

City of Excelsior

Planning Commission Meeting

Minutes

Wednesday, November 7, 2012

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gaylord called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Busch, Craig, Duyvejonck, Jensen, Wallace, Wright,  
and Chair Gaylord

Commissioners Absent: None

Also Present: City Planner Richards, City Attorney Staunton, City  
Planner Braaten

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Planning Commission Meeting of October 2, 2012

Craig asked for a small revision to the October 2, 2012 meeting minutes as proposed.

Commissioner Busch moved, Commissioner Jensen seconded, to approve the Planning Commission Minutes of October 2, 2012 with the revision discussed. Motion carried 7/0.

4. PENDING ISSUES/PROJECTS

a. Appoint Liaison to City Council (November 19, 2012)

Commissioner Jensen will be the Planning Commission Liaison to the November 19, 2012 City Council meeting and Chair Gaylord will be the alternate.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Variance form the minimum setback from the ordinary high water level of Lake Minnetonka as stated in Appendix E, Article 60, Sec. 60-4 of the Excelsior City Code, to build a pergola over the existing patio on the property located at 3 Maclynn Road, P.I.D.# 35-117-23-12-0019 – Nina Giovanelli

Braaten reported that Nina Giovanelli was proposing to construct an 18' x 16' pergola structure to be located approximately 18.31 feet to the OHW of Lake Minnetonka versus the required 50 foot structure setback required by City Ordinance. The site conditions include a channel connected to Lake Minnetonka which extends along the north and east border of the property which allows for a very minimal building envelope on the site. The applicant provided nine letters of support from neighboring property owners.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- a. Variance form the minimum setback from the ordinary high water level of Lake Minnetonka as stated in Appendix E, Article 60, Sec. 60-4 of the Excelsior City Code, to build a pergola over the existing patio on the property located at 3 Maclynn Road, P.I.D.# 35-117-23-12-0019 – Nina Giovanelli – (continued)

The Commission briefly discussed the structure setback requirements in the R-1, Single Family Residential zoning district and the Variance Review Criteria.

Chair Gaylord opened the public hearing at 7:10 P.M. No comments were received from the public and Chair Gaylord closed the public hearing at 7:11 P.M.

Commissioner Craig moved, Commissioner Wright seconded, to continue the public hearing to the City Council meeting and recommend approval of the variance request to construct a pergola within the 50 foot structure setback with the conditions stated in the staff report. Motion carried 7/0.

- b. General and Final Plan, Planned Unit Development District, Design Standards, and Site Plan review per Section 65-6 of Article 65. PUD of the Excelsior City Code, to construct a hotel on the property located at 10 Water Street, P.I.D. 34-117-23-11-0059 – Thomas F. James Properties, LLC

Richards informed the Commission that the application had not been deemed complete by the City Engineer and therefore no review information had been provided to the Commission. Richards explained that the public hearing notice had been sent out so the Commission should still open the public hearing for comment, but there should not be any discussion by the Commission.

The Commission was also informed that the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) had denied the Site Alteration Permit for the hotel proposal at 10 Water Street. The HPC has set a special meeting for November 20<sup>th</sup> to finalize a Decision and Order denying the application.

The Commission briefly discussed the HPC Decision and Order and the possibility of the applicant appealing the HPC decision.

Chair Gaylord opened the public hearing at 7:17 PM.

Bob Bolles, 229 George Street, stated that he currently held a seat on the HPC, but he was not at the meeting to represent the HPC. Mr Bolles stated that he was very disappointed in the outcome at the HPC. Mr. Bolles commented that the hotel was a good project that would be beneficial to the City. He was supportive of the project and hoped that Planning Commission could work with the applicant to make it a better project.

Chair Gaylord closed the public hearing 7:22 P.M.

The Commission discussed the HPC denial of the Site Alteration Permit. Staunton explained that the main issue and finding of fact for denial was the

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

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mass and scale of the proposed building.

Discussion followed regarding special meeting dates for the Planning Commission in anticipation of the hotel application taking more than one meeting to discuss and formulate a recommendation to the City Council. Staunton informed the Commission that the City Council may want to consider this application before the end of the calendar year which may cause a very tight timeline for the application moving forward.

By consensus the Commission set a special Planning Commission meeting for the 10<sup>th</sup> of December.

Bob Bolles, 229 George Street, commented that a hotel is a different type of a building and by nature it is a more massive building. He informed the Commission that the architect had submitted different options of turret designs and the HPC was working through options to tweak the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the proposed hotel to be more compatible with the Downtown Historic District.

Commissioner Wright moved, Commissioner Craig seconded, to continue the public hearing to the next Planning Commission regular meeting on December 4, 2012 for further discussion. Motion carried 7/0.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Impervious Surface Coverage Regulations – Green Technology Subcommittee

Richards explained that this agenda item was moved to a future meeting date with a lighter agenda with the expectation that the hotel application public hearing would be heard at this meeting.

- b. Formula Business Regulations (Franchises)

Richards explained that this agenda item was moved to a future meeting date with a lighter agenda with the expectation that the hotel application public hearing would be heard at this meeting.

Commissioner Craig moved, Commissioner Busch seconded, to continue Agenda Items 6(a) and 6(b) to a future meeting with a lighter agenda. Motion carried 7/0.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Parking Update – Implementation

1. Parking Counts Summary

Richards informed the Commission that the Parking Counts Summary was being completed by staff and would be provided at the December meeting.

2. Parking Options for Water Street/Design Standards for 50-foot Setback Requirement on Water Street

Richards informed the Commission that the City Council had asked the Planning Commission to take a closer look at this issue. Based on the previous Planning Commission discussion the Commission determined that George Street might be an obvious point to end the 50-foot parking setback requirement from Water Street. The previous discussion also included the parking options and possible incentives to replace existing, non-conforming parking with buildings. Richards explained that the Comp Plan did not give any guidance on this issue, but the visioning document "Making New History – A Downtown Revitalization Master Plan for Excelsior" did comment on a few issues that might pertain to this topic. Specifically, the visioning document talked about "cottage commercial" which is using what were originally single-family homes as businesses and how this adds character to downtown.

Discussion followed regarding the visioning document, the design standards and cottage commercial.

Staunton explained that the visioning document being discussed had been accepted by the Council, but never adopted by the Council. It could be used to generate ideas and to make recommendations, but should not be used in a legislative capacity.

Discussion followed regarding the 50-foot parking setback requirement from Water Street and cottage commercial.

Richards informed the Commission that staff would work on some possible language changes to the design standards and zoning ordinance that would incorporate the Planning Commission dialogue and bring them back at a later date for discussion.

3. Shared Parking Consequences

Richards stated that the topic of discussion was whether shared parking will have an unintended negative impact on the downtown area.

Chair Gaylord and Busch stated that it would be helpful to the

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Parking Update – Implementation

3. Shared Parking Consequences – (continued)

discussion if the Commission was provided with an up to date list of existing shared parking.

Discussion followed regarding possible consequences.

4. Water Street Angled Parking Options

Richards stated that based on past conversations and the information provided by the City Engineer angled parking is not a viable option.

5. Parking Map

The Commission discussed this topic along with Agenda Item 7(a)6 Parking Management.

6. Parking Management

Richards explained that the City Planning Intern Lisa Elliot was working on this topic. She is currently contacting parking management vendors and will have a report in the future to further this discussion.

Chair Gaylord commented that it would be helpful to have a parking model to help simulate parking loads. He stated that currently there is no way to simulate parking and business impacts.

Discussion followed regarding parking simulation, parking impact fees, and business uses.

Staunton commented that it would be beneficial for the Commission to have an idea of the current parking capacity and what is currently being used by business and property owners. He felt that "knowing how full the bucket is" would be helpful when making decisions on future parking issues.

a. Dates for Additional Work Session(s)

Additional dates for work sessions were not scheduled, but the Commission did discuss possible special meeting dates for the upcoming hotel application.

8. COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS

a. Next Planning Commission Meeting – Tuesday, December 4, 2012

9. MISCELLANEOUS

a. Recent City Council Actions

Staff updated the Commission on recent City Council actions.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wright moved, Commissioner Jensen seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Motion carried 7/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Lane L. Braaten  
City Planner