

NOT APPROVED
ANOKA PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
ANOKA CITY HALL
TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2023
7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting of the Anoka Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Planning Commissioners present: Chair Borgie Bonthuis, Karna Brewer, Nancy Coleman, Don Kjonaas, Shari Nemec, Peter Rech, and Logan Thompson

Planning Commissioners absent: None

Staff present: City Planner Clark Palmer

OATH OF OFFICE

City Planner Palmer administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed Commissioner Logan Thompson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. Approval of May 2, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER NEMEC, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER COLEMAN, TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 2, 2023, REGULAR MEETING.

7 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS ON NEW APPLICATIONS:

A2023-007, Variance, 3504 Rum River Drive

City Planner Palmer reported the property owners of 3504 Rum River Drive are seeking to expand their existing three season porch and deck located at the rear of the home which faces the Rum River. The existing structure, built in 1992, is setback from the Rum River by 57.28 feet. The current required setback from the river is 100 feet. The existing structure is considered legal nonconforming. The new porch and deck will be expanded toward the river by two feet and also widened along the back of the home. The new proposed setback is 53.76 feet, therefore the applicant is requesting a variance. He reviewed the variance criteria and related findings and the actions the Commission could choose to take.

Commissioner Brewer asked if the existing three season porch was original to the home or added later.

City Planner Palmer replied that he believes that it was original.

Commissioner Brewer commented that three season porches sometimes become four season porches, which is added living space.

City Planner Palmer replied that whether it is a three-season porch or four-season porch, the key would be whether there is a roof as that is the definition of an addition.

Commissioner Rech asked if this structure was permitted at the time it was built.

City Planner Palmer commented that he would assume it was as all the homes on that curve are in line with each other.

Commissioner Rech asked if the 100-foot setback is a requirement of the City or State.

City Planner Palmer replied that there are different river regulations which specify setbacks and over time those standards have become more stringent and created a lot of nonconforming river properties. He noted that about 50 percent of river properties are nonconforming. He confirmed that the City would be the body to issue the variance and the applicant would not need to go before another entity.

Commissioner Brewer asked where the measurement is done for the river, as the river depth fluctuates.

City Planner Palmer replied that the ordinary high water mark is used for measurement. He referenced the flooding that occurred this spring and asked the applicant how high the water came up onto his property during that time.

Keith Kessler, applicant, commented that the entire wood structure of the deck was under water during the flooding and came to the top step. He commented that they have a rise in their property and therefore did not experience the basement flooding that some of his neighbors experienced.

Chair Bonthuis opened the public hearing at 7:17 p.m.

As no one wished to appear, Chair Bonthuis closed the public hearing at 7:17 p.m.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER NEMEC, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER COLEMAN, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE VARIANCE SETBACK AT 3504 RUM RIVER DRIVE, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

7 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried.

City Planner Palmer advised this will go before the City Council on June 20, 2023.

A2023-003, Variance, Conditional Use Permit Amendment, and Site Plan Review, 215 West Main Street

City Planner Palmer clarified that a variance is not required for this item.

City Planner Palmer reported that Mike Kraft Architects, on behalf of Anoka-Hennepin School District, is requesting approval of a site plan review and conditional use permit amendment. The applicant is proposed to add two new building additions and expand the parking lot at Franklin Elementary School located at 215 West Main Street. Other improvements include landscaping, stormwater management facilities and recreational equipment. The property is zoned Main Street Mixed Use, West Main Street Subdistrict. Prior to the issuance of building permits, approval of a site plan review is required. Schools and public buildings are allowed in the zoning district with approval of a conditional use permit (CUP). The property currently has a CUP, so rather than issuing a new CUP, an amendment would be necessary. The school campus is an existing facility which was first constructed in 1915 and later expanded in 1952, 1959, and 2014. The Anoka-Hennepin School District is repurposing the school as a special education facility.

City Planner Palmer provided an overview of the site plan review including the zoning requirements, architectural details, parking, landscaping/tree replacement, lighting, and storm water. He then reviewed the CUP amendment request and noted that staff recommends approval of the conditional use permit and site plan review with the conditions noted in the staff report.

Commissioner Rech stated that he likes the inclusion of the fifth condition related to lighting to require the glare shields.

Commissioner Brewer stated that he would be curious as to the ages of the students.

Mike Kraft, representing the applicant, replied that the students using this facility are currently in the pathways program in Coon Rapids and the bridges program in Andover. He stated that the

students are 17 to 21 and are being trained to be largely independent. He stated that there would be a maximum of 250 students, compared to the 330 students currently attending Franklin.

Commissioner Brewer asked for details on the busing.

Mr. Kraft replied that they would dramatically improve the drop-off and pick-up from the existing condition for buses. He noted that 15 to 20 buses would be able to utilize the drop off area and it is their intent that the buses would not unload at the street.

Commissioner Brewer asked for details on fire escape locations.

Mr. Kraft provided details on the fire escape. He noted that currently the lower level where students eat lunch does not have handicap access for exiting.

Commissioner Rech asked for a comparison for staffing as proposed compared to the existing elementary school.

Mr. Kraft replied that the special education program would require more staff. He stated that they are planning for a higher level of staff in terms of parking than what may occur.

Commissioner Kjonaas asked for details on snow removal and snow storage.

Mr. Kraft provided details, noting that the majority of the snow would go to the north of the parking lot but would not encroach into the parking stalls.

Commissioner Rech commented that the letter mentions removal of the existing playground with a smaller playground to be constructed and asked for details.

Mr. Kraft replied that while recess is not part of the program, they are aware that the neighborhood uses the playground and therefore they will keep that element as a community benefit.

Commissioner Thompson asked for details on the salvaged items mentioned in the plan.

Mr. Kraft replied that many of the products on the site are in good condition and have not reached the cycle for replacement, therefore they will be reused.

Chair Bonthuis commented that she does not see an elevator on the drawing.

Mr. Kraft replied that there is an existing elevator in the building that would remain.

Chair Bonthuis asked for details on the path the buses would take in the two-way traffic parking.

Mr. Kraft described the path buses would take, noted with the arrows. He noted that as designed, traffic would be able to enter and exit while busing is occurring, compared to the current design where vehicles cannot move when the buses are there. He estimated 15 to 20 buses, noting that many would be smaller buses.

Chair Bonthuis noted that currently employees are parking along Webster and not utilizing the alternate lot.

Mr. Kraft commented that the employees will use the main parking lot and Webster parking lot.

Chair Bonthuis noted that the Parking Advisory Board may post Webster as no parking.

Mr. Kraft commented that they intentionally are planning to provide more parking in order to avoid the situations that exist today.

Chair Bonthuis asked about irrigation.

Mr. Kraft replied that there is not irrigation north of the parking lot currently and that would not be added. He noted that the shrubs and trees were intentionally chosen because they are hardy. He stated that the contractor would be obligated to water for the first year period until those become established.

Chair Bonthuis asked the number of entrances/exits.

Mr. Kraft replied that there would be six. He noted that the doors would have alarms if left open for an extended period of time.

Chair Bonthuis opened the public hearing at 7:58 p.m.

As no one further wished to appear, Chair Bonthuis closed the public hearing at 7:58 p.m.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KJONAAS, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER NEMEC, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AMENDMENT AND SITE PLAN REVIEW, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. An auxiliary parking lot southeast of the Branch Avenue/Webster Street intersection shall be designed, approved, and constructed prior to receiving a certificate of occupancy for the facility.
2. All parking shall be maintained in accordance with the approved parking plan.
3. All comments and concerns of the engineering department shall be met.

4. All site improvements shall be completed in accordance with the approved plans. Any significant deviations from the approved plans shall require additional review and approval by the Planning Commission and City Council.
5. Exterior lighting shall be downward directed and shielded with external glare shields and comply with the City's exterior lighting requirements stated in City Code Section 78-265(j)(5).

7 ayes – 0 nays. Motion carried.

City Planner Palmer advised this will go before the City Council on June 20, 2022.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Next work session will be Tuesday, June 21st at 5:00 p.m.

Next regular meeting will be Tuesday, July 18th at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER NEMEC, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER COLEMAN, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

7 ayes - 0 nays. Motion carried.

Time of adjournment: 8:02 p.m.

Submitted by: Amanda Staple, *TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*