

## Cambridge Planning Commission Meeting Minutes Wednesday, July 7, 2021

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

Members Present: Commissioners Aaron Berg (Chair), Robert Boese (Vice Chair), Jessica Kluck, Joe Morin, and Bob Shogren (City Council Representative).

Members Absent: David Redfield, unexcused.

Staff Present: City Planner Marcia Westover

### Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Berg called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm and led the Commissioners in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Approval of Agenda

Boese moved, seconded by Kluck, to approve the agenda. Motion passed 5/0.

### Approval of Minutes

Shogren moved, seconded by Morin, to approve the May 4, 2021 meeting minutes. Motion passed 5/0.

### Public Comment

Berg opened the public comment at 7:04 pm and, without anyone to comment closed the meeting at 7:04pm.

### New Business

#### **PUBLIC HEARING – 5A Variance for Exterior Materials, Arrow Tank & Engineering**

Westover stated Arrow Tank & Engineering, 650 Emerson St. N, is proposing a new 81' x 291' building to include an office space, parts storage and various bays for assembly, hot works, and overhead cranes/inside repair. The request is to use blue metal panels on three (3) sides of the building, but having the front façade meet the city's ordinance requirements. The front façade would be comprised of mostly rock face block and stucco.

Westover noted City code does not allow sheet metal, corrugated metal, metal/steel or aluminum for industrial buildings. In addition, buildings in the I-3 General Industrial District are required to have 25% of the building covered by a permitted major exterior wall surface material. Westover noted pertinent items of Section 156.088 of the city code are referenced in the staff report for Commissioner review. Westover stated the purpose and goal of the exterior materials section of the code is to have buildings designed with an attractive and durable finish. The idea is to no longer allow complete metal buildings

in order to enhance the overall appearance of Cambridge. In reviewing the Arrow Tank property, there are five (5) existing buildings with blue metal exterior materials. Westover noted she does not see those buildings changing their appearance any time soon since they can remain as existing non-conforming buildings. The business has been operating on this parcel with this look for over 40 years. Requiring the new building to meet our code requirements may look out of place on this particular established site. It would however start the change to a more attractive industrial zoning district in the city, but would remain out of place, likely for many more decades. It may provide more harmony to the property if the new building more closely matches the existing buildings, but also sets a precedence for other properties.

Westover noted Arrow Tank did agree to better meet the code requirements on the front façade of the building. This will add curb appeal and an attractive front office space. The remainder of the building consists of metal overhead doors on one side and a long expanse of metal on the two other sides. These sides are shielded by trees and berms and are not easily visible to adjacent properties.

Westover noted Arrow Tank has submitted a letter with their explanation of operations and reasons they think a variance should be approved. While economic considerations are one reason, they also explain their experience with their on-site forklift work and harmony with the existing buildings and surrounding Emerson Street properties.

Berg opened the public comment at 7:07pm.

John Stark, 650 Emerson St. N., Cambridge, MN 55008, has been the President of Arrow Tank for 23 years. The way they have positioned the building on the property is such that it will be as isolated as possible and not visible to adjacent properties. There are trees and a large berm that will shield the building. All of the buildings on the property are blue metal, they would like to match, and they have made accommodations to the front/west side of the building.

Gluck clarified which side of the building will face the street.

Berg closed the public hearing at 7:10pm.

Morin moved, seconded by Boese to recommend approval of the draft Resolution recommending approval of the variance request as presented. Motion carried 5/0.

**PUBLIC HEARING – 5B Interim Use Permit for Outdoor Storage, Midcontinent Communications**

Westover stated Midcontinent Communications has requested to allow an expanded area for outdoor storage. A plan has been submitted identifying several proposed changes to the site. The issue before the Commission is whether or not to allow the additional gravel lot area to store numerous large spools of fiber and cable. A list of the spool materials that will be stored outdoors has been provided.

Westover noted the plan includes removal of many large trees, a new entrance into the site off McKinley St. N. and a new fence. Staff requested the fence to be 8' high with privacy slats installed. This will help shield visibility into the site from nearby commercial properties due to the removal of the



trees. In addition, the grading and drainage plan is currently being reviewed and requires staff approval.

Westover noted this property is zoned B-2 Highway Business. City Code requires all outdoor storage in a commercial district to be stored within a building, except by issuance of an interim use permit. The interim use permit may impose requirements for screening, location, mitigating impacts on adjacent residential uses, height and other standards. The surrounding properties are also zoned commercial including Goodwill/Dollar Tree to the south, mini-golf, dentist, and Arthur's court retail to the east, and the west is planned for future commercial development. The Future Land Use map identifies the area to the north as High Density residential.

Shogren asked about the location of the driveway and confirmed that a new gravel driveway would also need to be added to the Interim Use Permit request since driveways need to be improved with bituminous or concrete per city code.

Morin agreed that if driveways are required to be improved in the ordinance that it should be added to the Interim Use Permit request.

Shogren made a motion, seconded by Boese, to table this item to August 3, 2021, so the driveway issue is addressed in the staff report and Resolution. Motion carried 5/0.

**PUBLIC HEARING-5C-Interim Use Permit for Solar panels at 512 Main St. S., Timothy Newton**

Westover stated Timothy Newton, 600 Main St. S. has applied for an Interim Use Permit to allow solar panels. The solar panels are proposed on the vacant lot located at 512 Main St. S. This is the vacant parcel just north of South Main Dental. Mr. Newton would like to purchase the vacant lot if the solar panels will be allowed.

Westover stated according to city code, Solar Energy Systems may be allowed as an interim use in all zoning districts. The location for a ground mounted system must be located in the rear yard. Since there is not building on this vacant lot, the applicant has shown the panels in the rear yard, with plenty of space remaining on the lot.

Westover noted the property is zoned B-2 Highway Business District. The parcel is intended for a commercial use. Staff would have more concern if the request was to fill the entire parcel with solar panels. The request is acceptable since the solar panels are in the rear and there is room for development of a commercial site.

Westover noted staff will require additional review of the solar panels if approved as an interim use. A building and electrical permit is also required. The panels must comply with (but not limited to) height requirements for accessory buildings, setback requirements from the rear and side yards, screening from adjacent properties to the extent possible without affecting their function, and must have certification by Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. A condition has been listed on the Resolution that all local, state, and federal codes must be met.

Berg opened the public hearing at 7:24pm.

John Newton, Timothy Newton's son, 600 Main St. S., confirmed that the solar panels will not be used for personal use for their building, that the panels will be a trade back for the power plant.

Shogren asked if this will be considered a power plant according to State Statute.

Discussion ensued about the requirements of power plants.

Morin stated that he would like some sort of security surrounding the solar panels, such as a cyclone fence.

Boese asked about vegetation beneath the solar panels. Newton confirmed it would be maintained and mowed by a commercial contractor.

John Newton confirmed they have plans to build an office building at this property since they are at capacity at their current site.

Shogren has concerns that this is generating income to divert costs from other properties, not powering the applicant's property.

Shogren moved, seconded by Morin to table this item to the August 3, 2021 meeting, so staff has time to seek guidance on State Statute as to whether or not this request can be authorized. Motion carried 5/0.

**PUBLIC HEARING-5D-Future Land Use Map Amendment, John Munkberg**

Westover stated John Munkberg, 3000 325<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, Cambridge, MN has requested a Future Land Use Map Amendment for his farm property located on the southeast corner of Opportunity Boulevard S. and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE. A rezoning of the property accompanies this request.

Westover stated the property is currently a mix of commercial, high density residential, low density residential, and shoreland.

Westover noted the request is to amend both the 7.85 acre commercial and 7.8 acre high density portion into low density residential to make the entire area single family development. Mr. Munkberg's realtor has submitted a narrative regarding the request. They have several developers interested, but none interested in the commercial or multiple family areas. They have made significant effort to attract developers to the commercial piece, but with no interest. The interested developers want to build single family homes.

Westover noted since the original commercial and multifamily concept hasn't gained popularity, staff does not see any concerns with the request to amend the Future Land Use Map and rezone the property. The original idea was to have a mixed-use development with a convenience store on the corner. With the proximity to Highway 95, this appears to be an unreasonable concept. In addition,



the Parkwood on the Lakes area to the north has been amended and rezoned in recent years to allow several multiple family parcels. The need for multi-family housing on the Munkberg parcel is no longer valid. The city is currently in need of single-family residential lots in this area.

Westover noted the Munkberg property was annexed into the City in 2003. Integra Homes started planning a development on this site in 2004 and brought it all the way to final plat approval. The final plat was approved by the city on July 17, 2006, but it was never recorded or any portion of it developed. A new developer will have to resubmit a preliminary and final plat for approval since the originals have expired.

Berg opened the public hearing at 7:43pm and with no one appearing before the Commission, closed the public hearing at 7:44pm.

Shogren asked about street design and configuration. Westover stated the new developer will be required to submit plans.

Morin moved, seconded by Boese to approve the resolution as presented to amend the Future Land Use Map. Motion carried 5/0.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING-5E-Zoning Map Amendment, John Munkberg**

Westover stated John Munkberg, 3000 325<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, Cambridge, MN has requested to rezone his farm property located on the southeast corner of Opportunity Boulevard S. and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE. The property is currently a mix of B-2 Highway Business District, R-3 Multiple Family Residence, R-1 One Family Residence, and SR Shoreland Residential. See the attached Exhibit A.

Westover stated the request is to rezone both the 7.85 acre commercial (B-2) and 7.8 acre multiple family (R-3) portion into R-1 to make the entire area single family development. Mr. Munkberg's realtor has submitted a narrative regarding the request. They have several developers interested, but none interested in the B-2 (commercial) or R-3 (multiple family) districts. They have made significant effort to attract developers to the commercial piece, but with no interest. The interested developers want to build single family homes.

Westover noted since the original commercial and multifamily concept hasn't gained popularity, staff do not see any concerns with the request to rezone to single family. The original idea was to have a mixed-use development with a convenience store on the corner. With the proximity to Highway 95, this appears to be an unreasonable concept. In addition, the Parkwood on the Lakes area to the north has been rezoned in recent years to allow several multiple family parcels. The need for multi-family housing on the Munkberg parcel is no longer valid. The city is currently in need of single-family residential lots in this area.

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A new developer will have to resubmit a preliminary and final plat for approval since the originals have expired.

Berg opened the public hearing at 7:46pm and with no one appearing before the Commission, closed the public hearing at 7:47pm.

Berg moved, seconded by Kluck to recommend approval of the resolution as presented to allow the rezoning. Motion carried 5/0.

### **5F-Ordinance Amendment, Storage Pod Containers**

Westover stated a request for an ordinance amendment has been made to the City of Cambridge to allow storage pod containers. Specifically, the applicant would like to retain the 75 storage pod containers at their mini storage facility, but that is not the request being heard at this time.

Westover stated at this time, staff is requesting the Commission discuss the possible outcomes and potential language of an overall ordinance amendment, if one is preferred. Several properties do have storage pod containers ranging in quantity from one to several pods, and staff need a direction on enforcement and whether or not they should be allowed.

Westover noted a request to keep the existing 75 storage pod containers was brought to the Planning Commission on April 6, 2021. The Commission ultimately made a recommendation to deny the request to keep the storage pod containers. After discussion with the City Attorney, staff rescinded the application due to the opinion that the city code currently does not allow storage pod containers and it was not heard by City Council. The only way to allow them is through an ordinance amendment.

Westover noted a draft ordinance amendment is attached for discussion. Westover asked the Commission to discuss the following points and direct staff on how to further draft the ordinance if desired. 1. Should storage pod containers be allowed temporarily, permanently, or not at all? 2. If allowed, what zoning districts should they be allowed in, commercial and industrial? 3. If allowed, do you agree any storage pod container request should require an Interim Use Permit? 4. Should storage pod containers be allowed on mini storage properties if only a certain percentage is allowed? 5. If allowed, what are the requirements you'd like to see (color to match primary building, no excessing wording or graffiti, grading/drainage plan, bituminous or concrete surface beneath, fence, setbacks, etc.)

The Commission discussed storage pod containers and a potential ordinance amendment. The Commission discussed the need to address storage pod containers since there are many within the city already. Tax base and value, the number of pods allowed, foundations, bituminous versus gravel surface, temporary or permanent pods, and aesthetics were discussed.

The general consensus was to move forward with a draft ordinance considering storage pods with an Interim Use Permit within commercial and industrial districts, limit the quantity of pods in some way (percentage of pods allowed), and establish some aesthetics/requirements such as fencing and setbacks. Commissioners had different opinions on the gravel versus bituminous surface.



Commissioners discussed existing non-conforming storage pods versus interim use permit requirements moving forward.

Commissioners directed staff to move forward with a draft ordinance and bring it back to the next Planning Commission meeting.

**Other Business/Miscellaneous**

**City Council Update**

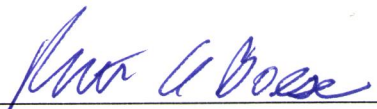
Shogren updated the Commission on the previous City Council meeting. Amanda Latsch has been appointed as the replacement Planning Commissioner due to Arianna Weiler's unexpected vacancy.

**Parks, Trails and Recreation Commission Update**

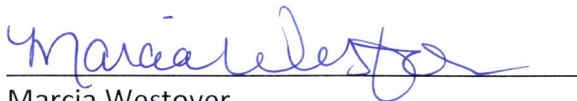
Westover gave an update on the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission.

**Adjournment of Council Meeting**

Being no further business before the Commission, Boese moved, seconded by Kluck, to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:26pm. Motion carried 5/0.

  
~~Aaron Berg, Chair~~ Bob Boese, Vice chair  
Cambridge Planning Commissioner  
for Chair Aaron Berg

ATTEST:

  
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Marcia Westover  
City Planner