

The Planning Commission Meeting was called to order by Chair Bill Campbell at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Meeting Room, 100 Village Center Drive Suite 150, City of North Oaks. Present were Commissioners Dick Hara, Nancy Reid, Bob Turkington, Kara Ries and City Council Liaison Katy Ross. Commissioner Joyce Yoshimura-Rank was absent. City Administrator Mike Robertson, Administrative Assistant Linda Hanson and Videographer Maureen Anderson were also present.

### **Approval of Agenda**

**Commissioner Nancy Reid moved to approve the Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kara Ries and passed unanimously.**

### **Approval of Minutes**

**With one correction, Commissioner/Council Liaison Katy Ross moved to approve the Minutes from the August 27, 2015 Planning Commission Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nancy Reid and passed unanimously.**

### **New Business**

#### **1. Public Hearing- CUP #15-10 NOHOA Removal of Trees in Shoreland District around Pleasant Lake**

City Administrator Mike Robertson presented to the Commission the CUP application to proactively remove some of the more potentially dangerous ash trees around Pleasant Lake. NOHOA would like to remove 35 trees which if they become diseased would put residents using the trail in danger. Mr. Robertson explained that other communities have done a similar thing to keep ahead of the Emerald Ash Borer. By doing a few at a time, it spreads out the cost. The City Administrator explained that the conditions for a CUP do not really apply to this request, but that it was necessary since this involves an alteration to the shoreline. NOHOA has worked with City Forester Mark Rehder who helped to develop seven conditions that would need to be met. City Staff agrees with the findings presented; however, one finding may not prove to be true. The finding stated that taking out trees could lower values of homes affected, but since so few trees are being taken out and since it may open up more view of the lake, this could have an opposite affect.

#### **Chair Campbell opened the Public Hearing at 7:06 pm.**

NOHOA Executive Director Kimberly Murray addressed the Commission and wanted to thank both the City Forester and the City Administrator for their support. Ms. Murray stated that it is less expensive to remove trees before they are infected. Bids were sent out and Langers Tree Service was chosen to remove the trees. The NOHOA Board of Directors has approved the plan. NOHOA has over 600 ash trees around Pleasant Lake and have decided it is in the best interest of the Community to remove 35 of the worst trees and inject 24 of the larger trees that they would most like to attempt to preserve. Ms. Murray worked with NOHOA Vice President Diane Gorder to create this plan. Much work went into the plan with surveying the shoreline to evaluate the condition of the trees, researching options, and using resources from the Minnesota Department of

Agriculture as well as others. Ms. Murray noted that by removing some of the trees, a healthier forest can be created.

Commissioner Bob Turkington asked if any trees will be planted to prevent shoreline erosion. None are planned at this time since only 35 out of the 600 are being removed. The trunk will remain in place to keep the shoreline intact. If later more will need to be removed, a plan for reforestation will be considered. Commissioner Reid explained that it is best to not plant near the removed trees as the rotting process creates considerable heat that could damage new plantings. Once this process is complete, plantings could be considered.

Commissioner/Council Liaison Ross asked about the ash trees at West Rec. NOHOA would like to remove two and save one if possible.

The plan is to remove the trees along the shoreline and the two at West Rec this fall before the snow falls. It is quite expensive to chemically treat ash trees as they need to be injected with chemically filled plugs and redone every two years. Ash borer currently is not in North Oaks, but it is in Shoreview. It sometimes takes a few years before it is detected. Commissioner Reid stated she is glad to see that NOHOA has a proactive plan.

Diane Gorder, the Vice President and Director of Land and Water for NOHOA, addressed the Commission. She stated that the trees selected are already compromised in some way and will be the first to attract the ash borer. These trees could be potentially dangerous to both homeowners and to other trees if they fall. City Administrator Robertson stated that NOHOA only needs the City approval if taking trees along the shoreline.

Commissioner Turkington asked if the homeowners have been informed. Ms. Murray explained that a letter will be sent out. Education of homeowners is an important part of any plan and involving City Forester Mark Rehder is also important. Commissioner Kara Ries stated that removing trees to open up more view of the lake may not please everyone since some homeowners do not like looking at other homes across the lake.

**Chair Campbell closed the Public Hearing at 7:36 pm.**

A suggestion was made to add another condition requesting NOHOA come back for a second CUP if they want to remove additional trees around the other lakes. City Administrator Robertson was going to discuss this with the City Attorney to verify that this could be done.

**Commissioner Dick Hara made the motion to approve CUP#15-10 for Removal of Trees around Pleasant Lake based on Staff's recommendations with the following conditions:**

- 1. All residents having ash trees removed adjacent to their land be notified.**
- 2. All contractors must be licensed and must stay off private property.**
- 3. Any chemicals used must be approved by the City Forester.**
- 4. Chemicals cannot be applied in a basal drench but must be injected into the tree.**

- 5. **Waste wood must be transported in accordance with Minnesota state law governing the transport of ash trees.**
- 6. **NOHOA shall review the Forestry Best Practices approved by the City for their applicability.**
- 7. **NOHOA must notify the City Forester before all removals.**
- 8. **If approved by the City Attorney, this CUP would apply to only the removal of trees around Pleasant Lake stated in the request. If additional trees need to be removed around other lakes, additional CUP's would be required.**

**The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ries and passed unanimously.**

**2. Update on the House Maintenance Committee**

Commissioner/City Liaison Ross gave an update on the House Maintenance Committee. Ms. Ross, Planning Commissioner Kara Ries, City Administrator Robertson, NOHOA Liaison Paul Lesieur, and former Mayor John Schaaf are on the Committee. Mayor Mike Egelston may also join the Committee. Currently the Committee is working on its focus which is intended to be a positive one. Ms. Ross cautioned that this process will take a while to get done and will look at exterior of homes only. Also, the members will be looking at ordinances already in place so as not to overlap in creating any new ordinance.

**3. Set November-December Planning Commission Meeting**

Due to the regular November Planning Commission Meeting which would fall on Thanksgiving, the Planning Commission selected December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 for the November-December meeting. City Administrator Robertson will finalize the City Council Meeting and let the Commission know if this is a viable date.

**Next Meeting**

The next Planning Commission Meeting is Thursday, October 29, 2015 at 7 p.m. at the Community Meeting Room, 100 Village Center Drive.

**Adjournment**

**On motion made by Commissioner/Council Liaison Ross, seconded by Commissioner Reid and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.**

Attest:

Respectfully submitted,

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Chair Bill Campbell

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Linda Hanson, Recording Secretary