



Planning Commission Minutes

July 27, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Rick Jabs, Commissioners Dennis Schuller, Jeffrey Karr, Maureen Scaglia, Catherine Peloquin, Greg Van Sickle, Joshua Root, Thomas Rublein, and Gordon Vizecky

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Melissa Poehlman, City Planner and Christine Costello, Community Development Specialist

OTHERS PRESENT:

Chairperson Jabs called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M/Rublein, **S/Root** approved the regular meeting minutes of June 22, 2009.

Motion carried: 8-0

Commissioner Karr arrived.

OPEN FORUM

None

PUBLIC HEARING

ITEM #1	09-RZ-01 and 09-CP-01 Continued public hearing on amendment and rezoning of 301 West 77th Street and 7700 Pillsbury Avenue (south half) from the June 22, 2009 meeting
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City Planner Melissa Poehlman (Poehlman) presented the staff report.

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Chair Jabs asked if the question could be split. Are the projects dependent on one another?

Community Development Specialist Christine Costello (Costello) said that it could. The projects are not dependent on one another.

Dan Billmark (Billmark) from Accessible Space, Inc. (ASi) spoke about the project and explained that the request for 51 and 15 units is based on funding the Federal government allocates for the State.

Billmark introduced Nancy Starr, (Starr) from Twin City Christian Homes (TCCH), and then continued to discuss financing and the project's further.

Commissioner Root asked Billmark to describe the 51-unit building.

Billmark described the unit sizes, amenities, 20 percent wheelchair accessible, and that the building will probably be 3 stories.

Commissioner Root asked Billmark to describe the 15-unit building.

Billmark stated that it will be one and two bedroom units, 100 percent accessible and 2 stories.

Commissioner Peloquin asked if we would be "hurting" future development possibilities by "lowering" the zoning. What else is proposed in the area?

Costello and Poehlman summarized the interest in the area and the fact that these sites have been difficult to develop given their particular constraints.

Commissioner Schuller asked what kinds of design elements would be incorporated. Will it beautify the area?

Billmark stated that it will be a modern design and they work with staff to meet requirements.

Commissioner Rublein asked if residents of the 15-unit building (for people with physical disabilities) would be required to be employed.

Billmark stated that many of their typical clients work, but it is not required. Their injuries are usually from accidents; some are returning war veterans. Some residents live there temporarily, but most live there permanently. They are required to be classified as physically disabled by a physician.

Commissioner Rublein questioned: So they could all be unemployed?

Billmark stated that it is unlikely, but possible.

Commissioner Rublein questioned that low income seniors would patronize nearby retail establishments.

Billmark responded that many seniors currently living in Richfield meet the income requirements that will be served by the proposed development. They still frequent retail establishments as they need to buy goods, groceries, etc.

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Chair Jabs stated that he was concerned with the site's safety level. Once tunnel is open (under TH 77) there will be high traffic on this road. Jabs also stated concern over the amount of green space that will be available for residents.

Billmark responded that ASI's existing facilities are in a variety of urban locations and do well. This is an ideal location due to the proximity of amenities and services. This is the type of site that the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) looks for when they distribute funds.

M/Root, **S/Jabs** to close the public hearing.

Motion carried: 9-0

Chair Jabs asked about staff if there seemed to be enough greenspace here to make it a good spot for residential development.

Poehlman responded that the 494 Corridor Plan ("Plan") envisions a walkable space that incorporates greenspace throughout. This will hopefully just be the first piece and the useable greenspace nearby will hopefully increase in the future.

Commissioner Root asked staff about transit services in the area.

Poehlman stated that there is frequent service along 77th Street as well as along Lyndale and Nicollet Avenues.

Commissioner Root stated that the projects will help to meet the required affordable housing goals of the Comprehensive Plan. He asked staff to explain the reasoning behind changing the zoning of 301 77th St from Regional Commercial/Office to High-Density Residential.

Poehlman responded that the specific constraints of the site (railroad, access, size) make it nearly impossible for this site to be developed into a truly regional commercial business. Changing this one parcel is not inconsistent with the Plan given that it was intended to be somewhat flexible and fluid.

Chair Jabs stated that it seemed that changing this parcel could impact the Plan as a whole and he felt that it started to erode the Plan.

Commissioner Scaglia stated that as she understood it, part of the idea of the Plan was that it be flexible in order to accommodate developments as they came forward. She commented that there were other senior complexes along 77th Street and safety did not seem to be a concern (Richfield Towers). Further, as additional development occurs along 77th Street opportunities for pedestrian upgrades will occur.

Commissioner Rublein asked Billmark if HUD had restrictions for the buildings once built. Would there be potential for building additions in the future?

Billmark responded that HUD would not allow changes.

Commissioner Rublein commented that this development may not maximize the site's potential. He asked staff if a Culver's had been considered for this site.

Poehlman responded that there had been some initial interest from a franchisee, but an application had never been made by Culver's.

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Commissioner Root asked staff what other type of development would fit on a site of this size.

Poehlman and Costello responded that gas stations are looking for larger sites these days; a smaller office building could possibly fit.

M/Root, **S/Karr** 1. Recommend approval of a resolution amendment the City's Comprehensive Plan at 301 77th Street West from Regional Commercial/Office to High Density Residential and for the southern portion of 7700 Pillsbury Avenue from High Density Residential to Medium-High Density Residential; and 2. Recommend approval of an ordinance amending Appendix 1 to the City Code by rezoning 301 77th street West from Mixed Use Regional to Mixed Use Community.

Motion carried: 6-3 (opposed Chair Jabs and Commissioners Peloquin and Rublein)

Chair Jabs stated that he voted against the project because he felt that there were too many inconsistencies with the 494 Plan, did not feel like enough green space would be available and was concerned about safety. He does support the efforts of ASi and TCCH as organizations.

Commissioner Peloquin stated that she took issue with the long-term issues in the area.

Commissioner Root stated that he felt that the 51-unit building would pair nicely with the adjacent hotel, while a small commercial development would not pair as nicely.

**ITEM #2 09-APUD-01 Amend planned unit development for 700 East
66th Street/6501 Woodlake Drive**

Poehlman presented the staff report.

Elizabeth York (York) from SilverCrest Properties Development introduced herself.

M/Root, **S/Rublein** to close public Hearing.

Motion carried: 9-0

Commissioner Jabs asked if the loss of the storage area would inhibit new retail in the front of the building.

York stated that the remaining retail space would be leasable.

Commissioner Rublein asked for a definition of a "memory unit."

York explained that memory care patients are generally no longer able to take care of themselves due to Alzheimer's, dementia, etc.

Commissioner Rublein asked if it would be staffed 24 hours.

York said that it would.

Rublein asked if each unit was self-contained with its own restroom.

York stated that they were and would.

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Commissioner Rublein asked if medical care was provided and medicine distributed.

York stated that there would be a Registered Nurse for prescription allotment.

Commissioner Rublein asked if the residents would be allowed to wander around.

York stated that it would be a locked facility.

Commissioner Rublein if there would be any additional security or changes to the plan.

York responded that there would not be.

Commissioner Vizecky clarified that the Commission was being asked to consider the addition of the units and its consistency with the plans for the area.

Commission Rublein asked staff if there were any conditions placed on original PUD that would not allow this.

Poehlman stated that there were not.

Commissioner Rublein asked if the units could be changed to a hospice.

Poehlman responded that the type of unit doesn't matter in this instance.

Commissioner Jabs stated that the concern is the number of units, not their use.

M/Vizecky, **S/Karr** approve an amendment to the planned unit development, final development plan and conditional use permit that will allow the conversion of retail space to 12 additional residential units at 700 66th Street West/6501 Woodlake Drive.

Motion carried: 8-1 (opposed Commissioner Rublein)

NEW BUSINESS

ITEM #3	PC Letter #16 Finding of Consistency with Comprehensive Plan for the purchase of 7338 Queen Avenue
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Poehlman presented the staff report.

Commissioner Vizecky stated that he appreciated staff letting the Commission know that they would be seeing a number of items like this in the near future.

M/Peloquin, **S/Vizecky** to approve resolution finding that the acquisition and disposition of 7338 Queen Avenue by the Housing and Redevelopment Authority for construction of a new single-family home is consistent with the Richfield Comprehensive Plan

Motion carried 9-0

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**ITEM #4 PC Letter #17 Finding of Consistency with Comprehensive
Plan for Housing Districts 2009-1 and District 2009-2**

Poehlman presented the staff report.

M/Root, **S/Vizecky** to adopt the attached resolution finding that:

1. A modification to the Redevelopment Plan for the Richfield Redevelopment Project Area is consistent with the Richfield Comprehensive plan; and
2. Establishment of the Richfield Station East (811 Building) and the Richfield Station West (202 Building) Tax Increment Financing Districts and Tax Increment Financing Plans are consistent with the Richfield Comprehensive Plan; and
3. That the disposition of 7700 Pillsbury Avenue (south portion only) by the City Council and the disposition of 301 West 77th street by the Richfield Housing and Redevelopment Authority is consistent with the Richfield Comprehensive Plan.

Motion carried 8-2 (opposed Jabs, Rublein)

OLD BUSINESS

None

LIAISON REPORTS

School Board: No report.

Community Services Advisory Commission: Report by Chair Jabs.

HRA: Report by Commissioner Root.

City Council: Report by Commissioner Peloquin.

Transportation Commission: No report

Property Excellence Task Force: No report.

Edina & Bloomington Planning Commission: Report by Commissioner Schuller

ADJOURNMENT

M/Root **S/Rublein** to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried 9-0

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at **8:45 p.m.**

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Thomas Rublein
Secretary