

City of Excelsior
Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, August 6, 2013

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Craig called the meeting to order at 7:13 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Busch, Craig, Duyvejonck, Hannah, and Wallace

Commissioners Absent: Wilson and Wright

Others Present: Braaten and Richards

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(a) Planning Commission Meeting of July 2, 2013

Commissioner Wallace moved, Busch seconded, to approve the Planning Commission Minutes of July 2, 2013 as presented. Motion carried 5/0.

(b) Planning Commission Special Meeting of July 22, 2013

Commissioner Wallace moved, Busch seconded, to approve the Planning Commission Special Meeting Minutes of July 22, 2013 with the revisions discussed. Motion carried 5/0.

4. PENDING ISSUES/PROJECTS

(a) Appoint Liaison to City Council (August 19, 2013)

Dan Hannah volunteered to be the Council liaison for the August 19, 2013 meeting.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS – (Continued)

None

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

(a) Conditional Use Permit to Allow a Daycare Facility as an Accessory Use Per Article 45 of Appendix E, Sec. 45-4 for 897 Third Avenue, P.I.D. #35-117-23-13-0034 – Christ Community Church

Richards introduced the application. Richards explained that the R-3, Medium Density Residential zoning district requires the approval of a Conditional Use Permit for a daycare facility. Richards informed the Commission that it would be a Spanish immersion daycare with approximately 23 to 25 children on the campus. Richards described the existing and proposed site conditions, explaining that based on the information provided staff saw no major issues with the application. Richards stated that the daycare would need a state license through Hennepin County and the facility must be inspected by fire official and building inspector per City Ordinance requirements.

Duyvejonck asked if any neighboring property owners had commented on the application. Staff had not received any comments from neighboring property owners.

Jeffery Jarvis, Senior Pastor at Christ Community Church informed the Commission that they have been doing the redevelopment/remodeling of the

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- (a) Conditional Use Permit to Allow a Daycare Facility as an Accessory Use Per Article 45 of Appendix E, Sec. 45-4 for 897 Third Avenue, P.I.D. #35-117-23-13-0034 – Christ Community Church – (continued)

church in two different phases. Phase two is finishing the lower level in which the daycare is proposed to be located. The Church was looking to start construction after the New Year. He felt there was a real need in this area for Spanish emersion. He also informed the Commission that he had spoken with representatives from the neighboring church to the west, United Methodist, and they are very excited about the project.

Chair Craig opened public hearing at 7:25 PM.

Doris Green, representative of the Spanish emersion program, informed the Commission that she had started a similar program 3 years ago and it has been very successful. She went into further explanation of the students and some of the criteria.

Melinda Nelson, 526 William Street, informed the Commission that her children went to a Montessori school. She stated that churches should be used to their highest and best use and that this project sounded like a wonderful addition to the community.

Hearing no further interest to comment, Chair Craig closed the public hearing at 7:30 pm.

Wallace commented that there should be no adverse effect on neighboring property owners based on the information provided.

Commissioner Wallace moved, Hannah seconded, to recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit for a daycare facility at 897 Third Avenue (Christ Community Church) with the conditions stated in the Staff Report. Motion carried 5/0.

- (b) Variance from Maximum Height Requirement Per Article 43 of Appendix E, Sec. 43-7 for a Home Addition at 100 Lake Street, P.I.D. #27-117-23-44-0015 – Mark Gaylord and Lori Anderson

Commissioner Wallace recused himself from the discussion due to the fact that he was the architect for the project.

Braaten introduced the application. Braaten informed the Commission that Mark Gaylord and Lori Anderson had purchased the home at 100 Lake Street and were requesting a variance to exceed the 30 ft. height maximum. Braaten indicated that the proposed third floor tower room would extend to an overall height of 40' 9½" and a mid-peak height of 37' 3½" rather than the maximum 36' overall height allowed and the 30' maximum mid-peak height allowed. Braaten explained that the applicants had provided photographs indicating that a similar historically significant feature had once occupied the same space and that at some unknown date that room had been removed and the current dormer had been installed.

Mark Gaylord, 182 Second Street, stated that he and his wife were trying to

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- (b) Variance from Maximum Height Requirement Per Article 43 of Appendix E, Sec. 43-7 for a Home Addition at 100 Lake Street, P.I.D. #27-117-23-44-0015 – Mark Gaylord and Lori Anderson – (continued)

bring back a historic element to the home. Mr. Gaylord informed the Commission that lot size is just below the 10,000 sq. ft. threshold which, by Ordinance standards, would allow an overall height of 41 feet and a mid-peak height of 35 feet rather than the 36 ft. overall height and 30 ft. mid-peak height allowed for parcels under 10,000 sq. ft. Mr. Gaylord provided pictures to the Commission explaining the historic significance of the home to the community. He stated that they have no intentions of tearing the home down.

Hannah asked the applicant what the useable square footage of the third floor tower room would be. Mr. Gaylord explained that it would be approximately 12 ft. x 12 ft. or 144 sq. ft.

Busch asked how the proposed tower room would be accessed. Mr. Gaylord responded that the plan was to construct an internal, wooden circular staircase.

Craig referred to the Variance Review Criteria and asked if the plight of the property owner was due to circumstances unique to the property that has not been created by the landowner. She questioned if the proposed Variance met this criteria. Mr. Gaylord responded that he felt his application met this standard based on the significance of the former historic element and that the request was reasonable in the R-2 zoning district.

Mr. Gaylord indicated that he had spoken with Mr. James, the neighboring property owner at 120 Lake Street, and he was okay with the proposed changes.

Chair Craig opened the public hearing 7:42 pm.

Bob Bolles, 229 George Street, strongly encouraged the Planning Commission to approve the proposed variance. Mr. Bolles stated that the subject home was one of the iconic homes in Excelsior along with the Wyer Pearce home. Mr. Bolles opined that any time the community can bring back historic features it should be done.

Hearing no further public comment Chair Craig closed the public hearing at 7:45 pm.

The Commission discussed the Variance Review Criteria and the proposed third floor tower room height variance.

The power went out at 7:50 pm, but the meeting continued.

Duyvejonck asked what roof material would be used on the third floor tower room. She asked if copper was a consideration. Dan Wallace, Wallace Architecture, responded that they were still working through the design, but if the roof were to be a metal he assumed it would be dark dull zinc. Lori

Anderson responded that it all depended on cost and that if they decided to install copper it would be patinaed.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- (b) Variance from Maximum Height Requirement Per Article 43 of Appendix E, Sec. 43-7 for a Home Addition at 100 Lake Street, P.I.D. #27-117-23-44-0015 – Mark Gaylord and Lori Anderson – (continued)

The Commission asked the HPC liaison, Melinda Nelson, if materials had been discussed when the applicant had informally brought the proposal to the HPC. Melinda Nelson responded that they had not discussed materials. Discussion followed regarding roof materials.

Duyvejonck commented that initially she was concerned with the proposed variance but since there were no documented neighbors' concerns and the proposed plans fit the historic nature of the home, she was supportive of the variance approval.

Commissioner Duyvejonck moved, Busch seconded, to recommend approval of the variance to exceed the height maximum with the conditions of approval stated in the Staff Report. Motion carried 4/0.

- (c) Design Standards Review and Conditional Use Permit to Allow the Installation of a Roof Sign Per Article 24 of Appendix E for 386 Oak Street, P.I.D. #34-117-23-13-0036 – Aaron Thompson, South Lake Holdings, LLC

Richards introduced the application. Richards explained that the property was outside the Historic District, but the applicant still required Design Standards approval and approval of a Conditional Use Permit for the proposed roof sign. Richards further explained the existing mid-century modern building and site conditions.

Discussion followed regarding exterior and interior signage.

Busch stated that she had some concerns with the monument sign. The applicant, Aaron Thompson, stated that they would only be re-facing the existing monument sign. Richards commented that the existing sign location meets setback requirements.

Aaron Thompson, Excelsior Real Estate, stated that they had been in business for 8 years and were very excited to purchase the property. They love the location and the midcentury modern design of the building. Mr. Thompson stated that it is quite an eyesore right now, but their proposed improvements should make the property look much nicer.

Tammy Magney, Magney Architecture, informed the Commission that they had reviewed historical photographs of the property and wanted to bring back the significant elements that had been removed. The window size would be increased and they are also proposing to strengthen the horizontal by reconstructing the original parapet.

Aaron Thompson provided material boards and explained the natural stone and proposed color combinations on the building.

Wallace commented that the proposed stone didn't match the mid-century modern design. Mr. Thompson commented that they had considered many different types of stone and felt the proposed stone complimented the building

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- (c) Design Standards Review and Conditional Use Permit to Allow the Installation of a Roof Sign Per Article 24 of Appendix E for 386 Oak Street, P.I.D. #34-117-23-13-0036 – Aaron Thompson, South Lake Holdings, LLC - (continued)

design. Tammy Magney commented that similar stone is found throughout the City of Excelsior. They were looking for a contemporary design with the mid-century modern building. Discussion followed regarding materials and available stone options.

Busch commented that she felt the stone went well with the design of the building. Wallace stated that it doesn't matter what the Commission likes or does not like, they have to make decisions based on the Design Standards and this design does not meet those standards. Busch responded that the Design Standards do not require the applicant to repeat what has already been constructed in the community, it just has to be compatible to the surroundings and consistent with the time it was built.

Tammy Magney stated that the reconstruction of the proposed parapet wall would be used for signage. Discussion followed regarding sign height, size, etc.

Busch asked if the proposed stone was a set course or a stone veneer. Tammy Magney responded that it would not be a full depth stone, but would still be installed with mortar.

Melinda Nelson, 526 William Street, stated she appreciated the design in many ways. She gave examples of existing mid-century modern buildings in the area, such as Navarre Dental. She felt preserving that moment in time was important. She appreciated what Tammy Magney had done from an architectural point of view.

Richards went through the design standards comments in the Staff Report.

Discussion followed regarding the proposed materials for the building. Wallace asked the Commission if the proposed materials would be appropriate for downtown Excelsior. Craig commented that they were appropriate in the proposed location. Duyvejonck stated that stone is a historic architectural building product; 100 percent stone in our downtown would not fit, but as an accent it is architecturally appropriate. Wallace wanted to have this conversation to make sure the Commission was comfortable with the materials.

Discussion followed regarding the proposed stone on the building and the appropriateness of an ashlar stone design versus more of a linear design which was more common in a 1950s building.

By consensus the Commission informed the applicant that a more horizontal stone would be appropriate for the building.

Hannah commented that the applicant was complimenting the mid-century modern design with the updating of materials. He felt that if the applicant had to install a strict horizontal stone pattern the building would just look like an old building on the corner. The proposed design will bring it up to today with

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- (c) Design Standards Review and Conditional Use Permit to Allow the Installation of a Roof Sign Per Article 24 of Appendix E for 386 Oak Street, P.I.D. #34-117-23-13-0036 – Aaron Thompson, South Lake Holdings, LLC - (continued)

new materials. He was supportive of the proposed design as presented.

Discussion followed regarding design standards and language.

Commissioner Duyvejonck moved, Hannah seconded, to recommend approval of Design Standards and a Conditional Use Permit for the installation of a roof sign with the changes discussed. Motion carried 5/0.

Commissioner Hannah moved, Busch seconded, to move Agenda Item 8(a) up on the agenda to accommodate the applicant. Motion carried 5/0.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- (a) Design Standards Review – Revised Plan – 352 Third Street, P.I.D. #34-117-23-11-0001 and #34-117-23-11-0115 – Mike Seifert, Excelsior 3rd Street Station

Richards introduced the topic. Richards informed the Commission that the applicant had already received approval of a Conditional Use Permit and Design Standards/Site Plan Approval by the Council, but Mr. Seifert was proposing some changes to the plan so he has come back for an amendment to his approvals. The new plans showed no changes to the building footprints and the applicant was showing more than enough parking for the proposed uses. Richards commented that the proposed parking plan had changed and needed to be further explored due to many of the parking stalls accessing directly off of the bike trail.

Mike Seifert, 352 Third Street, commented that the roof material had been changed. The exterior building materials are remaining the same as the original application. Discussion followed regarding the proposed corrugated metal to be used as an accent material.

Mr. Seifert commented that his engineer had tried to maximize the parking on the site, so a new site plan had been submitted with the application. The engineer had shown 3 parking spaces on the neighboring property which he would have revised/removed before the City Council meeting. Discussion followed regarding the proposed parking, the previously approved parking plan and the safety of the proposed design along the trail.

Seifert commented that the other large change was a trailside deck extending along the entire length of the barrel vaulted building (building one). The other changes included additional access doors on Third Street and the front façade of building one and an additional garage door and

service door on building number two. Nothing had changed with the residential unit except for a couple of windows.

Discussion followed regarding the residential windows.

Busch asked about the face material of the gable for the residential unit.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- (a) Design Standards Review – Revised Plan – 352 Third Street, P.I.D. #34-117-23-11-0001 and #34-117-23-11-0115 – Mike Seifert, Excelsior 3rd Street Station – (continued)

Seifert responded that both gables would remain metal as approved in his previous application.

Richards inquired about trail location and possible improvements to the parking surface within the HCRRA right-of-way. Seifert responded that the gravel would remain as phase one and he would delineate the parking and trail with some type of planter/barrier for safety. Paving of the gravel surface would be phase two, but some of those details still need to be discussed with Three Rivers Park District and HCRRA.

Duyvejonck commented that the proposed parking plan made her very nervous due to the amount of cars that would be backing out onto the trail. Discussion followed.

Wallace asked for an explanation of the differences between the proposed parking plan and the parking plan that had already been approved by the City Council. Seifert explained the differences stating that the parking plan included in the packet was his engineers attempt to maximize parking on the site.

Chair Craig called a 5 minute recess at 9:19 pm.

Chair Craig reconvened the meeting at 9:25 pm.

Richards informed the Commission that Mr. Seifert already had approval for a parking/site plan and he could use that plan and still meet the required number of parking spaces. Discussion followed regarding the trail location and parking spaces.

Duyvejonck was concerned that with the new uses in the buildings the parking lots could be filled with cars and drivers would not be able to see people on the trail when they are trying to back out of their parking spaces. She felt this was a very unsafe situation and parking configuration. Richards commented that Three Rivers Park District and HCRRA should comment on the proposed parking plan. Discussion followed regarding the proposed parking plan, the previously approved parking plan and safety concerns.

Bob Bolles, 229 George Street, provided a copy of a graphic showing the properties being leased from Hennepin County in the area being discussed. Mr. Bolles was concerned that three of Mr. Seifert's proposed parking spaces were shown on his property. Mr. Bolles also had concerns about drainage issues with the proposed improvements on the site. Discussion followed

regarding the existing site conditions and drainage on the site.

Craig asked about the proposed residential window change. Mr. Seifert responded that it was more typical of a residential window and the size was dictated by the uses inside.

Wallace commented that galvanized corrugated metal, as proposed in the

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- (a) Design Standards Review – Revised Plan – 352 Third Street, P.I.D. #34-117-23-11-0001 and #34-117-23-11-0115 – Mike Seifert, Excelsior 3rd Street Station – (continued)

plans, is not allowed per City Ordinance. Discussion followed regarding the proposed location of galvanized corrugated metal on the buildings, Ordinance language, and the previous approval.

Mr. Seifert commented that the galvanized corrugated metal was listed on the plans and approved as part of his original approval. Furthermore, the material was only being used as an accent material to reflect the former industrial nature of the building.

Discussion followed regarding the appropriateness of the material and the specifics of the ordinance language.

The Commission discussed the conditions of approval and possible additional conditions based on the previous conversation.

Commissioner Busch moved, Duyvejonck seconded, to recommend approval of the amended Design Standards application for 352 Third Street with the conditions discussed and emphasizing the safety concerns with the proposed parking/site plan. Motion carried 5/0.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- (a) Formula Business Regulations (Franchises)

Richards introduced the topic. Richards explained that the Planning Commission, at their Special Meeting on July 22, 2013, decided that back lit signs and sign materials should be reviewed immediately. Richards provided the current City Code and Design Standards language.

Commissioner Wallace moved, Hannah seconded, to direct staff to schedule a public hearing to consider amending Article 24. Signs and the Design Standards pertaining to back lit signage and sign materials. Motion carried 5/0.

- (b) Parking Update

i. Parking Counts

Braaten provided the parking count information for May, June and July. A brief discussion followed.

9. COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS

- (a) Next Planning Commission Meeting – Wednesday, September 4, 2013

10. MISCELLANEOUS

(a) Recent City Council Actions

Staff informed the Commission of recent City Council actions.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wallace moved, Busch seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:48 pm. Motion carried 5/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Lane L. Braaten
City Planner