

Meeting Minutes

City Plan Commission

Monday, September 2, 2008 PRESENT: Chairman Mayor Halverson; Karen Aldinger; Jami Gebert; Ald. Jerry Moore; Tony Patton; Fred Steffen (Lois Feldman excused)

ALSO PRESENT: Comm. Dev. Dir. John Gardner; Ald. Myers, Hanson, Wiza, Heart, Molski; Jim and Priscilla Ross; Cathy Dugan; Marti Sowka; Matthew Kovalaske; Mark & Sue Vetter; Gene Kemmeter, Po. Co. Gazette

Index of these Minutes:

1. Approval of the August 4, 2008 Plan Commission Minutes
2. Conditional Use - 217 Old Wausau Road - Request to Construct Additional Garage in Low Density Zoning
3. Phase 2 - Whitetail Subdivision, Accept Right of Way, Amend Restrictive Covenants

Chm. Halverson welcomed Jami Gebert as the new member of the commission. She is the former downtown manager as well as mayoral assistant. Currently, she is the recruitment director for the Catholic Area Schools. We appreciate your willingness to serve.

1. Approval of the August 4, 2008 Plan Commission Minutes

Jerry Moore moved, seconded by Fred Steffen, to recommend approval of the August 4, 2008 minutes. Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

2. Conditional Use - 217 Old Wausau Road - Request to Construct Additional Garage in Low Density Zoning

John Gardner stated this is a real good case for a conditional use application. The house is set way back on the lot. The previous garage burned down and they want to replace it. A garage larger than 900 sq. ft. in Low Density Zoning requires a conditional use permit. The owner has indicated if they use the existing concrete, the proposed garage will be 56' wide. Given the distance to any neighboring properties, staff recommends approval.

James Ross stated they have lived on the property for 40 years. They built the house back in the woods in 1974. The garage was built in 1988 and was used for vehicle storage and a hobby shop. It burned down in January and they would like to replace it.

Fred Steffen moved, seconded by Karen Aldinger, to recommend approval of the conditional use request to construct an additional garage at 217 Old Wausau Road based on compliance with the conditional use standards.

Ayes all; Nays none; Motion carried.

3. Phase 2 - Whitetail Subdivision, Accept Right of Way, Amend Restrictive Covenants

John Gardner reviewed the area and original plat. The lot sizes in Phase 2 will be increased to allow for more grading on the site to accommodate the potential for higher groundwater. Another reason for the larger lots is to reduce the number of lots in response to neighborhood concerns. We recommend increasing the size of the lots and reducing the number of lots from the original plat, and the additions to the restrictive covenants requiring finish materials for foundations exposed more than 18" and the height of the first floor not be more than 6' above crown elevation of the street.

Ald. Wiza questioned why not cul-de-sacs instead of a north/south road when nobody will be using anything to the west other than the disk golf course. There are concerns from the disk golfers about the road impeding on the golf course. He understands why the road needs to be put in from the standpoint of the city, he is trying to see if there is any way we can compromise more with the disk golf group because they benefit the city by bringing money into the community.

John Gardner responded the north/south connection was originally planned 1) for snow removal efficiency, and 2) the adopted Comprehensive Plan says you shouldn't have dead-end streets but have connected streets whenever possible for maintenance and neighborliness. When we run the utilities to the end, right now they just stub off, dead-end water mains have to be flushed out often to prevent stale water at the end of a pipe. A loop system allows for better fire protection. He expects the road to be paved next spring.

Marti Sowka, 4709 Whitetail Dr., noted there is a gravel path that goes past their house to the south as a walkway to Beaver Dam Rd. which is used all the time and was meant to help neighbors get through to the small neighborhood park between Beaver Dam/Partridge Way. We seem to have a precedent in this area for putting in a gravel path that connects two streets and would make a big difference to a lot of people and would say we don't need more paved roads in this area that need to be maintained.

Mark Vetter, 4716 Whitetail Dr., stated the disk golfers didn't want lots 32 and 49 included because they would cut into their course. The road would not be used for homes and would not be necessary for water/sewer. It makes no sense to spend time, money, and energy on a road that goes nowhere.

Matthew Kovalaske, 5001 Whitetail Dr., noted he agrees with the others and feels the road is an unnecessary expense. The pressure loop should go in and the gravel path fits in with our eco-municipality opportunities. He expressed concern with traffic safety for the bus stop at the end of Whitetail Dr. at Torun Road if the road were put in. Dead-end streets mean less traffic

John Gardner noted the subdivision ordinance states we shall not have cul-de-sacs more than 500' long, and all three of these would be longer than 500'. Houses on these end lots could face the west because that is where the green is.

Ch. Halverson noted the compromise as part of what you see before you is rather aggressive when you consider we are retaining the disk golf park area with minor alterations and nothing nearly to the scope of taking the 30 lots that we don't get a chance to develop because of the disk golf park. The city is compromising a great deal.

Mark Vetter questioned why the road is necessary and why do we want to spend the money for it.

Chm. Halverson responded first of all, you have added marketability of lots 32, 49, 58, 76 and 16 that you wouldn't have if the road wasn't there. This is a city-owned piece of property. If this were a privately-owned subdivision, it would be done this way because of ordinance.

John Gardner noted he talked with the Parks Dir. and he didn't feel anyone from the disk golf association would be here because it was his understanding that they were satisfied with this layout. The distance from the holes to the pavement line are satisfactory to the disk golf people.

City standards for cul-de-sacs are 120'-150'; Right of way for a street is only 60'. The cul-de-sacs could be more intrusive into the disk golf area than the proposal before you. The adopted policy of the city is to discourage cul-de-sacs and encourage connectivity.

Sue Vetter, 4716 Whitetail Dr., questioned with the higher elevations these houses will have because they can't have as deep a basement, where will all the storm water go.

John Gardner responded storm water shouldn't be affected at all. Because the lots are larger, storm water should be less of an issue than it is now. We added provisions to the architectural standards dealing with exposed foundations and the first floors not be more than 6' above the elevation of the street.

Ald. Heart stated the Park Commission made the disk golf park a city park. There was concern by the disk golf group about disks going into lot 16. The city has the responsibility and opportunity to take care of the subdivision development as well as the city park and there are potential user conflicts. We have pushed it to the limit and if we are going to make the decision to develop right to the edge of the park, we will have homeowners and disk golfers calling the mayor's office. We should consider re-doing some of the plat.

Matthew Kovalaske questions the timing of the sale of the lots. He understands the city needs revenue, but could someone speak to him about the occupancy levels in Stevens Point with the economy where it is at and the mortgage foreclosures. His experience has been that Wisconsin and many other municipalities follow the national trends slightly behind and maybe the worst of it is not over. He is concerned about the number of properties for sale in the subdivision right now.

Chm. Halverson responded the most appropriate person to speak with is the City Assessor. Sales are down but prices are stable. The inventory for flat and level residential lots is very limited within the city. We want to encourage redevelopment of the central city as best we can, but you have to be able to have new development at the same time. Our foreclosure rates are less than what is being experienced nationwide right now.

Tony Patton questioned what made Mr. Kovalaske decide to develop out there instead of someplace in the middle of the city. Did you realize that there was a potential for the whole disk golf course area to be homes.

Matthew Kovalaske responded they purchased the house already built. We enjoy the neighborhood in general. He enjoys disk golf, access to the green circle trail, and wildlife. We didn't have concerns about gas prices at the time we moved there. He was told that the water table was too high for the golf course area to be developed for homes.

Karen Aldinger noted she is delighted the disk golf course is successful. Her understanding was that the disk golf was there because the city allowed it. It was not our primary goal to put it there. It is positive that we are moving ahead with some vacant lots in the city.

Fred Steffen noted years ago, there was standing water on the entire disk golf area so trying to go any further west would be tough to do. He expressed concern with the city developing land and not having the standards that he would have. As a Realtor, there isn't any way that you put the lots in without putting the street in or there will be lots of Realtors suing you for the same privilege. He would like to see a set of plans that have the same information on it because the lots sizes are different on each of the various drawings. Five lots at \$30,000 each would be \$150,000 and someone should compare how much income and taxes are generated per year versus the money brought in by the disk golfers per year.

Tony Patton noted people could build homes facing the proposed road. He expressed concern with the discussion about closing off the development and then when we want to develop around it, we would have problems. Similar to the Kirschling Subdivision/Carol's Lane type deal.

Karen Aldinger noted the council approved the subdivision and we would be violating our ordinance if we did not put a road in.

Chm. Halverson showed the map in the packet that is the most important one which was prepared by our city engineering office with the new dimensions with the new rights-of-way.

John Gardner noted sometimes measuring is done on the diagonal versus a true east/west buildable lot. That is why there is a variance between the numbers. Lot #32 must have a typo - it should be 140'x 200' instead of 190'x200'.

Karen Aldinger moved, seconded by Tony Patton, to recommend approval of Phase Two of Whitetail Subdivision as presented, accept the right of way, and amend the restrictive covenants to add the following: 5) finish materials for foundations exposed more than 18", and 6) the height of the first floor not be more than 6' above crown elevation of the street.

Ayes, Aldinger, Patton, Gebert, Moore, and Chm. Halverson.
Nays, Steffen; Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:25 p.m. The meeting minutes reproduced on this website are derived from the computer files used to produce the official minutes for the City of Stevens Point, but are unofficial. The minutes on this web site cannot be certified under s. 889.08, Wis. Stats., and cannot be considered prima facie evidence under s. 889.04, Wis. Stats. Certain tables, maps, and other documents that are a part of the official minutes are not included in the files reproduced on this website. Please consult the printed minutes, available in the City Clerk's Office, for the official text. The decisions made by City of Stevens Point boards, committees, and commissions (other than the Police & Fire Commission) are advisory only and are not binding on the city until affirmed at a meeting of the Common Council. Some of the minutes on this web site might not be approved by the Common Council as of today.

Bottom of Form