

Cambridge Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 5, 2019

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: Chair Julie Immel, Vice Chair Monte Dybvig, Member Aaron Berg, Member Robert Boese, Member Marisa Harder-Chapman, Member Arianna Weiler, and Council Appointee Marlys Palmer.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Community Development Director Marcia Westover.

Call To Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Immel called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

Palmer moved, seconded by Weiler to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

February 5, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes

Harder-Chapman moved, seconded by Dybvig, to approve the February 5, 2019 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Immel opened the public comment period at 7:00 pm and, without any comments, closed the public comment period at 7:01 pm.

New Business

Final Plat, Cambridge-Isanti Schools
1700 305th Ave NE, Cambridge MN

Westover stated the City received a request by Eric Linner, Wold Architects, 332 Minnesota Street, St. Paul, MN 55101, to request a final plat. Cambridge-Isanti Independent School District #911 is preparing plans for a new special education building. As part of this planning, a plat is being proposed. The location is 1700 305th Ave NE, and is on the very southern edge of the city (south of County Road 19 or 305th Ave NE, and east of Highway 65).

Westover stated the preliminary plat was reviewed by the Planning Commission on February 5, 2019 and approved by City Council on February 19, 2019. The final plat is consistent with the preliminary plat. The proposed plat will create two new separate parcels from the one existing parcel. The total plat has an area of 66.509 acres. Lot 1 will have 28.953 acres and will maintain the new special education facility. Lot 2 will have 35.525 acres and will be vacant.

Westover stated no new infrastructure is required as part of this plat. This area of the city does not have city services (sewer and water) available. The septic and well will be reviewed for compliance with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and Minnesota State Statutes.

Westover stated staff is recommending approval of the proposed final plat named Cambridge-Isanti Schools, as long as the following conditions are met: (1.) Site Plan Review must be completed and approved by the city prior to building permit issuance; (2.) All state, local, and federal permits and applications must be completed and submitted by the applicant and all approvals from each agency must be met; and (3.) Final plat must be recorded within 120 days after approval.

Westover stated there are representatives from Cambridge-Isanti Schools present at the meeting and are open to answering any of the Commissioners' questions.

Palmer asked whether the plans will come back to the Planning Commission or City Council for review.

Westover stated the permits and plan review will all be done administratively by City staff.

Palmer asked if Commissioner Berg was going to be able to vote since he is a school board member.

Westover stated she understood that if there is no financial interest, Berg would be able to vote.

Palmer added that a Commissioner can abstain if they need more information.

Dybvig stated there were questions at the previous meeting as to why this particular plot was chosen for this school building. Weiler asked if there is a plan for the soon-to-be vacant buildings that currently house these school programs.

Kris Crocker, Director of Finance and Operations for the C-I School District, 625 Main St NE, Cambridge, MN, stated the school district went through a comprehensive facility study a couple of years ago and it was decided that three of the current programs would be moved to this new building. Ms. Crocker stated these programs were cited within this facility study because of the spaces they were currently located in being inequitable compared to the school's other programs and overcapacity of the spaces the programs were located in. One of the programs is the ALC Program which is currently located in the back of the Education Services Center. Another program is the 18 to 21 year old Special Education Transition Program which was located across the street from the Education Services Center which has been sold so they are temporarily in another space in another school building. Ms. Crocker went on to explain the third part of the building will be a Special Education Setting IV Program where students are currently attending the Rum River Special Educational Cooperative Programs. With the school's removal of its membership from the Rum River Special Educational Cooperative, this program will be housed in the new facility as well.

Ms. Crocker stated at the start of the facility study, their search for property and buildings within the Cambridge and Isanti areas resulted in high costs in purchasing existing facilities, purchasing property or the high cost of remodeling existing facilities. Their findings brought about a discussion that since the school district already owned the property south of Cambridge, the district decided to use the current property and resources they had at that time.

Weiler asked whether the second lot, consisting of 35.525 acres, would remain a vacate lot with plans for future school development should the need arise.

Ms. Crocker stated there have been no conversations of future development and stated there have been discussions of possibly selling this property and putting those resources back into the school programs.

Harder-Chapman asked if this property was bought with this project in mind.

Ms. Crocker stated the school district has owned this property for quite a few years and stated she wasn't sure if it was purchased or given.

Cambridge-Isanti Schools Superintendent Ray Queener, 625 Main St N, Cambridge, MN, stated the property was purchased prior to building the new Cambridge Middle School project.

Immel stated another discussion last month centered around the issue of transportation. With the building being used for special education and concerns about the distance away from downtown, what will the impact be on transportation?

Ms. Crocker stated each of these three programs currently have transportation going to them. The school has a one tier transportation system meaning all of the routes go out, then come back in where there are two transfer hubs where students then get transported to their prospective building. Ms. Crocker explained the new school facility property is right in the middle of both of the transfer hub sites so this will actually provide some efficiencies since currently, the transportation system goes to all three separate programs and with the new facility, they would just go to one site.

Boese stated since this development is located where connection to city sewer and water is not available, is this going to be an issue down the road or are there plans to connect to the city sewer and water to developments like this in the future.

Westover stated the City Comprehensive Plan has designated priority areas in the city that can be served by city water and sewer but this school facility is located in an area that won't be served by city services for quite some time.

Palmer moved, seconded by Boese, to recommend City Council approve the proposed resolution of the final plat named Cambridge-Isanti Schools as long as the conditions on the Resolution are met. Motion passed 5/0 with Berg abstaining due to possible conflict of interests in the future.

2019 Meeting Schedule Discussion

Immel asked Commissioner Berg to summarize his email response regarding the previous conflict in meeting times. Berg stated the school board meeting was rescheduled to an alternate date and time so the previous conflict has been resolved and he will be able to attend the Planning Commission meetings at the regularly scheduled date and time.

Dybvig moved, seconded by Harder-Chapman, to approve the 2019 Planning Commission schedule as presented.

Comprehensive Plan Review – Chapters 1-3

Westover explained that as part of the updated 2017 Comprehensive Plan process, it was determined that staff and the Planning Commission would review the goals of the plan on a regular basis. The first review is of Chapters 1-3. Westover requested the Commission to review and focus on the goals in each chapter (only chapters one and three have goals). The Commissioners and Westover reviewed these goals together and discussed a few changes.

Dybvig questioned why the Commissioners were reviewing the plan since a considerable amount of time and money was spent on updating the City Comprehensive Plan.

Westover stated staff is following the recommendation from Stantec, the consulting group that helped the city update the Comp Plan in 2017, to review the Comp Plan goals once a year to help the Commissioners keep these goals fresh in their minds as they discuss and decide on issues that are brought before them for review. The goals may change over the years as the City grows. Weiler added that every city reviews their Comp Plan as she learned in a Planning Commission training she recently attended.

Westover reviewed the goals and policies and the following items were discussed.

Chapter 1:

Policy 1.6 under General Goal 1 in Chapter 1 brought about some discussion regarding the interpretation of the phrase “individual choice”. The Commissioners asked Westover to mark this item for future review.

General Goal 2 in Chapter 1 brought about the suggestion to add our “state legislators” to the phrase, “... adjacent Townships, state legislators, and state and federal agencies such as the DNR and MnDOT...”.

Policy 2.3 under General Goal 2 in Chapter 1 brought about a suggestion of removing the words “annual workshop” and replacing them with “regular workshops”.

Chapter 2: Contains no goals to review.

Chapter 3:

Commissioners questioned the city’s consistency with Policy 1.6 in Housing Goal 1 in Chapter regarding the large amounts of rentals in one section of the city, Parkwood, along with more rental properties coming in.

Westover stated when updating the Comprehensive Plan, staff looked at the city overall and placed multifamily in different areas of the city so as not to concentrate it in one location. The current concentration of multi-family properties in the Parkwood area includes apartments and senior housing units. The developer for the Parkwood area went bankrupt and left the City with an unfinished development. The city had to finish the streets with special assessments. The property sat vacant for 10 plus years. The city then amended the planned unit development in order to get development started.

Boese brought up a seeming conflict from Chapter 3 Housing Goal 1 Policy 1.6 and Chapter 3 Housing Goal 2, Policy 2.5 regarding avoiding a concentration of high density in housing types and increasing density in existing development neighborhoods.

Westover responded the city needs both types of housing as there is a need for affordable housing. Finding a balance and not a concentration for high density and merging it with single family and mixed-uses was a part of the process for the updated Comprehensive Plan.

Westover reviewed the remaining policies from Chapter 3 and there were no changes noted.

Other Business/Miscellaneous

City Council Update

Palmer updated the Commission on the previous City Council meeting. Westover stated the City has received the resignation of Mike Fabini, the City Building Official, who is retiring, and plans for Matt Small to take Mike's place on May 31st, 2019. The City is seeking applicants for a building inspector.

Parks, Trails, and Recreation Commission Update


Westover updated the Commission on the Parks Commission. There hasn't been a meeting since late summer and last month's meeting was cancelled due to a lack of quorum. The Parks Commission plans to meet next week.

Pictures of Planning Commission Members for Website

Pictures of Planning Commission members were taken to add to the City of Cambridge website.

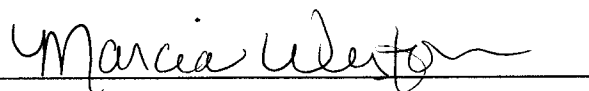
Adjournment

Being no further business before the Commission, Berg moved, seconded by Palmer, to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

 04/02/2019

Julie Immel, Chair
Cambridge Planning Commissioner

ATTEST:



Marcia Westover
Community Development Director