council and have that denied.

Citizen Input

Paul Tabone, Lennar, thanked the Commission to listening to the request. He noted that he has been working closely with staff to propose different layouts for the property. He stated that at this time they are down to the lot sizes, noting that the Council was clear about the desire for 80-foot-wide lots. He stated that they are working with staff on the secondary access. He stated that the density transitioning is the biggest challenge. He noted that with the desire of the Council to have 80-foot lots, the depths of those home sites would be shortened if that transition area is put into its own parcel. He hoped that there could be some flexibility on that. He stated that he understands how important berming and density transitioning is in the City of Ramsey. He stated that this site is a challenge, surrounded by business, municipal, and rural residential uses. He asked if there could be flexibility in the density transitioning plan if the intent is still met. He stated that the draft landscape plan included as many trees as recommended by the landscaper per size at full maturity,

which falls short of the requirement. He stated that if a berm is added, that would take space from the backyards of the residents. He commented that there are some fairly significant existing tree lines to the north and west of the site. He stated that an adjacent property owner previously made the comment that he would even support 65-foot lots, if properly screened. He noted that property has a row of evergreens and suggested that perhaps a row of evergreens be added on this site to increase the thickness of that screen. He stated that would meet the intent of screening without reducing the backyard sizes. He stated that if home sites cannot be platted to the lot line, as shown, it would create a challenge in having 80-foot lots. He commented that staff has been great to work with throughout this process.

Chairperson Bauer asked the concern with the size of the 80-foot lots.

Mr. Tabone reviewed the depth that is needed in order to meet the 10,000 square feet lot size for an 80-foot-wide lot. He noted that if the density transitioning corridor is required, that portion of the site would be rendered undevelopable at 80 feet wide.

Chairperson Bauer asked if a variance could be issued for that section of the property related to minimum lot size.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that a minimum lot size variance could be provided, noting that would need to occur through separate action at a future meeting.

Kyle Swenson, 15049 Iguana Street, stated that this project seems to be a moving target as he has had different layouts mailed to him. He stated that the original layout would have had four 65-foot lots and three ponds that would come near his property but with the design change there would be several more homes along the existing residential boundary. He stated that the solution would be to include the buffer and remove a lot in order to have the minimum lot size met against that existing residential property line. He stated that the existing residents want to see a transition as it will be quite a difference to have 140 homes compared to the cornfield that exists. He stated that he likes the 80-foot-wide lot requirement and would suggest the developer remove a few lots in order to support that buffer.

Motion by Commissioner Peters, seconded by Commissioner Walker, to close the public hearing.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Commissioner Walker	aye
Commissioner Gengler	aye
Chairperson Bauer	aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 8:31 p.m.

Commission Business

Chairperson Bauer suggested the Commission begin with the requested rezoning.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to recommend that City Council adopt Ordinance #21-19 Approving a Zoning Amendment to Rezone Portions of the Subject Property from R-3 Residential (High Density) to R-2 Residential (Medium Density).

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Gengler	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Commissioner Walker	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Chairperson Bauer	aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Bauer noted that the second request is related to the preliminary plat and asked staff to display the list of contingencies that were included in the staff report.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that he is a little confused on how the transition can have common ownership and how it is configured with the lot. He stated that the applicant stated that the transition area is currently part of the lot.

City Planner Anderson stated that as the applicant proposed, the density transition corridor is part of the individual lots, but City Code states that corridor should be held common ownership, such as a separate entity like an HOA. He confirmed that changes would be needed in order to meet that requirement of the Code. He stated that each individual lot should meet the lot width and area requirements, separate from the density transition area.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that if the layout is configured in that manner, the density corridor should not impact the lot depth.

City Planner Anderson stated that if laid out in that manner from the start, there would not be an issue. He stated that originally, these lots were proposed at 65 feet and under that scenario the lots would have met the minimum lot size requirement and there was sufficient spacing for the density transitioning corridor to be held in separate parcel. He stated that the minimum lot size is larger for 80-foot-wide lots and therefore with the separate density transitioning corridor, 80 foot lots in that area could not meet the minimum lot size requirement.

Commissioner Anderson stated that this would mean yards would be smaller in that area and therefore a variance request would need to come back in the future to consider those smaller lots.

City Planner Anderson stated that the applicant could choose to revise the plan in order to show the required minimum lot size. He noted that a resident did suggest that a lot or two be removed in order to support meeting those requirements. He stated that if the applicant chose not to do that, they could come back to request a variance.

Mr. Tabone stated that he would like the ability to continue to work with staff on the density transitioning standards to determine if the intent can be met without dropping lots. He stated that this is not the first time they have dealt with a buffer, wetland, trees, or screening and therefore believed there were additional options outside of dropping home sites. He stated that they have already dropped a few townhomes and they want to ensure the project would be feasible in delivering a market need.

City Planner Anderson stated that within the density transitioning ordinance it states that alternatives can be used if agreed upon by the City and developer.

Chairperson Bauer asked if this type of issue has come before the Council during the tenure of Councilmember Woestehoff.

Councilmember Woestehoff replied that he cannot recall an instance of that nature in his time on the Council.

Commissioner Anderson asked if this should be tabled to allow the developer and staff to work this out.

City Planner Anderson stated that the Code does provide for some flexibility and that discussion as to whether the proposal would be reasonable could be discussed and decided upon by the City Council during its review.

Motion by Commissioner Gengler, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #21-252 Approving the Preliminary Plat of Lynwood Subdivision with the contingencies outlined in the staff report.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Commissioner Gengler	aye
Commissioner Walker	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Chairperson Bauer	aye

Motion Carried.