

**BIG LAKE PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

MARCH 3, 2010

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Ketti Green, Doug Hayes, Duane Langsdorf, Scott Marotz, Patricia May, and David Schreiber. Commissioners absent: Kirby Becker. Also present: Senior City Planner Katie Larsen, Community Economic Development Director Jim Thares, and Economic Development Assistant Sandy Petrowski.

3. ADOPT AGENDA

Commissioner May moved to adopt the revised agenda as presented, noting that Item #7C, Set Special Gathering for TH 10 & TH 25 Intersection Improvement Project, has been added. Seconded by Commissioner Hayes, unanimous ayes, agenda adopted.

4. OPEN FORUM

Chair Marotz opened the Open Forum at 7:02 p.m. No one came forward for comment. Chair Marotz closed the Open Forum at 7:02 p.m.

5. APPROVE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 3, 2010

Commissioner Green motioned to approve the February 3, 2010 Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Langsdorf, unanimous ayes, Minutes approved.

6. BUSINESS

6A. CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW – BIG LAKE RAIL PARK (CONTINUED DISCUSSION)

Planner Katie Larsen reviewed the February 23rd Planning Report pertaining to the changes made to the Concept Plan for the Big Lake Rail Park and asked for any additional comments that the Commissioner's might have regarding the revised proposal.

It was noted that changes were made to the Plan that was reviewed at the February 3rd Planning Commission meeting and that the preferred plan, "Concept B", is before the Board for discussion and review. Planner Larsen reviewed the comments received from the City Engineer, Planning Consultants, Parks Advisory Board, Sherburne County Public Works, MnDNR, BNSF, and MnDOT.

Planner Larsen noted that Marlon Glines, of Northstar Land, LLC, was present to answer questions of the Commission.

Commissioner Schreiber stated his concern with the trees on the site being one of the last wooded, natural stand of trees within the City and that something should be done to preserve the existing trees, noting that if the property were a potato field, he would not have as great a concern as with the natural stand of trees that exists on the site. He also asked how 40% of the trees will be preserved, per the City's tree preservation requirement. Planner Larsen clarified that tree preservation does not mean that 40% of the established trees are required to be preserved but that, if trees are taken down, additional trees must be placed elsewhere on the site to equal or exceed the 40% requirement. In regards to the maintenance of trees on the site, Planner Larsen suggested that it would be similar to the development of the Remmele parcels.

The Commission discussed the proposed location/need of the apartment complex as well as the ratio of land/acreage to housing units. Staff noted that, if the development meets the anticipated potential for 1,000-1,500 jobs, an apartment complex would be of benefit in the area. Mr. Glines stated that the units would all be built "on demand" as the Park fills up with businesses and that it would be beneficial to make the apartment buildings vertical and more compact, making it less spread out.

Mr. Glines also stated that an assisted living facility could possibly be development to the north. Planner Larsen stated that, with a PUD, it would allow for the project to be more condensed, which would allow more tree preservation and which would change the dynamic of the entire parcel.

No action was required or taken by the Commission. Comments received from the Planning Commission will be provided to the City Council for their review and consideration at their March 10th regular meeting.

7. PLANNER'S REPORT

7A. PROJECT UPDATE REPORT

Planner Larsen reviewed the nine (9) items listed in the February 24th Project Review Report and answered questions of the Board.

Commissioner Hayes asked if City staff knew the reason behind the Duffy Development's Elk River project being selected above the their Big Lake site for the Section 42 Tax Credit funding from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. Planner Larsen stated one reason the Elk River project was approved was because they had a larger percent of units dedicated to a specific income limit than the Big Lake project did.

Planner Larsen reported that the City had recently approved the purchase agreement for the BP station located on the SE corner of Highway 10 and Highway 25/Lake Street South for the intersection improvement project scheduled for that area; noting that the project will better realign the roadway and provide better safety and aesthetics at that intersection.

Commissioner Schreiber asked if it would be possible to have some type of "Welcome to Big Lake" sign erected near that project area. Planner Larsen stated that staff had recently discussed the idea of such signage and that the remaining BP parcel on the east of Lake Street will provide more green space for possible placement of a sign.

Commissioner Schreiber also stated that there will be a lot more pedestrian traffic at that intersection, which is a very vast/wide roadway. He stated that he believed that there needs to be more signage in the area, particularly in the future when there is an increase in pedestrian traffic from the train station.

7B. CENSUS 2010

Planner Larsen reminded the Commissioners that the 2010 census will be mailed to residents within the next few weeks and that staff is encouraging everyone to fill out and return the surveys as it is very important from a planning standpoint.

7C. SET SPECIAL GATHERING FOR TH 10 & TH 25 INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Planner Larsen reported that Bolton & Menk will be hosting an Open House on Wednesday, March 10, 2010, to present the proposed TH 10 & TH 25 Intersection Improvement Project and that staff is asking the Commission to call a Special Gathering for this Open House.

Commissioner Hayes motioned to schedule Special Gathering of the Planning Commission for Wednesday, March 10, 2010, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. for an Open House for the presentation of the proposed TH 10 & TH 25 Intersection Improvement project. Seconded by Commissioner Green, unanimous ayes, motion carried.

8. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS – No reports.

Commissioner Green stated that there have been some discussions about a possible dog park being established in the City. It was noted that some people have written in to state their interest in exploring the development of a dog park and that Public Works Director Mike Goebel will be including an item in the upcoming City Newsletter to ask for resident feedback on the desire/need for a dog park in the City.

9. **OTHER** – None.

10. **ADJOURN**

Commissioner Green motioned to adjourn at 8:42 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner May, unanimous ayes, motion carried.