

**APPROVED MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF WYOMING, MINNESOTA
JUNE 8, 2021
7:00PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

Planning Commission Chairman Lobermeier called the Regular Meeting of the Wyoming Planning Commission for June 8, 2021 to order at 7:00 PM

CALL OF ROLL:

On a Call of the Roll the following members of the Wyoming Planning Commission were present: Mark Lobermeier, Kevin Teel, Bryan Murdock, Katie West, and Roger Carr

ABSENT: None

Also Present: Fred Weck Zoning Administrator and Council Liaison Brett Ohnstad

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

OPEN FORUM: NONE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Consider approving the minutes of the “Regular Meeting” of the Wyoming, Minnesota Planning Commission for May 25, 2021

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WEST, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CARR, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE “REGULAR MEETING” OF THE WYOMING, MINNESOTA PLANNING COMMISSION FOR MAY 25, 2021 AS SUBMITTED.

<i>Voting Aye:</i>	<i>Murdock, West, Teel, Carr, and Lobermeier</i>
<i>Voting Nay:</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Abstain:</i>	<i>None</i>
<i>Absent:</i>	<i>None</i>

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS

2. Site Plan Review Sp-21-001 Widseth Smith and Nolting
Location: 5368 266th Street
Applicant: PMI Construction Services

Zoning Administrator Weck noted that he had e-mailed out some additional information just prior to the meeting and placed copies at their places. He stated that in the staff report, staff had recommended tabling this request in order to give the applicant more time to revise and complete their plans. He stated that in the meantime, he had briefly gone through the additional information that Tim Houle of Widseth Smith and Nolting had provided and suggested that he go ahead and address some of the items that were noted in the staff report.

Tim Houle explained that he is a civil engineer with Widseth Smith and Nolting and noted that they frequently just go by Widseth. He stated that Mike Koch from PMI Construction was also present at the meeting and will be the contractor for the project. He stated that their building project will be split into two phases with the first just remodeling the existing building and the second phase will include adding a garage for their vehicles. He stated that they purposefully did not submit all the required documents with things like the lighting and signage plans because they wanted to see what the City thought about their big items before they invested too much time in the project. He stated that they understand why staff's initial recommendation was to table the application but noted that he is hopeful that they can have a discussion with the Commission to get feedback and garner conditional approval for moving forward with this application. He stated that there are a few things that are causing them some challenges that are really out of the ordinary such as supply chain problems and pricing challenges. He stated that they are concerned about the time frame of the project because of those issues and is another reason that they would like to keep the process moving forward. He noted to address the landscaping and screening concerns raised in the staff report, they have submitted some pictures and noted that the site is fairly well treed and explained that there are presently 9 trees on the site, 3 on the west side and 6 on the east side near the residential area. He stated that will need to figure out where to put 3 more trees in order to meet the request by the City. He stated that they understand that they will need to replace the 4 trees they plan to remove with this project in addition to adding the 3 more trees that are required.

Chair Lobermeier asked if the Commission had any questions for the applicant regarding trees and screening.

Commissioner West asked how close they are to having a preliminary landscape plan to show the locations of these trees. She stated that is something she would like to see but imagines that the City Council would also find it helpful.

Mr. Houle explained that they received the staff report on Friday and reiterated that they are pulling together some additional information, but wanted to see what the initial reaction is from the Commission and noted that he hopeful that by next Monday they will have a plan sheet to show.

Zoning Administrator Weck explained that the City Council packets go out on Friday, so they would need additional information from Mr. Houle by Thursday.

Mr. Houle stated that is helpful information and will have the information ready by then.

Commissioner Murdock noted that he thinks some understory trees between the residences and the business seem like the best way to go and doesn't know why the Commission should hold up the entire process surrounding this point.

Chair Lobermeier asked about tree removal along the east side and noted that some that were related to the U-drive for the garage and some were related to stormwater. He stated that to get the garage where it is needed with the U-drive makes sense and noted that he believes there is some landscaping that could be done there. He stated that he thinks there may be other options for stormwater that can be covered later.

Mr. Houle stated that related to landscaping and screening there is a requirement in the City ordinances related to screening between residential areas and a parking lot. He stated that the screening is supposed to be a wall, a fence, or densely planted compact hedge or tree cover not less than 4 feet in height. He stated that they wanted to get some kind of feedback from the Commission on which screening they would prefer. He stated that his first idea was to go with vegetation because he doesn't think a wall would be appropriate in that neighborhood.

Chair Lobermeier stated that the Commission is not in any position to tell the applicant's which way they should go, but noted that have probably seen vegetation more often in this type of situation.

Commissioner Murdock stated that any trees that meet the understory requirement as part of their screening, will count towards trees too.

Zoning Administrator Weck stated that it actually depends on what type of tree is chosen, for example, if they choose an evergreen that could work on the screening side also.

Mr. Houle noted that they had spoken preliminarily, when they purchased the building, about the idea of whether they wanted to spend the funds to put in a garage and thought about just using the existing parking lot and remodeling the building. If so, they would not have to do any screening and noted that may be something the City wanted to keep in mind in the future when they look at their ordinances because there is a bit of a dichotomy in the ordinance. He stated that if they want to put in a garage, they have to do screening, but if they did not do a garage, they would not have to provide screening. He moved on to discuss stormwater and drainage and explained that they do have rate control requirements and are proposing two stormwater basins that would have approximately a two-foot dish. He stated that it will be a grassed depression and will be mow-able. He stated that they sized the two basins for the 100-year, 24-hour storm and have driveway curb and gutters and driveway valley gutters to direct the new impervious from the building and from the U-drive into the basins. He stated that they believe they will be able to show that they will be addressing stormwater on site and were not counting on infiltration but their understanding is that the soils are sandier in nature, so infiltration may occur. He stated that they did not show overflow elevations, but the general nature of the slope is towards Felton Avenue right now and that will not change. He noted that they will indicate on their drawings that both basins will overflow towards the street after detaining the 100-year, 24-hour storm. He stated that the finished floor measurement is at 902.6 and the top of the basin is right around 901, so they are asking for 1.6 feet rather than 2 feet. He stated that he understands the freeboard requirement, but would hope that the 1.6 feet would be found to be reasonable. He stated that it has been suggested to use a wet type seed mix and his thought was that they have to mow and maintain it, so he would hope that they could have some latitude to choose an appropriate seed mix based on the condition of the basin.

Chair Lobermeier asked how the water will get from the two new basins to the southwest corner of the site.

Mr. Houle stated that the basins on the east side are not set up to drain to the west side. He explained that the two basins on the east side will contain the 100-year, 24-hour storm.

Chair Lobermeier stated that the basins are not designed as wet detention but were designed to retain a 6-inch rainfall which is a lot. He noted that he is a retired civil engineer and questioned why the water was not taken to the west side where there is already a natural depression with an outlet. He asked if the applicant had taken a look at that to see if there is a way for them to bring storm water where it appears to want to go. He stated that most of the site drains there and has always drained there. They are not planning to add too much impervious surface which may also mean that no grading would be needed on the east side which would save some of the trees.

Mr. Houle explained that when they looked at the existing site, they noted that the drainage appears to be fine and did not want to interrupt or mess with the parking lot of the building. He agreed that the west appears to have capacity, but they believe that there is a highway easement over there, and were planning to stay away from interacting with MnDOT, if at all possible. When they decided to put in the improvements on the east side with the garage, they asked if there was a reasonable way to take it past or around the building and could not come up with a reasonable

way to do that which is why they proposed sizing the basins and were able to save 3 of the trees.

Chair Lobermeier referenced a project from a few years ago for a new dental office which ended up with a stormwater pond in the front and part of what he is talking about is in areas where that doesn't make sense to have to do that. He stated that it is their site plan, but if they are looking for options, that may be one to consider.

Mr. Houle stated that elevation-wise, if they were adding the garage at the first-floor elevation, they may have had a different take on whether they could go to the west, but since they are putting the garage basically between the first floor and the basement, it was lower than it would have been ideal to get across to the west side.

Chair Lobermeier stated that he is assuming staff will want to see where the water will go in the instance where the ponds fill up.

Mr. Houle stated that they can show where the overflow from the basins will go. He noted that the highest edge of the pavement is 900.6 feet.

Zoning Administrator Weck noted that when the streets were redone in the area, they had a tough time trying to figure out how to get the water to move because it is so flat in the area.

Commissioner Murdock asked if there was a reason that the drainage cannot go west along the north side of the building.

Mr. Houle stated that it would probably have to be piped because the entire new roof will go to the south. He noted that right now the north basin is there because trying to get everything to tilt to the south was going to be difficult. He stated that the staff report was correct that they did not indicate where the garbage enclosure would be kept and explained that they planned to put the garbage in the garage and will note that on their updated plan sheet. He stated that there were a few access questions from the staff report relating to sidewalks and the promotion of walkability. He stated that currently, the old clinic building has a sidewalk from the front door down to Felton and the City put in a sidewalk on the east side of Felton. He stated that they did not show a new sidewalk connecting their front door to Felton. He stated that the streets have been basically set up for vehicles and noted that some cities have wider streets so they can be used for parking or for people to walk along them. He stated that they would understand if they were a retail business or if they were still a clinic that the walkability may be more of a need, but with their type of business, there is not a lot of walk-up traffic. He stated that their request is that they do not have to continue the sidewalk between the new garage, the u-drive and up the sloped path to the front door. He stated that they are also requesting to use a 5-foot-wide sidewalk and noted that the existing sidewalk is 4 feet wide and complies with the ADA requirements.

Commissioner Teel stated that he would prefer a sidewalk even though the use will not be retail. He stated that he works in downtown St. Paul and he frequently walks during his lunchbreak and would like to give that opportunity not only to the citizens of the City, but also to the associates of Widseth so they are able to walk and head to the grocery store, for example, without having to just walk-through parking lots to get around the area. He noted that he understands that there isn't a crosswalk in the area, so he is not sure what the 'right' answer is, but is concerned that there is no way for their associates to get safely from their building to a sidewalk to take a walk during their lunch break to get to a restaurant or the grocery store.

Mr. Houle noted that he made a good point about the crossing and explained that they can go through the garage and out the u-drive because it has a pedestrian door. He reiterated that their request would be to allow their staff to come out the garage and the u-drive and cut across the street just like the present situation.

Zoning Administrator Weck stated that he agreed with Commissioner Teel's suggestion.

Commissioner Murdock questioned how they would walk around the front of their building and get from the front entry of the building to the u-drive.

Mr. Houle stated that currently only staff would go to the u-drive and would go through the garage.

Commissioner Murdock asked what would happen if this property is sold in the future to something that has a more retail use, and there is no sidewalk, would the City then require the new user to put in a sidewalk.

Zoning Administrator Weck stated that would only be if they had to do another site plan review.

Council Liaison Ohnstad stated that he would like to make sure that fire safety is taken into consideration and those types of vehicles would have easy access.

Mr. Houle addressed the comments in the staff report regarding lighting and signage. He noted that they now have a lighting plan from their electrical engineer so that will be submitted to the City. For signage, they do have a photo of the existing sign near Highway 8 and would propose to have something very similar to that at 266th and Highway 61. He noted that they have not yet made any decision regarding on-building sign and noted that it is not like their business will be an 'impulse' business for someone to see the sign and stop in.

Chair Lobermeier thanked Mr. Houle for having this dialogue with the Commission and noted that he thought it was a very helpful conversation.

Mr. Houle reiterated that they are hoping to keep the process moving forward.

- 3. MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LOBERMEIER, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WEST, TO RECOMMEND CONDITIONAL APPROVAL OF THE SITE PLAN REVIEW FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT 5368 266TH STREET, FOR WIDSETH SMITH AND NOLTING, SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS NOTED IN THE STAFF REPORT, THAT INCLUDES THE TREE REPLACEMENT AND RE-SCREENING OF THE RESIDENTIAL AREA TO THE EAST AS DISCUSSED, NOTING THAT SCREENING, IF DONE WITH TREES MAY REDUCE THE ADDITIONAL TREES THAT NEED TO COME INTO THE SITE, THAT INFORMATION BE PROVIDED TO STAFF SHOWING WHERE WATER WILL FLOW ON THE SITE AS WELL AS THE FREEBOARD REQUESTED, THE ADDITION OF THE 5 FOOT SIDEWALK ,AS WELL AS A REQUIREMENT FOR A SIDEWALK FROM THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING, ALL THE WAY UP THE U-DRIVE OUT TO FELTON.**

Voting Aye: Murdock, West, Teel, Carr, and Lobermeier

Voting Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Chair Lobermeier stated that he thinks this is a good project and is happy to see something go into this space. He asked how many employees will initially be using the building.

Mr. Houle stated that they currently have 10-11 employees and have room for close to 20 employees without including the basement space.

OLD BUSINESS: NONE

COMMUNICATIONS: NONE

UPDATES:

Sunrise Riverbank: Rezoning, Preliminary Plat, and Conditional Use Permit were approved by the City Council on June 1, 2021.

Zoning Administrator Weck noted that at the next meeting there will be a site plan review for Hallberg Self-Storage.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER MURDOCK, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER TEEL, TO ADJOURN THE JUNE 8, 2021 “REGULAR MEETING” OF THE WYOMING, MINNESOTA PLANNING COMMISSION AT 7:53 PM.

Voting Aye: Murdock, West, Teel, Carr, and Lobermeier

Voting Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None