

**BIG LAKE PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

JANUARY 17, 2007

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Benecke called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Dick Backlund, Kirby Becker, Tony Benecke, Doug Hayes, Duane Langsdorf, Scott Marotz, and David Schreiber. Also present: City Administrator Scott Johnson, Community Economic Development Director Jim Thares, and Consultant Planner Nate Sparks of Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc. (NAC).

SWORN OATH BY NEW COMMISSIONERS

Mr. Dick Backlund and Mr. Duane Langsdorf were sworn in as Commissioner of the Big Lake Planning Commission.

3. OPEN FORUM

Chair Benecke opened the Open Forum at 7:05 p.m.

Ben Altschul, 310 Fern Street, #5 (Big Lake Townhome complex), was present to discuss the following two (2) concerns he has that pertain to the proposed Phase II of the Martin Avenue Extension project and how it would affect the Townhome property

- Assessment for the Martin Avenue Extension Project: Mr. Altschul stated that City staff had informed him that the townhome property shouldn't be assessed for the Martin Avenue Extension Phase III project due to the fact that as part of the project, the property would be reclassified as a corner lot and the City's Assessment Policy states that a corner lot property is only to be assessed for one project and that this property had been previously assessed with the Fern Street project. Mr. Altschul further stated that City Engineer Brad DeWolf had stated that there should not be assessments to the property due to the fact that the proposed roadway is new construction as opposed to as an established roadway being upgraded. Mr. Altschul asked for confirmation that the property would not be assessed for the Martin Avenue Extension project.
- Screening of the Townhome Property with the Martin Avenue Extension Project: Mr. Altschul stated that the townhome property abuts parcels that have been rezoned as commercial and he is requesting that a fence be installed behind the building as well as along the side in order to provide adequate screening from future commercial development on the adjacent parcels.

Community Economic Development Director Jim Thares stated that Mr. Altschul's concerns with potential assessments to his property would need to be addressed at the City Council level. Also, he stated that the Planning Commission would be responsible for reviewing any proposed plans for the adjacent commercial property and would consider the screening request at that time.

Chair Benecke stated that Commissioner Parsons would no longer be able to serve on the Planning Commission due to her family moving out of the City limits and he thanked her for six (6) years of service with the City of Big Lake Planning Commission.

Chair Benecke also thanked Commissioners Becker and Hayes for their recommitment to the Planning Commission for another 4-year term.

Chair Benecke closed the Open Forum at 7:09 p.m.

4. ADOPT AGENDA

Commissioner Becker moved to adopt the agenda with the removal of the item listed under #9, Other ("Appoint a Vice Planning Commission Chair). Seconded by Commissioner Hayes, unanimous ayes, agenda adopted.

5. APPROVE MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 15, 2006

Commissioner Langsdorf motioned to approve the November 15, 2006 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Hayes, the motion passed on a vote of 6 to 1, with Commissioners Becker, Hayes, Langsdorf, Marotz, Parsons, and Schreiber voting aye and Chair Benecke abstaining due to his absence at the 11/15/06.

6. BUSINESS

6A. PUBLIC HEARING: REZONING FOR PROPERTIES LOCATED ALONG EAGLE LAKE ROAD NORTH AND U.S. HIGHWAY 10

Consultant Planner Nate Sparks, of Northwest Associated Consultants, reviewed his January 11th Planning report pertaining to the proposed rezonings of a number of properties located along the east side of Eagle Lake Road North (County Road 5), north of U.S. Highway 10, and south of Minnesota Avenue (several R-1 Single Family properties and B-3 General Business properties being rezoned to B-2 Community Business).

Chair Benecke opened the public hearing at 7:14 p.m. No one came forward. Chair Benecke closed the public hearing at 7:15 p.m.

Community Economic Development Director Jim Thares responded to questions about the proposed, future alignment of Lexington Avenue and residential properties on the north end of the block which are not included in the proposed rezoning as they were not in agreement with the rezoning.

Commissioner Hayes motioned to recommend the rezoning of the various parcels along Eagle Lake Road North, as discussed. Seconded by Commissioner Marotz, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

6B. PRAIRIE MEADOWS THIRD ADDITION CONCEPT PLAN

Mr. Sparks reviewed his January 17th Planning Report and answered questions of the Board regarding the Concept Plan Planned Unit Development (PUD) application submitted by Miles Development for Outlot C of Prairie Meadows 3rd addition, to which they are proposing to divide into 47 detached townhome units and 20 attached townhome units. He further reported that the site is currently guided for a High Density Residential land use in the Comp Plan and is zoned R-3 (High Density Residential). Mr. Sparks stated that the applicant is requesting the Commission's feedback on the proposal, specifically on a Comp Plan Amendment, Rezoning, PUD flexibility, and Conceptual Site Plan, so that the appropriate suggestions can be incorporated into the future Development Stage PUD and Preliminary Plat.

Mark Gergan (SP), of Miles Development, discussed the proposed application and answered questions of the Commission. He briefly reviewed a project that Miles Development has developed in River Falls, stating that it was hoped that Big Lake would be interested in the same type of development. Mr. Gergan presented information on potential unit pricing and marketability and stated that the proposed application would create an opportunity for single family home ownership along with the creation of an association that would monitor the development to assure the upkeep of the properties should the owners fail to do so.

Commissioner Hayes asked for clarification as to whether this proposed development would be presented to the Boards as a single family development with smaller lots or a detached townhome development. Mr. Gergan stated that if it is taken as a PUD, he believes it was more beneficial to revise the plans from 111 townhomes and driveways to small lot, single family residences, and that the plans being reviewed at this time were presented in order to obtain the Commission's feedback and direction.

It was noted by one of the Commissioners that including some type of main floor/rambler style homes would be preferable in order to address the needs of both the aging population as well as persons with limited-physical mobility. Two other concerns that were noted by a Commissioner were the number of proposed lots to be located along the Township property and the proposed house height for the properties located along the eastern boundary of the development. The Commissioners discussed with Mr. Gergan other concerns and suggestions for the proposed project.

Chair Benecke receive a consensus from the Commission that it was appropriate for the developer to move forward with the Commissioner's comments as noted and discussed.

6C. COUNCIL ON AGING PRESENTATION

Ms. Lori Vrolson, Executive Director of the Central MN Council on Aging (St. Cloud, Minnesota), gave a presentation to the Planning Commission on the demographics of the aging population in the area. She suggested that the City review its policies to ensure that they are friendly to older citizens. Ms. Vrolson informed the Commissioners about several potential grant programs for pedestrian connections and senior-type transportation features/services.

7. **PLANNER'S REPORT** – No report.
8. **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS** – No reports.
9. **OTHER** – None.
10. **ADJOURN**

Commissioner Becker motioned to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Hayes, unanimous ayes, motion carried.