

Community Development Department

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MINUTES
PLAN COMMISSION
AUGUST 4, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers

Members Present: Dan Toland, Lisa Moody, Patricia LaRue, Hal Watson, Craig Hinzman, Rebecca Prendergast
Members Absent: Craig Hofland
Staff Present: Amy Peterson, Crystal Raleigh, Brandy Howe, Sam Wessel, Keri Schreiner, Jason Stroud
Others Present: Marvin Wanders, Three Sixty Real Estate, LLC

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting convened at 6:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. March 9, 2020 Plan Commission minutes
M/Watson, S/Moody – motion carried 6-0
2. July 23, 2020 Extraterritorial Zoning Committee (Troy) minutes
M/Moody, S/LaRue – motion carried 6-0

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Neil Gilbertson, River Falls, spoke in opposition to the proposed Milltown Residences project citing safety and traffic as primary concerns.

Susan Meyer, 1659 Covey Drive, spoke in opposition to Milltown Residences citing devaluation of her property as a primary concern. She also asked if any steps will be taken to protect her property from traffic lights that might shine into her windows.

Joann Ayres, 1583 Covey Drive, spoke in opposition to Milltown Residences citing the loss of the view to DeSanctis Park as well as concerns about transient people that will reside in the townhomes.

George Ayres, 1583 Covey Drive, spoke in opposition to the proposed Milltown Residences. He commented that extension of Roosevelt Street through the park would destroy the park.

Julie Larson, 1617 Covey Drive, spoke in opposition to Milltown Residences because construction of the townhomes will create traffic and it will no longer be the “edge of town.”

Katherine Hector, Maple Street, representing an online petition with 1091 signatures against the proposed Milltown Residences project because it will permanently change the neighborhood and

impact the park and environmental integrity of the area. She also raised parking, traffic, and a lack of desirable retail in the City as other concerns.

PUBLIC HEARING

Public hearing for Agenda Items 3 and 4, below.

Peterson provided a presentation on items 3-5, below.

No public comments were provided during the public hearings for agenda items 3 and 4.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

3. Consideration of a Resolution Designating Proposed Boundaries and Approving a Project Plan for Tax Incremental District No. 16, City of River Falls, Wisconsin

The Mayor called for a motion. Watson made a motion to approve the Resolution Designating Proposed Boundaries and Approving a Project Plan for TID No. 16. No questions or comments by Plan Commission. Howe proceeded with a roll call vote.

M/Watson, S/Hinzman – motion carried 6-0

4. Consideration of a Resolution to Amend the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map for Mann Valley and DeSanctis Vicinity

The Mayor called for a motion. Watson made a motion to approve the Resolution to Amend the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map for Mann Valley and DeSanctis Vicinity. LaRue suggested that some additional study and public input might be needed related to the DeSanctis area FLU amendment. She suggested that the area may be suitable for neighborhood commercial. Watson noted that in reference to the Mann Valley FLU amendment, in addition to 214 acres of future business uses, there will be considerable acreage reserved as conservancy in an area previously had designated for single family. It is Watson's understanding that the proposed FLU amendment will dramatically increase the amount of park and conservancy land on the west side of the city for both residents as well as habitat for animals. Watson then asked staff if the City reached out to local developers after the Gerrard project fell through to see if single family homes would be feasible to be built on the 7-acre site. Peterson responded that staff did reach out to two or three local developers and all of them passed due to steep slopes, limited access to Division Street and the odd shape of the site. Watson then added that it is his opinion that the City has done its due diligence to try to find out if single family can be done on the site and has learned that it is not economically feasible. It therefore does not make sense to leave the future land use designation as single family residential. LaRue then asked if there was an examination of various densities or neighborhood commercial for the site. Peterson responded that the RFP that was sent to developers was specifically for housing and that the proposals received included various densities. No further discussion. Howe proceeded with a roll call vote.

M/Watson, S/Hinzman – motion carried 5-1

5. Consideration of a resolution to approve the specific implementation plan for Milltown Residences (previously known as DeSanctis Townhomes)

The Mayor called for a motion. Hinzman made a motion to approve the Resolution to Approve the Specific Implementation Plan for Milltown Residences. LaRue asked if the property should first be rezoned before this item is approved. Peterson responded that rezoning is not required when using a planned unit development because the PUD grants the flexibility for density. Watson asked if Peterson could speak to the park improvements planned as a result of this project. Peterson responded that improvements will include a public parking lot for DeSanctis Park, which is a community park, realignment of Dry Run Road, water and sewer connections to Glover School so it can be usable for a rentable, sidewalk connections, and park and street landscaping. Watson noted that completion of the water/sewer extension to Glover School will be the conclusion of many slow, incremental improvements to make that building rehabbed and usable. Watson asked if the developer could speak to the landscaping along W. Division Street. Marvin Wanders, with Three Sixty Real Estate, LLC, indicated that regional natives will be used as well as edible plants. For example, instead of dogwood, raspberry bushes would be planted, which is beneficial not only for humans, but also birds and wildlife. A pollinator prairie will also be integrated on the site. Watson asked the developer to speak to the target market. Mr. Wanders indicated that the first-floor one-level units will be attractive to empty nesters and the stacked townhomes will work well for young professionals. Overall, the end product will feature complementary uses that will benefit the neighborhood in that single family homeowners may wish to downsize to the townhomes and younger residents may wish to graduate up to the single family houses in the neighborhood. Prendergast expressed a concern with traffic resulting from the development. Peterson responded that based on anticipated traffic counts, staff does not have a concern with how the intersection will function. Hearing no further comments, the Mayor called for a vote on the motion.

M/Hinzman, S/Watson – Tied - 3-0 with Watson, Hinzman, and the Mayor voting in favor and LaRue, Prendergast, and Moody voting against.

REPORTS/DIALOGUE

6. Director's Report


Peterson provided a brief director's report of departmental activities since March 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

Watson made a motion to adjourn at 8:05 p.m.

M/Watson, S/Moody; motion carried 6-0

Respectfully submitted,



Brandy Howe, AICP, Sr. Planner