

**Cambridge Planning Commission Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, November 4, 2020**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting of the Cambridge Planning Commission was held at Cambridge City Hall, 300 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE, Cambridge, Minnesota.

Members Present: Commissioners Aaron Berg (Chair), Robert Boese (Vice Chair), Arianna Weiler, Jessica Kluck, Monte Dybvig, and David Redfield. Bob Shogren (City Council Representative) arrived at 7:04 p.m.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Community Development Director Marcia Westover, Economic Development Director Stan Gustafson, and Assistant City Administrator Evan Vogel.

**Call To Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

Berg called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Commissioners in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Agenda**

Boese moved, seconded by Redfield to approve the agenda. Upon call of the roll, Dybvig, Redfield, Berg, Boese, Kluck, and Weiler all voted aye. Motion carried 6/0.

**Approval of Minutes**

***October 6, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes***

Boese moved, seconded by Dybvig to approve the October 6, 2020 meeting minutes. Roll call was taken and the motion passed 6/0.

**Public Comment**

Berg opened the public comment at 7:03 p.m. and, without any comments, closed the public comment period at 7:05 p.m.

***PUBLIC HEARING – Variance Request for Landscape Materials at 1145 Deer Run SW – Charles Baynton***

Westover explained the City received a request by Charles and Amanda Baynton, 1145 Deer Run SW, for a variance to Section 156.065 Landscaping and Screening and Section 92.16 Nuisances Affecting Health, Safety, Comfort or Repose of the City Code.

Westover stated the Bayntons completed their new home in June, 2020 and received a Certificate of Occupancy. When certain improvements such as landscaping are not done when the Certificate of Occupancy is requested, an escrow can be secured to assure the landscaping is complete at a future date. During a re-inspection of the property, it was noted clover was planted in lieu of sod. Only a few strips of sod were placed along the perimeter of the structures.

Westover stated during the summer months, the Bayntons had been working on the yard themselves. Staff work with owners and give them reasonable time to complete the work. When the clover was observed, staff also noted certain existing areas of natural vegetation were not being maintained. It was at this time that staff requested a landscape site plan, which is only required when an owner requests to plant natural vegetation or other materials.

Westover explained staff can approve a landscape site plan as long as it is reasonable and acceptable to staff without the need for a variance. The original plan submitted could not be administratively approved since it did not include any sod other than that around the perimeter of the structures. Several conversations between City staff and the Bayntons were had regarding the landscaping. The Bayntons asked what would make the plan approvable by staff without the need for a variance.

Westover stated an acceptable decision was made by staff and a site plan was derived. The plan identified Area A, Area B, and Area 13 as sod. This assured the front yard and the area surrounding the walkway up to the house would have sod. In staff's opinion, this is very minimal sod as the remainder of the parcel is natural vegetation or areas left for other plantings as the Bayntons identified on their plan.

Westover stated the Bayntons questioned Area 13 and wondered how staff would not allow a flower garden. In an effort to gain minimal acceptance with the sod requirement, staff originally asked that they keep Area 13 as sod since it bordered a walkway and is visible from the street. Westover stated if they would have agreed to keep Area A and Area B sod, and asked only for Area 13 to be a flower bed, staff could have agreed with that. Staff received no agreement for sod in Area A and Area B.

Westover stated staff did receive a complaint about the clover and the weeds on the lot. Sod is a City requirement and is to be placed in all disturbed areas on the lot including the front, sides, and rear yard. All vegetation must be maintained and kept to a minimum of twelve (12) inches. It is the opinion of staff that the weeds on the lot must be mowed. In a natural wooded area, there is no expectation to mow. However, in open areas without trees, the yard must be maintained.

Westover stated the City does require sod and said this request is basically an appeal as to how Westover interprets the ordinance. The City does require sod and does accept some other ground cover as long as the landscape plan is approved by City staff. This is the goal the City is working toward and is the basis for some type of approval and assistance. In staff's opinion, what the Bayntons have come up with to only sod Area A is not enough sod to comply. It is not a typical request so approval is needed from both the Planning Commission and City Council. Staff cannot approve this plan because it varies too much from our current code language.

Westover stated in addition, a downed tree log is in the yard. This is considered a nuisance according to City code and the Bayntons have been asked to remove the log. However, the Bayntons have requested to keep the log as a natural environmental border.

Westover stated since requesting the variance, the Bayntons have installed fescue sod in Area A. Ultimately the request is to review the site plan and ask for clover to be allowed in Area B and a flower bed in Area 13, keep the log border, and discuss whether or not the City can prohibit the placement of a flower bed.

Westover summarized the research completed regarding the sod policy in several cities including North Branch, Mora, St. Francis, Blaine, New Prague, and Moorhead.

Berg addressed the Baynton's and stated the Commissioners had received a number of items of supportive documentation the Baynton's had provided to them and invited them to state their case.

The Baynton's expressed their concern regarding Ms. Westover's interpretation of the City code and wondered if the Planning Commission members had reviewed the additional information that was sent to them by the Baynton's.

Berg responded that all the Commissioners have received the additional information and have read it.

Mr. Baynton outlined the three concerns they would like addressed including: (1) the use of sod, (2) the area of perennial, decorative flowers in their front yard, and (3) leaving in place the three pieces of log that have been arranged into a pattern.

Mrs. Baynton asked if the Commissioners had read the testimony that Mike Mueller had written. Berg responded that all of the Commissioners stated they have reviewed everything that had been sent to them earlier in the day.

Mr. Baynton referred to Ms. Westover's statements creating an impression that they were inflexible and unwilling to negotiate anything and stated that Ms. Westover's reporting of the sequence of events was not accurate. Mr. Baynton went on to describe discrepancies of various conversations with various staff regarding the flower beds in the front yard.

Berg replied to Mr. Baynton that the Planning Commission's role is to review the facts of what the Bayntons are asking for and whether the Commissioners should approve that or not based on the circumstances and not to mediate whether things were said or not said or whether the Bayntons were offered a compromise or not. Berg asked if Mr. Baynton could provide a presentation that is supportive of his stance on the issue.

Mr. Baynton referred to the debris section of the code and offered his interpretation of the ordinance. Mr. Baynton's doesn't think his logs are disorderly and the code is misleading.

Mr. Baynton referred to the desirability of clover, specifically how it will look on his lot, and gave his interpretation of the code language and how clover should be allowed.

Mr. Baynton further interpreted and questioned the code requirements for placement of sod. Mr. Baynton referred to the city of Princeton's code language. Mr. Baynton feels the Cambridge code is not clear and is not ambiguous. He stated the way Ms. Westover edited the code language was not a proper way to interpret ordinances in his opinion.

Shogren asked whether the Baynton's had read the City ordinance before making the decision to build a new home in Cambridge.

Mr. Baynton stated they did not read the ordinance before deciding to build their home in Cambridge nor did they decide to plant clover before deciding to build in Cambridge. The reason behind the decision to plant clover and create a lawn was in an effort to stick to a budget. Mr. Baynton added if they had read the ordinance before they had decided to build, they would not have seen the requirement for sod because it isn't in the Cambridge City ordinance as it is in Princeton's ordinance.

Mrs. Baynton asked what the commissioners' impression was of the report written by Mike Mueller.

Berg responded that all the commissioners received the information and had a chance to review it and stated their decision will encompass and take that information into account.

Mrs. Baynton asked Commissioner Boese, who stopped by and saw the yard, if it looked objectionable or strange?

Boese stated he did not find it objectionable but he did find it different than the rest of the neighbors. Boese stated he didn't think being different by itself should be disallowed. Boese stated he is concerned about a broadcast use of clover instead of grass but the flower bed and the log border are trivial problems in his opinion. Boese posed the question to Ms. Westover if clover would cause harm.

Mrs. Baynton stated clover won't harm the neighbor's yards, it requires less water, and doesn't use fertilizer or pesticides which all protect the Rum River.

Mr. Baynton asked what harm would befall the City and stated the answer is no harm would befall the City. The City may have more butterflies and bumblebees around. Mrs. Baynton added they don't understand where the harm comes in.

Berg stated that was just a question posed to our Community Development Director, Marcia Westover.

Westover stated that staff have not researched or identified scientific harm with the use of clover. What staff is addressing is the variance request since the Baynton's are requesting something other than sod. While staff have been working with them, their plans for their yard do not meet the intent of our code. In order to meet the intent of the code, Westover was trying to work with a compromise to at least have some sod and the rest natural landscape.

Boese stated he did find the yard attractive but it is different from the neighborhood. It is also a lot that, because of its natural vegetation, is separated from the rest of the neighborhood as well. He stated he didn't see any problems.

Redfield asked if the City has a specific definition of sod.

Westover stated the City ordinance does not define it. In this case, the Baynton's stated they wanted fescue sod. The City will allow fescue, bluegrass or other types of sod regardless of what kind it is because the City does not define it.

Kluck stated that in Minnesota, clover is considered an invasive species, wondered how long until the clover spreads to the neighbors' lawns and how long until it takes over their entire lawn. Kluck also asked

about the length of time the clover turns green compared to grass as she believes clover isn't as green as grass throughout the summer and fall.

Westover stated a compromise is needed to have sod in the front so what you are seeing when you drive up looks similar and is consistent with the rest of the City in the neighborhood.

Shogren confirmed whether everyone living in the City of Cambridge is subject to this ordinance.

Berg opened the public comment at 7:43p.m.

Robert Knight, 1172 24<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Cambridge, lives adjacent to the Bayntons. His concerns consisted of the amount of clover in the plan due to it being a prolific plant, the size of the flower beds due to unwanted weeds taking over, the natural log border due to deteriorating and attracting bugs and insects unless it is specifically treated and the existence of weeds already apparent on this lot.

Steve Ritchart, 1125 Deer Run SW, Cambridge, stated he has followed all of the City Ordinances with his plans on his lots. He takes great pride, works hard in keeping his yard weed free and well maintained and recommends the City enforce compliance to the ordinances in place.

Bev Hama, 1115 Deer Run SW, Cambridge, said does not want the clover creeping into other yards, stated they spend a lot of time keeping their lots looking nice and wants the ordinances to be followed. Hama stated if it looks like a nuisance, it needs to be taken care of.

Marisa Harder-Chapman, 1501 Elm St S, does not live in the neighborhood. As an herbalist, she wanted to clarify that white dutch clover is not an invasive species, however, it is considered weedy and has a creeping nature. It does stay green longer than grass and is beneficial to pollinators.

Janelle Ritchart, 1125 Deer Run SW, Cambridge, asked what is being done with Section 2, along the sidewalk to the west (parallel to East Rum River Dr S) and stated there has been no soil added to the top soil, no seed, no clover, and no sod. Presently, it is mowed down but not all the time. The weeds grow over into the wall which is right along the main street. Ms. Ritchart stated that is a great concern of hers as you are driving up into the cul de sac. The sod right now is just on the cul de sac side.

Berg closed the public comment at 8:01 p.m.

Westover stated the Area 2, along East Rum River Drive S along the retaining wall, was not disturbed so staff agreed the Baynton's could keep that existing vegetation as is as long as they keep it mowed.

Boese asked Westover what is staff's reasoning for allowing clover on the sides and rear of the house.

Westover stated that the sides and rear of the house are bordered by wooded area and a two-tier boulder wall and are not visible from the street. Westover stated a compromise was being made to be understanding of the nature of the request.

Shogren noted the landscape site plan on page 22 of the packet would be allowable to staff without a variance. Shogren stated the ordinance allows staff to approve or not approve up to a certain degree and

this is within that degree.

Shogren moved, seconded by Dybvig to make a motion to recommend Council approve the variance request with amendments as discussed by the Commission and direct staff to bring forward a resolution for approval with the amendments and findings as indicated by the Commission. If the homeowners are not agreeable to this plan, then no variance will be granted.

Boese asked what is the variance that the Planning Commission is granting under this motion?

Shogren stated this may not be a variance but we are trying to compromise. The intent is that the homeowners follow the original landscape site plan approved by staff.

Berg suggested the Commission needs to deny this request for a variance completely which would allow the homeowners to come back and work with staff. If that plan isn't accepted, the homeowners can come back and request another variance from the Planning Commission. If what they have applied for doesn't match the City ordinances, we are denying this request and giving the homeowners a chance to bring back another plan. If the plan isn't approved, the homeowners can request another variance.

The motion was denied on a 7/0 vote.

Berg moved, seconded by Shogren, to make a motion to recommend Council deny the variance request as proposed on the Resolution.

Dybvig asked if the issue regarding the fallen log had been addressed? If a homeowner has a dead log in their yard, it has to be removed.

Westover stated if the variance is denied, the log would have to be removed.

Kluck stated she thinks the City should define fallen logs versus decorative logs.

Shogren confirmed if it fell, the homeowners would be required to remove it.

Boese stated he thinks the log was purposefully placed there and stated the log is not seen unless you walk up the driveway into the yard. You don't see it from the street at all. It seems like a trivial thing.

Motion passed 5/2 with Redfield and Boese voting nay.

Westover stated this request will be heard by the City Council on Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m. at the City Council meeting.

### ***PUBLIC HEARING – PUD Amendment for Lot 1, Block 1 Heritage Greens of Cambridge***

Westover stated the City received a request from Della Kolpin, Heritage Greens of Cambridge, 175 7<sup>th</sup> Ave S., Waite Park, MN 56387, to amend the Heritage Greens of Cambridge mixed use Planned Unit Development (PUD) specifically for Outlot C and an adjacent metes and bounds parcel from single

family to multi-family (R-3 zoning).

Westover explained that Outlot C and the adjacent parcel in Heritage Greens of Cambridge are identified as single family residential in the original Planned Unit Development (PUD) of Heritage Greens dated July 19, 2004. Single family home construction had a strong start in the Heritage Greens development, but came to a halt soon after because of a recession. When the City was seeking out new locations for the library, and planning future ideas for a community center, it purchased this 9.6 acres of land in 2015.

Westover stated that ultimately, a more suitable location for the library was found and the housing market has made a come-back. The City has been receiving requests for multi-family housing options, and this parcel has plenty of space, is centrally located, and is already part of a mixed housing community. The developer plans to build an apartment complex and townhomes in three (3) phases. In order for this to happen, a change in use on this parcel is required through an amendment to the PUD. The City can amend a Planned Unit Development if it finds the amendment necessary due to a lack of development within a reasonable time after the PUD zoning district was established.

Westover stated the Heritage Greens PUD is currently a mixed use of single-family homes, villa homes, and multi-family townhomes. An apartment building and additional townhomes will fill a significant need for the City and compliment the areas housing choices. Multi-family housing is an essential portion of a city's total housing demand.

Westover stated that according to our most recent housing study, the City has a market rate apartment vacancy rate of 1.2% (only 7 out of 579 units were vacant). Affordable apartments also had a very low vacancy. The study based the need on Cambridge being a growing regional center, market demand, growth from new employment hires, pent up demand due to housing shortages, empty nesters, and future households that could relocate to Cambridge if adequate rental housing was available. The study found that approximately 1,100 units should be built within the next five years.

Westover explained the first phase of this project is proposed to have 75 apartment units, and will be a four-story building with underground parking for its residents. The second phase will add 75 units for a total of 150 apartment units. The height of the building is proposed to be 48'. The developer would like to have 9' ceilings to create an open and modern feel. Therefore, they are asking for the height approval. The current zoning regulations limit the height to 45' in a multi-family zoning district. If the Commission approves, this 48' height allowance can be added as part of the PUD approval.

Westover stated the building is proposed to feature a community club room, outdoor patio, fitness center, business center, dog wash, dog park, walking paths, resident storage units and bike storage in the garage.

Westover stated when making recommendation to City Council on the rezoning request (amendment), the Planning Commission shall consider the Standards for amendments as stated in Section 156.116.E of the Zoning Code. Westover noted the standards provided in the staff report.

Westover stated a neighborhood meeting was held on October 26, 2020. The developer came to City Hall and there were about 20 people who attended in person and via Zoom. Questions were answered regarding taxes, value of the homes in the neighborhood, traffic concerns and many other issues.

Westover noted an amendment to the motion is needed, adding the phrase, "and allow the building to be 48' high" after the words Development Plans.

Della Kolpin presented a slide show overview of the Heritage Greens project. Kolpin, with DK Design and Development, introduced the rest of her team. Kyle Dider, with DK Design and Development, Jim Illies, Jr. and Mike Stoebe with INH Property Management, and Group Architects are the design team and Schultz Engineering is doing civil engineering and site design.

Jim Illies, Jr., stated they will manage the apartment buildings and maintain them. INH is currently managing the Preserve Apartments and Roosevelt Gardens Apartment in Cambridge. Mr. Illes reiterated the strong need for housing in this community based on the waiting lists they have at these two apartment buildings in Cambridge.

Berg opened the public comment at 8:30 p.m.

Randall Amos, 741 11<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Cambridge, shared his concern regarding deer in the area of the proposed building projects. His other concern is the residents in the area cannot hear the Civil Defense sirens warning of severe weather in the area from inside their houses.

Berg suggested Mr. Amos contact the Emergency Manager or the Police Chief regarding the Civil Defense sirens not being heard in the area.

Marisa Harder-Chapman, 1501 Elm St S, Cambridge, has lived in Heritage Greens since 2006 and opposes the PUD modification because it fundamentally alters the character of the Heritage Greens neighborhood. She and her husband bought their house because of the neighborhood's unique design and character which includes smaller lots, homes with front porches, a central park space, sidewalks, and garages on rear alleys. The neighborhood is not opposed to density in Heritage Greens. People moving into the proposed apartments would not be a part of the Heritage Greens neighborhood as they will live in their own community in the apartment complex. Harder-Chapman stated they want new neighbors to enter the tax base now and not deferred until 2048. Harder-Chapman presented to the City a list of signatures of 50 people in the Heritage Greens community who agree with her.

Patti Langerman, 1504 Fern St S, Cambridge, just moved to Heritage Greens in October of 2020. She and her husband bought their home as a retirement home with no knowledge of these new apartment buildings and townhomes proposed to be built in Heritage Greens. She is heartbroken regarding the thought of having to sell their home and move into a different home for their retirement.

Michelle Lecceardone, 649 13<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Cambridge, has concerns regarding property value, privacy, safety and future streets assessments. She runs an in-home daycare and works hard to make sure snow and ice do not impede the safety of her clients coming and going from her home.

Kristina Mikrot, 613 13<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Cambridge, has lived in the neighborhood since 2007 and was under the assumption it would be a smaller neighborhood with single family houses. She has worked in this town since 2007, loves this town and does not want to move. Her concerns are about the property valuation when it comes time to sell her home.



Terri Olson, 631 13<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Cambridge, has lived in the neighborhood since 2006. She specifically chose this location because she wanted to live in the old part of town where the community had the front porches and a tightknit community. She was told the homes would be single family homes when she moved in. A large apartment complex will not fit into their community. They need single family homes that create taxes for our city to help our schools. Please stay with the single-family homes. She is also concerned about the market value of her home.

Sue Sandstrom, 1554 Fern St S, Cambridge, moved to the neighborhood in 2020 because of the area and the front porches. Neighbors are so friendly and so warm. A complex this large doesn't fit into this area. Single family homes would be a much better solution.

Marge Ubel, 1591 Elm St S, Cambridge, and her husband bought their house in October 2019 with the understanding that the community was a single-family neighborhood. The single level home is perfect for them. She is wondering if the future homeowners of the houses being built right now know about the proposed multifamily apartment buildings going up.

Bill Ubel, 1591 Elm St S, Cambridge, is concerned about the tax base and that the new building will not be paying taxes for 28 years. This takes away from everyone else in Cambridge because the tax base is not broadened.

Berg closed the public hearing at 8:52 p.m.

Dybvig asked how the Heritage Greens area changed into a potential multifamily district when its original intent was single family? Why did Heritage Greens change its mind regarding single family development?

Westover explained the change (amendment) is being reviewed tonight. This is the procedure and how an amendment is made. This is the Planning Commission's opportunity to hear public input. She stated currently the City of Cambridge owns the property and have been approached by several multifamily developers. In the PUD requirements of City code, the Planned Unit Development can be amended if the City Council finds that there has been a lack of development over a number of years. Westover stated the original PUD was done in 2004 and this parcel had no serious inquiries until now. Currently it is single family and the request is for multifamily. Opportunities happen, development changes, and that's we are discussing tonight.

Redfield commended everyone who spoke tonight for sharing their beliefs. He stated this is a sales pitch and it is good to hear from the members of the community stating their concerns in regards to these developers.

Berg requested to see the list of the names on the petition that were given to the Planning Commission by Harder-Chapman. Westover gave Berg the list to review.

Weiler asked Westover if the City has to make public that they plan to move forward with multifamily bids. If developers reach out to the City with requests to build multifamily homes and single-family homeowners are buying homes and being told they are moving into a single-family development, does the City have to inform the residents that by any law.

Westover stated this public hearing process is the requirement by law to let the citizens know. Any change in zoning would be heard before the Planning Commission. Westover stated Heritage Greens is a Planned Unit Development that includes single family homes, townhomes and villas. There have been a handful of amendments to that original PUD over the years, just not an apartment building. Amendments to PUD's happen often, this one just happens to be for an apartment building.

Weiler confirmed that for 16 years, zero single family developers have not expressed any interest in building single family homes on this parcel.

Mr. Amos, 741 11<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, asked if it is because of what the City is asking for the land? Why would the City not want to develop it?

Westover stated the City purchased the land for the library and/or the community center and that didn't happen. Developers contact the City with projects in mind and staff work with them on their requests. We have highlighted this area as potential multi-family because 16 years have passed without development and maybe there is a change that needs to happen. Westover added the parcel is large enough, it is centrally located, and it is already in a mixed housing development.

Mr. Amos asked if the City has approached any single-family developers of the existing houses in the area?

Westover stated typically developers contact the City with their ideas and the City doesn't reach out to the developers.

Kluck asked the developers what the reason they decided to go with a multifamily complex versus a single-family home that is similar to the neighborhood?

Kyle Dider, with DK Design and Development, stated that typically they don't build single family homes. They look for communities that have need for housing. Dider said they start by looking at the market study indicating that there is a large need in Cambridge and then they work with the City to find the best place for it.

Mike Stoebe, INH Properties Partner, 175 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue S, Waite Park, MN, stated INH has been in Cambridge for 6 years and have built 103 units in two phases on Opportunity Boulevard (the Preserve) which were filled up very successfully. Stoebe stated INH built Roosevelt Gardens, a 51-unit apartment building that opened in April of 2020, making that a total of 154 units here in Cambridge. This Heritage Greens project will be two phases of 75-unit buildings which will be very comparable to what INH has already built. Stoebe pointed out there are brand new single-family houses being built across the streets from the Preserve and Roosevelt Gardens which assimilate very nicely and are respectful of their neighbors. INH is in the process of building a new 36-unit building which is also right next door to a brand new single-family neighborhood and they believe these new buildings will fit in very well to the neighborhood.

Patti Langerman, 1504 Fern St S, stated it is very difficult to buy a single-family home in this area. They had a very difficult time finding one to buy in the search a few years ago. She encouraged the City to let

single family home developers know about this parcel of land. She doesn't understand why the City needs to put in more and more apartment buildings without building more single-family homes.

Berg stated it is very obvious that the City is many units short in our areas for housing. Berg confirmed the Comprehensive Plan Study was updated in 2017.

Berg asked what the current rate of vacancy is?

Westover stated it is 1.2%.

Shogren asked approximately how many households are in the Heritage Greens development presently?

Westover stated approximately 80.

Shogren asked how many people have signed up to talk about this tonight?

Berg stated about 9 and 50 others included in the petition.

Redfield moved, seconded by Dybvig to recommend City Council deny the draft ordinance approving an amendment to a previously approved PUD zoning request in accordance with the Development Plans as amended.

Boese observed the Planning Commission approved the 48-unit south of Heritage Greens last month and saved the neighborhood from a QuikTrip or a strip mall but an apartment building is going in there. Boese stated the Heritage Green addition is a much bigger change. It is 150 units with the two phases not including the townhouses. The 150 units are going to dwarf the 80 single-family houses. It seems like a rather substantial change to the neighborhood.

Redfield stated he agrees with Boese. It is not in line with where the community sits at this point. He stated he voted for the 48-unit apartments because in that spot, it made sense being where it is. This doesn't make sense.

Dybvig commented that with the demand for single-family housing, it is interesting that the City would be considering creating a TIF district on something like this.

Redfield recommended the community reaching out if they know of any single-family developers.

Kluck agreed. The community is very tightknit and a peaceful area to walk through and to visit. By adding the apartments, they are trying to add a different neighborhood, trying to add a different feel and it would just completely shake up the entire existence out there. Kluck stated she doesn't think that's what Cambridge is looking for.

Redfield agreed. There are lovely complexes on Opportunity Boulevard and Roosevelt Street but this location isn't Opportunity or Roosevelt.

Shogren stated it is similar. There are single family, townhomes and twin homes over in the Opportunity

and Roosevelt area. Shogren believes Cambridge needs to have a diverse housing stock and his only concerns have to do with the TIF part of it. Ultimately, it will pay it back. It's just a way of helping development come in. This is property that could be and should be developed and ultimately it will benefit the City.

Kluck stated the west side of the city is more an old root, downtown area and the east is newer and modern. The west side looks for the more downhome atmosphere. The City has a huge need for homes but adding this many apartment units changes the atmosphere of this part of the city.

Weiler stated the Planning Commission voted to approve the third phase of the Yerigan Farms development a short time ago. There are 84 single-family homes being added there. We live in a city that desperately needs spaces for families that are coming here to raise their children in our schools, to use our buses to and from schools, to shop our retail stores, to work here to add to our community value. So yes this is a huge addition to our City, but this is still progress in the forward moving direction. We have a need. While it looks like it is a sale, we still have a lot of people coming to this city which require more space to live in.

Dybvig asked the developer what the demographic of the people renting from them is and where would they be working.

Shogren also asked what the rental rate would be.

Mike Stoebe, with INH, stated the tenant demographics would be very similar to those living in the Preserve Apartments in Cambridge. Most of the tenants work in Isanti County. The rent levels would be \$1.20 per square foot so a 1,000 square foot, two-bedroom, one bath apartment would be \$1,100 - \$1,200. One bedroom would start at \$900.

Dybvig stated 52% of Isanti County is the City of Cambridge.

Berg stated the City would be remiss in not making the most of an opportunity to bring more people to our community to support people with affordable housing in our community to give them a place. Berg stated he realizes there is a property tax issue; however, these people would also be paying sales tax which the City would capitalize from. They would also be providing pupils into our school district which we would get state funding for.

Redfield commented that he does not agree with the Heritage Greens of Cambridge, LLC, trying to come up with an LLC before the property is even purchased.

Shogren stated that isn't illegal or immoral; it's just a business decision.

Motion passed 4/3 with Berg, Shogren and Weiler voting nay.

***PUBLIC HEARING – Preliminary Plat for Heritage Greens of Cambridge 1<sup>st</sup> Addition, and Final Plat***

The Commissioners asked if they still needed to proceed with this agenda item since they voted to deny the PUD?

Westover stated since the City owns this property and it is currently an outlot and a metes-and-bounds description combined, it does need to be platted in order to be developed. The platting process is required regardless of who develops the site. Westover stated it is in the City's best interest to get it platted.

Westover stated the preliminary plat does require a Public Hearing but the final plat does not. The Public Hearing can be opened for the preliminary plat and then make a motion on the preliminary plat and the final plat together if the Commissioners wish.

Shogren confirmed they were platting this just as one lot and block.

Berg opened the public comment at 9:23 p.m.

Dave Dupont, 1634 Fern St S, wanted to thank each and every one of the Commissioners for practicing garage logic and for shooting the apartments out of here. Mr. Dupont and his wife were interested in a one-level home and love the house and the Heritage Greens area. He thanked the Commissioners again and said well done and that he was impressed.

Berg closed the public hearing at 9:26 p.m.

Shogren moved, seconded by Boese to recommend the City Council approve the preliminary plat and the final plat on the draft Resolution as long as the conditions listed can be met.

Dybvig confirmed once these properties are combined, this has the potential, if it was sold to a builder or a developer of single-family homes, for the parcel to be subdivided into lots.

Westover asked if the motion could be amended to strike the words "as long as the conditions listed can be met" and we are just approving the preliminary plat and final plat as is.

Shogren and Dybvig agreed to amend the motion as previously stated, striking the words "as long as the conditions listed can be met".

Berg stated there is an amended motion and an amended second.

Motion carried 7/0.

***PUBLIC HEARING – Request by the City of Cambridge to Vacate Existing Easements for 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW***

Westover stated the City of Cambridge holds easements for a portion of 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW. The easements are for the roadway itself and for utilities and drainage. The Schumacher Addition plat was recently approved by the City and this plat dedicates 20<sup>th</sup> Ave SW in its entirety. The easements are no longer needed. These public easements must be vacated and a public hearing must be held.

Berg opened the public comment at 9:29 p.m. and hearing no comments, closed the public hearing at 9:30 p.m.

Dybvig moved, seconded by Redfield to recommend City Council approve the vacation of the easements as stated on the resolution. Motion passed 7/0.

**Approve Resolution R20-01 Finding that a Modification to Development Program for Development District No. 6 and Tax Increment Financing Plan for Tax Increment Finance District No. 6-21 Conforms to the General Plans for the Development and Redevelopment of the City. (DK Designs, PIN:15.280.0830 and 15.032.1005)**

Gustafson stated the Planning Commission is requested to review and approve Resolution 20-01 Finding that a Modification to Development Program for Development District No. 6 and Tax Increment Financing Plan for Tax Increment Finance District No. 6-21 conforms to the general plans for the development and redevelopment of the City.

Gustafson explained staff have been working with Kyle Dider and Della Kolpin, with DK Design and Development, and Jim Illies, Jr. and Mike Stoebe, with INH Property Management, about constructing two apartment complexes and 33 townhomes in three phases known as Heritage Greens of Cambridge, LLC. These units are market rate apartments.

Gustafson stated Heritage Greens is a Planned Unit Development (PUD) that consists of single-family, Villa homes and multi-family townhomes.

Gustafson stated Phase 1 75-unit residential apartment building with studio, 1 bedroom, 1 bedroom + den and 2-bedroom units. These apartments will feature an elevator, underground. On site amenities including office, community room, outdoor patio, lobby with onsite managers office, storage units, bike storage maintenance office and mail/package room, business center, dog wash & dog park, fitness center, security system and keyless entry. Phase 1 construction would start spring/summer of 2021 and be completed by August 31, 2022. The building would be sprinkled and parking would meet the city's requirements.

Gustafson stated Phase 2 Additional 75-unit residential apartment building attached to phase 1. Phase 2 development plans would start September 2022 and be completed by November 30, 2023.

Gustafson stated Phase 3 is estimated at 33 townhomes and construction would start September 2023 and completion November 2024.

Gustafson explained the Developer is seeking Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to help finance this project with the added cost of the upscale apartment building. TIF will assist the developer to build in added value to this project by increasing future property tax that would not normally be done without the use of TIF. Gustafson explained the proposed use of TIF is used for land cost, infrastructure including road, sidewalks, parking lot, underground parking, street lighting, grading engineering, storm water retention pond, curb and all other eligible cost.

As part of the creation of this district, Gustafson stated the Planning Commission is required to find that the TIF District is in conformance with the City's general plans for development and redevelopment of the City. As described above, the program Modification and tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan for Development District No. 6 and TIF District No. 6-21 is in conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Gustafson stated the TIF District 6-21 will be established and the proposed use includes the construction of two three-story apartment complexes with underground parking and an estimated 33- townhomes.

Berg asked if a change in the TIF district or redistricting as is proposed allows for a developer that wanted to build single-family homes or twin homes on this parcel?

Gustafson answered single family will not work on this particular TIF district. Single-family housing TIF districts can be created but there is a whole different set of standards and rules.

Berg asked if the City Council would not approve the PUD and then further down the road, it is developed into something different than a PUD, the City would need to amend it again to accommodate whatever option is approved?

Gustafson stated again this TIF district will not work with any single-family homes. It would have to be a whole different resolution.

Berg asked whether the requirement that the Planning Commission amend this district is a statute?

Gustafson stated the Planning Commission is required to find that the TIF District is in conformance with the City's general plans for development and redevelopment of the City and stated this process is basically just statutory and a formality.

Dybvig stated he finds it interesting that the Planning Commission denied the PUD, but yet allowed the property to be platted, and now we are voting on TIF. All three items should have been no votes.

Shogren stated the platting was to clean up the legal description so it is just one lot.

Shogren stated he understands that if the Planning Commission approves this TIF district and if the City Council votes to change the decision the Planning Commission made, this would be one less hurdle for the City to have to do.

Berg asked if this was just for formality and the Planning Commission voted to deny the PUD, and if the City Council votes in the next meeting to go ahead and approve the PUD, the City Council could just approve this in their own form.

Gustafson stated there would have to be an additional step if the Planning Commission denies it.

Berg asked what this Heritage Greens parcel is identified as now?

Westover stated it is a Planned Unit Development (PUD) but it is identified as a single-family district.

Berg states this feels like putting the cart before the horse by approving this since the majority of this Commission denied the PUD, deciding this wasn't in the best interest of the City. If this is simply procedural, Berg stated he is not understanding why the Planning Commission needs to approve this.

Redfield agrees that this is putting the cart before the horse and it was assumed this would be approved and the next steps would be voted on.

Redfield moved, Boese seconded to deny Resolution R20-21 finding that the modification to the Development Program for Development District No. 6 and the Tax Increment Financing Plan for TIF District No. 6-21 is in conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Weiler asked if the Planning Commission could table this decision without approving or denial to see what is decided at the City Council meeting on November 16?

Gustafson stated this resolution needs to follow along with the TIF plan. If the Planning Commission votes to deny this, staff would need to come up with a different resolution. Gustafson stated he believes the resolution needs to be approved now and that this probably won't come back to the Planning Commission to decide on later.

Boese confirmed this resolution would be moot if the Council overrides the Planning Commission's decision.

Berg stated unless there is a procedural statutory requirement that the planning and zoning approve a redistrict, City Council will take care of this if they decide on the PUD anyway.

The motion passed 4/3 with Berg, Weiler and Shogren voting nay.

**Approve Resolution R20-02 Finding that a Modification to Development Program for Development District No. 6 and Tax Increment Financing Plan for Tax Increment Finance District No. 6-22 Conforms to the General Plans for the Development and Redevelopment of the City.**

Gustafson stated the Planning Commission is requested to review and approve Resolution 20-02 Finding that a Modification to Development Program for Development District No. 6 and Tax Increment Financing Plan for Tax Increment Finance District No. 6-20 conforms to the general plans for the development and redevelopment of the City.

Gustafson stated Heritage Greens is a Planned Unit Development (PUD) that consists of single-family, Villa homes and multi-family townhomes.

Gustafson stated staff has been working with Samuel Herzog with Unique Opportunities, LLC, they are proposing to construct a 48-unit apartment complex on Lot 1 Blk 1 Heritage Greens of Cambridge. The site consists of approximately 2.17 acres that sets directly north of the Isanti County Government Center. The apartment building will feature 3-studio, 15-one bedrooms and 30-two-bedrooms and some with 2 bathrooms depending on the unit style. This would be a three-story building with underground



parking, the building will feature a community room, exercise room, balconies, sprinkled building to meet building requirements, each unit will have washer, dryer, refrigerator, range, dishwasher, microwave, and AC.

Gustafson explained the Developer will be seeking Tax Increment Financing to help finance this project to assist the developer to build in added value to this project by increasing property tax base that would not normally be done without the use of TIF. This project will provide the needed apartments for current and future workforce, add construction jobs and ongoing jobs for management and a maintenance person. The proposed use of TIF is used for land cost, infrastructure including road, grading engineering, storm water retention pond, sidewalks, parking lot, underground parking, street lighting, curb and all other eligible cost.

Gustafson stated compact development yields both economic and fiscal benefits for the entire community. It provides attractive places to live while conserving land and these are market rate apartments.

Gustafson stated as part of the creation of this district, the Planning Commission is required to find that the TIF District is in conformance with the City's general plans for development and redevelopment of the City. As described above, the program Modification and tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan for Development District No. 6 and TIF District No. 6-20 is in conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Gustafson explained the TIF District 6-22 will be established as depicted on the attached map. The proposed use includes the construction of one-three-story apartment complex with underground parking, and adequate surface parking.

Shogren asked if Gustafson could give the Commissioners a quick explanation of how TIF works.

Gustafson gave a summary to the Commissioners how the Tax Increment Financing process works.

Dybvig moved, seconded by Boese, to recommend the City Council approve the attached Resolution R20-22 as presented, finding that the Modification to the Development Program for Development District No. 6 and the Tax Increment Financing Plan for TIF District No. 6-22 is in conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan. Motion carried 7/0.

## **Other Business/Miscellaneous**

### ***City Council Update***

City Council Representative Shogren gave an update on the previous City Council meeting. Evan Vogel, the newly hired Assistant City Administrator, was introduced to the Planning Commission members via Zoom.

### ***Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission Update***

Westover explained the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission meetings have been suspended until further notice. However, there may be a Green Steps Program volunteer internship in the works.

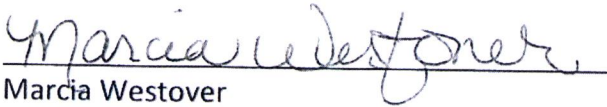
**Adjournment**

Being no further business before the Commission, Dybvig moved, seconded by Kluck to adjourn the regular meeting at 10:13 p.m. Motion carried 7/0.



Aaron Berg, Chair  
Cambridge Planning Commissioner

ATTEST:



Marcia Westover  
Community Development Director