



# CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

## Special City Council/Planning Commission Worksession

September 13, 2011

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Goettel at 6:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

*Council Members Present:* Debbie Goettel, Mayor; Sue Sandahl; Pat Elliott; and Tom Fitzhenry.

*Council Members Absent:* Fred Wroge

*Planning Members Present:* Rick Jabs, Chair; Tom Rublein; Gordon Vizecky; Joshua Root; Robert Hall; Daniel Kitzberger; Dennis Schuller

*Planning Members Absent:* Maureen Scaglia

*Staff Present:* Steven L. Devich, City Manager; Mike Eastling, Public Works Director; Jeff Pearson, Transportation Engineer; Melissa Poehlman, City Planner; Corrine Heine, City Attorney; and Cheryl Krumholz, Recording Secretary.

**Item # 1**

**DISCUSSION REGARDING MENARDS DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL FOR  
77<sup>TH</sup> STREET AND NICOLLET AVENUE AREA**

Theron Berg, Menards representative, reviewed and discussed the revised site plan and elevations for the proposed Menards development, which contains some difficult issues needing to be addressed.

City Planner Poehlman stated staff is comfortable with the number of parking spaces and had asked for a reduction in spaces to add more landscaping.

Community Development Director Stark explained staff is supportive of the Menards project, there are code enforcement and other applicable requirements, including non-compliance with many provisions of the Comprehensive Plan or Zoning Ordinance and the location of ingress/egress into the site not meeting engineering guidelines from Hennepin County and City's Public Works staff.

Planning Commissioner Root expressed concern regarding the aesthetic aspect of the non-windows on the building wall along 77<sup>th</sup> Street and that the ingress/egress as presented appears difficult.

Mr. Berg explained MnDOT and Hennepin County are conducting a traffic study for Nicollet Avenue and the 494 frontage road and there are threshold issues to get past to allow the project to proceed.

Community Development Director Stark stated no developer for a site this large could meet every issue and that's why there are planned unit development and variance options. He explained several options related to the 494 Comprehensive Plan.

Community Development Director Stark suggested a conditional use permit with stipulations and conditions of what makes this development different. He added the 494 Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed if the issues related to this project become a recurring theme.

Mayor Goettel stated she did not want to tie a developer's hands with the Comprehensive Plan.

Council Member Sandahl agreed with the conditional use permit (CUP) process because it provides flexibility.

City Planner Poehlman explained the mixed use district allows existing buildings to expand.

Mr. Berg explained the timeline with the process being fully approved by the end of 2011.

City Attorney Heine reviewed options from the legal perspective. She suggested permitting the expansion as a non-conformity because it benefits the community as a unique site and setting conditions to bring the project closer to the vision but not hold to the restrictions that were in place after the business was already there. This would not be setting a precedent for other developments because no similar situation in the corridor exists.

Planning Commission Chair Jobs expressed concern that the side of the building along 77<sup>th</sup> be secure and pedestrian friendly.

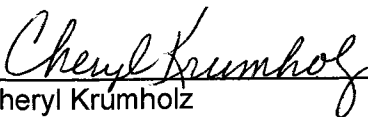
City Manager Devich discussed the importance of the look of properties along 77<sup>th</sup> Street.

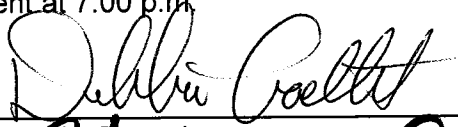
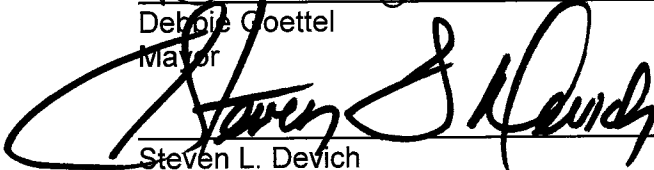
Planning Commissioner Hall expressed support for the proposal.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:00 p.m.

Date Approved: September 27, 2011

  
Cheryl Krumholz  
Recording Secretary

  
Debra Goettel  
Mayor  
  
Steven L. Devich  
City Manager