

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES - CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Tuesday, September 3, 2019 – 7:00 p.m.
City Hall Chambers - 8150 Barbara Avenue

Chair Maggi called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Elizabeth Niemioja
Joan Robertson
Jonathan Weber
Tony Scales
Brett Kramer
Annette Maggi
Dennis Wippermann

Commissioners Absent: Pat Simon (excused)
Armando Lissarrague (excused)

Others Present: Allan Hunting, City Planner
Heather Botten, Associate Planner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Commissioners unanimously approved the minutes from the August 7, 2019 Planning Commission meeting as submitted.

JAEGER CONSTRUCTION – CASE NO. 19-36CA

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Scales read the public hearing notice to consider the request for a conditional use permit amendment to allow for an addition to the oil change bays and car wash, for the property located at 4725 Robert Trail South. 5 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Heather Botten, Associate Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. She advised that the applicant is requesting a conditional use permit amendment to add a 1,008 square foot carwash addition on the north side of the Ford dealership building and a 1,194 square foot oil change addition on the south side of the building. No additional impervious surface would be added on the property. There will be a loss of five parking stalls with the proposed addition, but the number of parking spaces still exceeds the minimum required by code. Staff recommends approval of the request with the 12 conditions listed in the report. Staff did not hear from any neighbors.

Commissioner Weber asked if they would be restricting the horizontal parking currently in the customer pickup area.

Ms. Botten replied that she assumed the Fire Marshal would require that area to be striped for a fire lane and prohibit parking in that area.

Opening of Public Hearing

Barry Jaeger, 8308 Alverno Avenue, advised he was available to answer any questions.

Chair Maggi asked the applicant if he read and understood the report.

Mr. Jaeger replied in the affirmative.

Chair Maggi closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Weber, second by Commissioner Scales, to approve the request for a conditional use permit amendment to allow for an addition to the oil change bays and car wash, for the property located at 4725 Robert Trail South, with the conditions listed in the report.

Motion carried (7/0). This item goes to the City Council on September 23, 2019.

WILLIAM D. KRECH – CASE NO. 19-35SPD

No notices were required.

Chair Maggi asked if this application would require a public hearing.

Allan Hunting, City Planner, replied that final plats and final PUD's do not require a public hearing or notice. Mr. Hunting explained the request as detailed in the report. He advised that the applicant has submitted the final plat and final development plan for the plat of Amberwood, which consists of 20 single-family lots and two outlots. The proposed plan is consistent with the approved preliminary plans. Outlot A will be owned by the City as a stormwater retention area. Outlot B will be owned and maintained by the homeowners association and will remain in its natural state as required open space. Staff recommends approval of the request with the conditions listed in the report.

Commissioner Weber asked if the dark shaded area shown on Outlot A was a walking trail.

Mr. Hunting replied that it was not a walking trail but rather a maintenance access.

Commissioner Wippermann noted that tonight's plan was significantly different from the one previously before the Planning Commission and asked if the neighbors in the area were notified that this was going to be on tonight's agenda.

Mr. Hunting replied that the residents were aware of the changes on tonight's plan and were there to speak to it when Council approved the 20-lot preliminary plat.

Chair Maggi asked for clarification of whether a public hearing was needed.

Mr. Hunting replied that a public hearing was not necessary.

Commissioner Wippermann stated he had a question for the applicant.

Dick Braun, Sunfish Lake, advised he was available to answer any questions.

Commissioner Wippermann asked if the anticipated price range was still between \$575,000 and \$900,000.

Mr. Braun replied that actually it was more likely \$750,000 to \$900,000.

Commissioner Wippermann asked if the original villa style plan had been changed to standard houses.

Mr. Braun replied in the affirmative, stating the 70-foot lots afforded them the room to build larger homes, three car garages, and more two-story products.

Commissioner Wippermann commended Mr. Braun for making these significant changes to the plan.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Scales, second by Commissioner Wippermann, to approve the request for a final plat and final PUD development plan for Amberwood, with the conditions listed in the report.

Motion carried (7/0). This item goes to the City Council on September 23, 2019.

CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS – CASE NO. 19-37V

Reading of Notice

Commissioner Scales read the public hearing notice to consider the request for a variance to exceed the maximum size of a sign allowed in the P, Institutional zoning district, for the property located at 8055 Barbara Avenue. 6 notices were mailed.

Presentation of Request

Heather Botten, Associate Planner, explained the request as detailed in the report. She advised that the Veterans Memorial Community Center would like to replace their existing 69 square foot sign on 80th Street and Barbara Avenue with a new sign that would include an LED messaging center and a list of tenants. The sign would be about 96 square feet in size whereas 75 square feet is the maximum allowed. The total signage on the site is well within the total aggregate allowed on the property. Additionally, the proposed sign would be under 100 square feet, complying with the maximum freestanding sign requirements in other commercial and industrial districts. Staff believes that a practical difficulty can be found in the fact that it serves a public purpose by identifying the uses in the building and promoting community activities. Staff recommends approval of the request with the one condition listed. Staff did not hear from any of the neighboring property owners.

Commissioner Wippermann asked if churches, schools, and other government buildings were allowed in the P Institutional district.

Ms. Botten replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Weber asked for clarification regarding measuring square footage on two-sided signs.

Ms. Botten advised that freestanding signs were measured using the square footage of one side, not both.

Commissioner Scales noted that in the past staff has tended to recommend denial of requests for larger signs in the private sector. He hoped staff would take that into consideration when businesses come in with similar requests in the future.

Commissioner Wippermann was concerned about the precedent this would set for schools, churches, etc. wanting larger signs in the P, Institutional district.

Ms. Botten replied that staff looks at all variances individually. She advised that they have

approved other sign variances for schools and churches, and she did not recall any sign variances being denied in the P, Institutional district. She noted that City has also supported other variances for businesses that are along busier roads and for visibility purposes along highways.

Opening of Public Hearing

Julie Dorshak, 8055 Barbara Avenue, Recreation Superintendent, advised she was available to answer any questions.

Chair Maggi asked the applicant if she read and understood the report.

Ms. Dorshak replied in the affirmative.

Chair Maggi closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission Discussion

Commissioner Niemioja felt that public purpose was a weaker practical difficulty and suggested that an additional practical difficulty be the lack of visibility of the current sign. Unless drivers know immediately where the VMCC is, it is difficult to see it or have enough time to turn into it without more visible signage. The proposed sign would alleviate confusion and provide a safer driving experience, as well as being under the total size allowed in other commercial or industrial districts.

Planning Commission Recommendation

Motion by Commissioner Weber, second by Commissioner Niemioja, to approve the request for a variance to exceed the maximum size of a sign allowed in the P, Institutional zoning district, for the property located at 8055 Barbara Avenue, with the practical difficulty being the lack of visibility which could result in unsafe driving situations or difficulty locating the VMCC.

Motion carried (7/0). This item goes to the City Council on September 9, 2019.

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Fox
Recording Secretary