



Approved: March 7, 2018

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**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2018  
6:30 P.M. - ARDEN HILLS CITY HALL**

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**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Chair Roberta Thompson called to order the regular Planning Commission meeting at 6:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present were: Chair Roberta Thompson, Commissioners Matt Dixon, Nick Gehrig, Steven Jones, and James Lambeth.

Absent: Commissioners Brent Bartel, Angela Hames, and Clayton Zimmerman.

Also present were: City Planner Matthew Bachler, Public Works Director/City Engineer Sue Polka, and Councilmember Steve Scott.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA – FEBRUARY 7, 2018**

**Chair Thompson** stated the agenda will stand as published, noting that staff has recommended that Item 3B be tabled to the March 7, 2018 Planning Commission meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*January 10, 2018 – Planning Commission Regular Meeting*

**Commissioner Jones moved, seconded by Commissioner Lambeth, to approve the January 10, 2018, Planning Commission Regular Meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

**PLANNING CASES**

- A. Planning Case 17-029; Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, Vacation of Easement – 3685 New Brighton Road – *Public Hearing***

**City Planner Bachler** stated the Planning Commission held the public hearing for Planning Case 17-029 at their meeting on January 10, 2018. The Planning Commission voted to table this planning case to allow staff and the Rice Creek Watershed District additional time to review the

stormwater management plan for the development. Since that time, staff has completed its review of the stormwater management plan and has no additional comments.

**City Planner Bachler** explained the Rice Creek Watershed District (RCWD) has reviewed the plans and granted the project CAPROC status (Conditionally Approved Pending Receipt of Changes) as of January 29, 2018. Site work cannot begin until all pending items are satisfied. This includes providing RCWD with a Declaration for Maintenance of Stormwater Management Facilities that is acceptable to the RCWD engineer and attorney for the onsite stormwater management features. The Maintenance Agreement would be between RCWD and the developer, and RCWD will be responsible for monitoring and enforcing the agreement.

**City Planner Bachler** commented the existing property at 3685 New Brighton Road is approximately 1.9 acres in size and is comprised of a single-family residential dwelling, detached garage, and shed. The dwelling and accessory structures are located towards the eastern side of the property and the one access driveway for the lot is on New Brighton Road near the intersection with Thom Drive. The property has approximately 124 feet of frontage on New Brighton Road and 378 feet of frontage along Thom Drive.

**City Planner Bachler** reported the existing topography of the lot generally slopes west from New Brighton Road to a wetland complex located on the western parcel boundary. This wetland complex covers approximately 0.3 acres of the property and extends off the property to the north and south. The City has a sanitary lift station located on the southern edge of the property approximately in the middle of the lot. The remainder of the lot is heavily wooded.

**City Planner Bachler** noted the applicant has proposed a subdivision of the existing property to create three lots for single-family residential dwellings. The existing dwelling and other improvements would be retained and located on the proposed Lot 3. Two new lots (Lot 1 and Lot 2) would be located to the west of Lot 3 with frontage and driveways on Thom Drive. The existing access driveway for Lot 3 would be relocated to Thom Drive so that all three parcels are similarly oriented with their principal frontage on Thom Drive. There is a purchase agreement in place for the easterly lot (Lot 2) and the applicant expects construction to begin on this lot immediately if City approval is received. The westerly lot (Lot 1) is being marketed for sale.

**City Planner Bachler** stated in order to support the proposed development, a Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, and Vacation of Easement is requested. The easement vacation is needed to vacate a portion of the public utility easement for the City lift station on the property. The development is required to meet Rice Creek Watershed District regulations and the proposed grading plan shows that two basins would be constructed on Lot 1 to capture stormwater runoff from the site and allow it to discharge into the adjacent wetland. Lot 1 and Lot 2 would be graded to direct water flow from these properties to one of the two basins. The site is heavily wooded with 72 significant trees. A Tree Preservation Plan has been provided indicating 22 of these trees would be removed. Replacement tree plantings are proposed as part of the Tree Preservation Plan.

#### Site Data

Land Use Plan:	Low Density Residential
Existing Land Use:	Single Family Detached Residential
Zoning:	R-2: Single & Two Family Residential
Current Lot Sizes:	83,253 square feet (1.91 acres)

Topography: Property slopes east to west approximately 28 feet from New Brighton Road to the wetland complex on the western boundary.

**City Planner Bachler** reviewed the surrounding area, the Plan Evaluation and the Variance Evaluation Criteria.

**City Planner Bachler** provided the Findings of Fact for review:

1. The property at 3685 New Brighton Road is located in the R-2 – Single and Two-Family Residential Zoning District.
2. The subject property is 83,253 square feet in size with approximately 124 feet on frontage on New Brighton Road and 378 feet of frontage on Thom Drive.
3. The subject property is currently comprised of a single-family residential dwelling, detached garage, and shed.
4. The City has an existing lift station located along the southern line of the subject property along Thom Drive. This lift station is located on private property and the City has a utility easement that permits the City to operate and maintain the lift station.
5. The applicant has requested a Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, and Vacation of Easement in order to subdivide the subject property to create three (3) lots for single-family residential dwellings.
6. The proposed Horita Acres subdivision meets the Minimum Subdivision Design Standards included in Section 1130 of the Arden Hills City Code.
7. The park dedication requirement for this application is ten percent of the buildable land area in the subdivision or a park dedication fee of \$6,500 per lot. Ten percent of the development would be 0.19 acres which would not allow for a feasible park area. The park dedication fee of \$6,500 per new lot will be applied in this case.
8. The proposed Horita Acres subdivision meets or will be required to meet the Required Improvements for subdivisions included in Section 1140 of the Arden Hills City Code.
9. The proposed Horita Acres subdivision would result in three (3) lots that would conform to the minimum lot area and dimension requirements for the R-2 District.
10. The R-2 District permits residential densities of up to five (5) units per net acre.
11. The proposed Horita Acres subdivision would have a density of approximately 1.86 units per net acre.
12. The proposed Lot 1 and Lot 2 could be developed for a single-family residential dwelling and meet the setback, lot coverage, height, and FAR requirements for the R-2 District.
13. The proposed Lot 3 would meet the lot coverage requirements for the R-2 District.
14. The existing dwelling on Lot 3 has a deck that would encroach into the proposed western side yard setback and within a drainage and utility easement.
15. The existing accessory structures on Lot 3 would meet the accessory structure setback requirements for the R-2 District.
16. Based on the submitted Tree Preservation Plan 193.5 caliper inches of new tree plantings are required based on the amount of significant tree caliper inches removed.
17. The applicant has proposed a Landscape Plan that includes 92.5 caliper inches of new tree plantings.
18. Section 1325.055 of the City Code states that replacement trees are required to be planted on the same site from which significant trees are removed, unless the City determines that the number of replacement trees exceeds the number of trees that can practically fit on the

site. The City may require the additional replacement trees be planted off-site, or a fee in lieu of the off-site plantings may be collected set as the cost of materials and installation, plus ten percent.

**City Planner Bachler** stated based on the submitted plans and findings of fact, staff recommends approval of Planning Case 17-029 for a Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, and Vacation of Easement at 3685 New Brighton Road. If the Planning Commission votes to recommend approval of Planning Case 17-029, staff is recommending the nineteen (19) conditions of approval listed below. The first recommended condition is that the Preliminary Plat approval be contingent on the City Council approval of the Vacation of Easement request, which will be reviewed at a public hearing on February 26, 2018. It was noted the applicant has submitted a letter responding to the recommended conditions on tree replacement requirements and park dedication fees.

1. The Preliminary Plat approval shall be contingent upon City Council approval of the request to vacate a portion of the existing easement for the City lift station on the proposed Lot 2.
2. The project shall be completed in accordance with the submitted plans as amended by the conditions of approval. Any significant changes to these plans, as determined by the City Planner, shall require review and approval by the Planning Commission and City Council.
3. A Development Agreement shall be prepared by the City Attorney and subject to City Council approval. The Development Agreement shall be executed prior to execution of the Final Plat.
4. The Developer shall submit a park dedication fee in the amount of \$13,000, subject to the approval of the City Council. The park dedication fee shall be submitted prior to the execution of the Final Plat.
5. The Developer shall provide the City with a copy of the approved Rice Creek Watershed District Permit prior to the execution of the Final Plat by the City.
6. The developer shall file the Final Plat with the Ramsey County Recorder and provide the City with a recorded copy within sixty (60) days of approval.
7. The proposed project may require permits, including, but not limited to, MPCA-NPDES, Rice Creek Watershed District, Minnesota Department of Health, MPCA- Sanitary Sewer Extension, Ramsey County and City Right of Way, and City Grading and Erosion Control permits. Copies of all issued permits shall be provided to the City prior to the issuance of any development permits.
8. Final grading and drainage plans shall be subject to approval by the City Engineer prior to the commencement of any construction on the site.
9. The signed and recorded Maintenance Agreement between the RCWD and the Developer for the stormwater management facilities on the site shall be provided to the City before the issuance of any development permits. The City shall not be responsible for the maintenance of the onsite stormwater management facilities.
10. Before construction, grading, or land clearing begins, trees or tree areas that are to be preserved shall be visibly marked and city-approved tree protection fencing or other method shall be installed and maintained at the critical root zones of the trees to be protected. The location of the fencing shall be in conformance with the approved tree preservation plan.

11. A Letter of Credit in the amount of 125 percent of the cost of materials and installation for the required replacement tree plantings shall be provided prior to the issuance of a Grading and Erosion Control permit. The Letter of Cred shall be valid for two full years from the date of installation of the replacements trees.
12. The Developer shall work with the City to find alternative locations for the 101 caliper inches of replacement trees off-site, or a fee in lieu of the replacement tress will be required equaling the cost of materials and installation plus ten percent, as determined by the City Council.
13. Survey monuments shall be placed and installed at all block corners, angle points, points of curves in streets, and at intermediate points as shown on the Final Plat. Pipes or steel rods shall be placed at the corners of each lot.
14. The Developer shall be required to stake metal markers along the drainage easement abutting the infiltration basis and wetland with signs stating the area is a natural vegetation/infiltration area and no dumping is allowed. The design of the signs shall be approved by the City prior to installation.
15. Sewer and water for the subdivision shall be obtained by connections to the City water and sewer systems. Extension of City services shall be subject to review and approval by the City Engineer and all associated costs shall be the responsibility of the developer.
16. A grading as-built and utility as-built plan shall be provided to the City upon completion of grading and utility work.
17. The deck on the existing single-family dwelling at 3685 New Brighton Road shall be removed or modified in order to meet the side yard setback requirement and not encroach on any drainage and utility easement prior to the issuance of a building permit for Lot 1 or Lot 2, or the Developer shall be required to submit a cash escrow with the City to ensure the removal of the deck within six (6) months from the approval of the Final Plat.
18. The driveway for the existing single-family dwelling at 3685 New Brighton Road shall be relocated to Thom Drive prior to the issuance of a building permit for Lot 1 or Lot 2, or the Developer shall be required to submit a cash escrow with the City to ensure the relocation of the driveway within six (6) months from the approval of the Final Plat.
19. The Developer shall conform to all other City regulations.

**City Planner Bachler** reviewed the options available to the Planning Commission on this matter:

1. Recommend Approval with Conditions
2. Recommend Approval as Submitted.
3. Recommend Denial
4. Table

**Chair Thompson** opened the floor to Commissioner comments.

**Commissioner Lambeth** asked who the developer would be for the project.

**City Planner Bachler** explained the current owner of the property was Timothy Horita and the application was from Mr. Horita and Richard Kotoski, a real estate agent. He indicated Mr. Horita would be the developer.

**Commissioner Dixon** questioned if there were any costs to the City with regard to the lift station.

**City Planner Bachler** stated the City would incur ongoing maintenance costs for the lift station over time.

**Public Works Director/City Engineer Polka** reported the developer would be responsible if any damage were to occur to the lift station during construction. She explained the majority of the equipment for the lift station was underground. She stated the concerns regarding the lift station could be addressed in the Development Agreement.

Further discussion ensued regarding Rice Creek Watershed approval and maintenance of the stormwater basins.

**Commissioner Jones** questioned if the required maintenance would be done quarterly, every six months or yearly.

**City Planner Bachler** explained the property owner would be required to inspect the basins annually. If this was not done in accordance with the Rice Creek Watershed Permit, notice would be given of the deficiency and steps may be taken to correct the deficiency. In addition, the property owner would be responsible for covering the expenses to maintain the facilities.

**Chair Thompson** opened the public hearing at 7:00 p.m.

**Chair Thompson** invited anyone for or against the application to come forward and make comment.

**Ivan Gilbert**, 3707 New Brighton Road, expressed concern with the fact that the owner of Lot 1 would be responsible for the maintenance of the storm basins. He questioned who would be responsible if this lot never sold. He encouraged the Planning Commission to hear the concerns of the neighbors regarding this development and not approve the request.

**Joe Federer**, 3695 New Brighton Road, commented on how this development would injure his property and home. He indicated he sent a lengthy email to the Commission addressing his concerns. He stated after speaking with a hydrologist, the proposed basins were not put in the correct place, but rather where they would fit. He noted he spoke with the Rice Creek Watershed District as well and explained the cost to maintain this basin would be \$30,000 to \$50,000 to replace once it fails. He explained these basins are typically owned by municipalities and not homeowners. He discussed the proposed lot sizes and noted they were quite a bit smaller than the adjacent properties. He encouraged the Commission to keep the lot sizes more closely aligned with the existing neighborhood. He commented on the lift station and discussed how the easement location was relocated after recent reconstruction on this structure. He noted 78% of the trees on this property would be removed if this development were to go through and noted the diseased trees should not be considered for salvaged caliper inches. He recommended staff review the tree numbers more closely.

**Richard Kotoski**, Coldwell Banker Burnett, explained he was working with Tim Horita to market and sell his lots.

**Commissioner Jones** questioned how the maintenance agreement for the storm basins would be handled by the developer.

**Paul Cherne, Pioneer Engineering**, stated the maintenance agreement would run with the land.

**Chair Thompson** requested further information on how the storm basins will be graded.

**Mr. Cherne** discussed how the basins would be graded and seeded for the development. He reported these basins were not complicated but would simply be used for holding and discharge to the wetlands. He explained the maintenance for the basin would be quite minimal and would simply involve keeping the pipe free and clear of debris. He noted no street runoff would be managed by the storm basins on Lot 1.

**Commissioner Lambeth** asked if the grading on the property would have a natural grade.

**Mr. Cherne** described how the site would be graded and noted one pipe would be needed for one of the driveways.

**Commissioner Dixon** requested staff summarize the list of variances needed to approve this Planning Case.

**City Planner Bachler** stated this request has no variances and noted all of the lots met the City's minimum size requirements.

**Commissioner Dixon** asked if the City could successfully replace the lift station in 20 or 50 years with the proposed development in place.

**City Planner Bachler** explained that staff has reviewed the proposed plans and believes the lift station could be successfully reconstructed with the reduced easement area and the addition of the two new homes.

**Commissioner Gehrig** thanked staff for providing the Commission with additional information from the Rice Creek Watershed District and on the basin maintenance.

**Commissioner Jones** stated the Commission did not really have a leg to stand on in order to deny the request, given the fact the applicant had not requested any variances and the proposed development met all City requirements.

**Chair Thompson** indicated this was the case and noted the final decision for this request would be made by the City Council where the comments and concerns expressed by the neighbors would have to be considered.

**Commissioner Jones** requested that staff take a closer look at the tree preservation plan to address the concern expressed by Mr. Federer this evening.

**City Planner Bachler** discussed the tree preservation plan and noted all diseased trees had been removed from the City's calculations. He commented further on the bond the City would require for the new tree plantings on the site. He noted if trees that are to be protected are removed or

significantly damaged during construction, the City would require the trees to be replaced at a ratio of two caliper inches for every one inch removed.

**Chair Thompson** reported the tree replacement and bond requirement was addressed in Conditions 11 and 12. She stated she supported keeping the cottonwood trees as significant trees within the calculations.

**Chair Thompson** thanked the neighbors for coming forward and voicing their concerns regarding this development.

**Commissioner Gehrig moved and Commissioner Lambeth seconded a motion to recommend approval of 17-029 for a Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, and Vacation of Easement at 3685 New Brighton Road, based on the findings of fact and submitted plans, as amended by the nineteen (19) conditions in the February 7, 2018 Report to the Planning Commission. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

**B. Planning Case 18-001; Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Conditional Use Permit and Variance – 3246 New Brighton Road**

**City Planner Bachler** stated this application was not complete in time to include on the February 7, 2018 Planning Commission agenda. Staff requests that the Planning Commission table Planning Case 18-001 until such time that a full review can be completed on the proposal. A motion to table to a future meeting is necessary because this item had already been noticed as a public hearing for this evening prior to it being pulled from the agenda.

**Commissioner Jones moved and Commissioner Lambeth seconded a motion to table action on Planning Case 18-014 to the March 7, 2018 Planning Commission meeting. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

**UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Sign Code Update**

**City Planner Bachler** reported at the Planning Commission meeting on February 8, 2017, staff presented the following topics regarding the City's Sign Code:

- Review of planning cases from past 5 years that included a deviation from the Sign Code
- Comparison of the Arden Hills Sign Code with sign regulations adopted by cities in the surrounding area in the following areas: wall signage, freestanding signage, dynamic display signs, temporary signs, and projecting signs

**City Planner Bachler** stated based on their discussion, the Planning Commission recommended focusing on the following areas:

- Permit wall signage as a percentage of the building elevation area rather than a set square foot amount
- Allow for greater flexibility in the use of dynamic display sign while ensuring quality of signs and reducing distraction



- Allow for larger freestanding signs for properties with highway frontage
- Permit the use of projecting signs
- Evaluate temporary sign regulations, including how regulations address devices such as inflatable mascots

**City Planner Bachler** reviewed the sign code in detail with the Commission stating it currently includes nine sign districts in the City based on land use and geographical location. Generally, properties in commercial and industrial zoning districts are permitted more signage than properties in residential districts, and properties with frontage on main commercial corridors like Lexington Avenue are allotted greater signage than properties on secondary roadways. The purpose of this is to grant appropriate signage for business visibility in the City's commercial districts while minimizing the negative impacts of signage in residential areas.

**City Planner Bachler** stated as part of its evaluation of the Sign Code, staff reviewed the current sign districts. Staff is recommending that the sign districts be reorganized based on similar zoning districts rather than geographical location. The zoning districts generally conform to geographical areas and road corridors in the City already, and creating sign districts based on zoning districts will allow for easier administration of the Sign Code. Staff reviewed a table with the Commission with the breakdown of the new proposed sign districts.

**City Planner Bachler** explained currently, the Sign Code allows a set square footage of wall signage based on the sign district the property is located in. This one size fits all approach can result in signs that are not proportional to the size of the building a business is located in. For example, under the current Sign Code properties in Sign District 5 (properties fronting Lexington Avenue south of Interstate 694) are allowed 80 square feet of wall signage. This applies to both a large store like Cub Foods as well as a tenant in a multiple occupancy building, such as Subway.

**City Planner Bachler** reported staff has worked on updates to allow wall signage based on a percentage of the building elevation area. From reviewing other cities' regulations, this approach is commonly used for business and industrial districts and not residential or public/institutional districts. The range is generally between 5 and 10 percent of the elevation area. One wall sign per building would be permitted, but properties with frontage on more than one public street would be allowed an additional sign for each elevation with frontage. Staff reviewed a table with the Commission that provided examples of how much wall signage would be allowed for different businesses in the City.

**City Planner Bachler** stated based on these calculations, using 5 percent of the building elevation for larger buildings (Cub Foods and Walgreens) appears to work better than using 10 percent. Conversely, for tenants in multiple occupancy buildings (Potbelly), 10 percent of the building elevation results in a more appropriately sized sign. Staff would recommend setting the permitted wall signage at 5 percent of the building elevation and establishing a minimum square footage for wall signage in each district. This would ensure that tenants in multiple occupancy buildings have adequate signage. Staff is recommending that wall signage be allocated as a set square footage for properties in residential districts, and in the B-1, Neighborhood Business, Civic Center, Institutional, Parks and Open Space, and Conservation Districts. Staff provided further comment on a table outlining the recommendations for wall sign copy area.

**City Planner Bachler** explained staff is recommending minor changes to what is allowed for freestanding signage. The City has received fewer requests for additional freestanding sign area or height as compared to requests for additional wall signage. Where additional height or copy area is needed for a freestanding sign, property owners can still request flexibility through the sign standard adjustment process. Generally, the changes that were made would increase the amount of sign copy area in industrial districts to 80 square feet (currently most industrial properties are allowed 25 or 45 square feet), and allow for additional sign copy and height for properties with highway frontage.

**City Planner Bachler** reported dynamic display refers to signs that use technologies such as LCD or LED to display content including videos, digital images, or text. He explained dynamic display signs are currently prohibited in the City. In the past, staff has interpreted digital display to refer to a sign with any type of digital content, including weather data and gas prices. At the Planning Commission meeting on February 8, 2017, commissioners expressed an interest in allowing for certain types of dynamic display signs if standards were put in place to ensure quality and to reduce distraction to drivers. Staff reviewed standards adopted by Roseville, New Brighton, Shoreview, and Mounds View for dynamic display signs and has summarized the main types of standards below. Based on Planning Commission feedback on this item, additional work would need to be completed on possible standards for dynamic display signs.

#### *Duration and Transition*

The City can regulate how long a sign image is displayed for before there is a transition to another image. This would ensure that video or a rapid sequence of images were not used that could cause distraction. Roseville requires a minimum duration of 25 seconds and the three other communities require a minimum of 8 seconds. The transition between images could be required to be instantaneous. Transitions that include fading, dissolving, scrolling, traveling, or any other illusion of movement could be prohibited.

#### *Brightness*

To reduce the visual impact of dynamic display signs at night, the City could consider setting maximum brightness levels. The unit for measuring the brightness of the face of a sign is a nit (candelas per square meter). Roseville has adopted a maximum illumination of 5,000 nits during daylight hours and 500 nits between dusk and dawn as measured from the sign's face at maximum brightness. Roseville also requires that dynamic display signs include a dimmer control that automatically reduces the illumination level of the sign between one half-hour before sunset and one half-hour after sunrise.

#### *Sign Content*

The Sign Code currently prohibits outdoor advertising signs, which are signs that advertise a product, business, service, event, or any other matter that is not available or does not take place on the same premises as the sign. If dynamic display signs were permitted, the messages displayed would be required to be for products and services offered on the property. An exception could be time and temperature display signs.

#### *Size*

The area of a dynamic display sign would be included in the maximum sign area permitted for the sign type. The City could place limits on how much of a sign area could be comprised of

dynamic display. For example, in certain districts Shoreview limits the area that can be a dynamic display to 50 percent of the total sign area or 50 square feet whichever is less.

#### *Location*

The City could limit dynamic display signs to non-residential sign districts. Additionally, location, orientation, and hours of display regulations could be put in place to impact the impact of these signs on adjacent residential uses.

#### *General Prohibitions*

The City could retain the current prohibitions on any dynamic display sign that includes video display, fluctuating light intensity, flashing, blinking, or any other technology that creates the illusion of movement.

**City Planner Bachler** explained the Sign Code currently does not permit projecting signs. The TCAAP Redevelopment Code allows for projecting signs that extend up to six feet from the building wall they are attached to or 50 percent of the width of the public sidewalk, whichever is less. If the City chooses to allow projecting signs in areas outside of TCAAP, staff would not recommend adopting these same dimensions given the difference in the type of development that is expected on TCAAP. Staff would recommend considering adopting regulations similar to Roseville, which allows for projecting signs that extend up to 30 inches from the building wall. Staff would recommend that a projecting sign be counted towards the overall amount of wall signage permitted for a property.

**City Planner Bachler** reported for temporary signage, Arden Hills allows property owners to install up to one-half of the area allowed for a permanent wall or freestanding sign. Temporary signs may be displayed on three occasions per calendar year, with a maximum of 10 days each time. The three occasions may also be combined for one 30-day period.

#### *General Temporary Signs*

Staff would recommend simplifying the allowed temporary signage area to 32 square feet for businesses. Temporary signs must follow the height limit established for the sign district that the property is located in. Staff would also recommend changing the allowed display length to up to four occasions per year with a maximum of 14 days on each occasion.

#### *Grand Opening & Leasing Signs*

New businesses with a grand opening and buildings with vacant space are eligible for temporary signage. For grand openings, a sign may be in place for up to 30 days. Leasing signs may stay in place until seven days after a space is leased. Staff would not recommend any changes to the display length for these temporary signs. Staff would recommend that both grand opening and leasing signs be limited to 32 square feet. Property owners would still be limited to one temporary sign at a time.

#### *Inflatables and Banners*

The Sign Code currently lists streamers, banners, balloons, and inflatables as types of temporary signs that are regulated by the temporary on-premise sign requirements. These types of commercial message displays would need to meet the area and height requirements for all temporary signs.

**Commissioner Dixon** stated he would like to see a sign code ordinance in place that would minimize the number of requests for sign code variances.

**Chair Thompson** agreed it was the City's goal to amend the sign code in order to have less sign variance requests.

**City Planner Bachler** stated the Planning Commission could consider shifting the percentage from somewhere between 5 and 10 percent of the building elevation area.

**Commissioner Jones** questioned how wall signage would be handled by the City when businesses choose to co-locate, such as Cub Foods and TCF Bank or Target and CVS.

**City Planner Bachler** stated in these cases the amount of wall signage permitted for the elevation would need to be shared between the businesses.

**Commissioner Lambeth** recommended the wall signage criteria have language that specifies clarity and visibility requirements from the freeway or other major roadway for both visual and safety purposes.

**City Planner Bachler** reported the proposed changes should help address this, but that sign standard adjustments may still be needed in certain cases.

**Chair Thompson** supported the City having more language in place to address dynamic display signs. She liked the idea of having dimmers in place. She questioned how the City would address dynamic display signs that were placed in windows inside an establishment.

**City Planner Bachler** stated staff would have to investigate how to handle this further.

**Commissioner Gehrig** stated he supported dynamic display signs with the understanding it would be difficult for the City to monitor the brightness and transition periods.

**Commissioner Jones** stated his main concern with dynamic display signs was the duration or transition period. He explained gas stations already have dynamic display signs and he did not oppose these.

**City Planner Bachler** recommended dynamic display signs only be allowed in commercial zoning districts and not residential.

**Chair Thompson** did not believe projecting signs would be a good fit for Arden Hills except for the Town Center within TCAAP. The Commission was in agreement.

**Commissioner Jones** asked if dynamic display should be considered for temporary trailer signs.

**City Planner Bachler** stated currently the Sign Code prohibits portable signs. He noted sandwich board signs were allowed.

**Chair Thompson** thanked staff for the detailed report.

**City Planner Bachler** thanked the Commission for their feedback and noted staff would continue to work on this topic.

## **B. 2017 Year-End Report**

**City Planner Bachler** provided the Planning Commission with a summary of the planning activities for 2017. The following is a list of the main accomplishments completed over the past year:

- Reviewed and processed 32 planning cases that included 44 separate land use requests
- Reviewed and made recommendations to the City Council on the Commercial, Industrial, and Higher Education study completed by WSB & Associates
- Reviewed draft chapters for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan in anticipation of final adoption in 2018

## **REPORTS**

### **A. Report from the City Council**

**Councilmember Scott** updated the Planning Commission on City Council activities from the January 16, 2018 City Council Work Session stating staff presented a conceptual plan for a new Arden Hills gateway sign at the southwest corner of Highway 96 and Lexington Avenue. Three gateway signs have been installed to date at the following locations in the City:

- County Road E2 at Cleveland Avenue
- County Road D at Cleveland Avenue
- County Road D at New Brighton Road/Lake Johanna Boulevard

The City Council directed staff to investigate additional funding sources for the gateway sign. If funding is secured, the sign could be constructed in 2018.

**Councilmember Scott** updated the Planning Commission on City Council activities from the January 22, 2018 Regular Meeting, stating the City Council voted to deny Planning Case 17-028 for a Site Plan Review at 1504 Edgewater Avenue in order to allow an accessory structure to be located in the front yard between the principal structure on the property and the public street. The Planning Commission reviewed this case at their meeting on January 10, 2018 and recommended denial of the request (5-0). The application for a Variance at 3415 Lake Johanna Boulevard (Planning Case 17-027) was withdrawn by the applicant following the Planning Commission meeting on January 10, 2018 and prior to City Council review.

**Councilmember Scott** noted staff would be holding several neighborhood meetings in the coming weeks to address the upcoming PMP projects being completed by the City.

### **B. Planning Commission Comments and Requests**

None.

**C. Staff Comments**

**City Planner Bachler** stated the Planning Commission was in need of volunteers. Those interested in serving the City in this capacity were encouraged to contact City Hall for further information.

**ADJOURN**

**Commissioner Jones moved, seconded by Commissioner Lambeth, to adjourn the February 7, 2018, Planning Commission Meeting at 8:35 p.m. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).**