

Planning Commission Meeting
December 20, 2018
7:00 PM

Call to Order:

Chair Ries called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call:

Present: Chair Kara Ries, Commissioners Nancy Reid, Bob Turkington, Joyce Yoshimura-Rank, David Pfuhl and Councilmember Katy Ross.

Staff: City Administrator Mike Robertson and City Planner Bob Kirmis.

Absent: Commissioner Paul Lesieur.

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Reid, seconded by Commissioner Yoshimura-Rank, moved to approve the agenda. Motion approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Yoshimura-Rank, seconded by Chair Ries, moved to approve the November 7, 2018 meeting minutes. Motion approved unanimously.

Public Hearing - North Oaks Company Development Concept Plan Review

North Oaks Company President Mark Houge and Vice-President Gary Eagles reviewed the proposed development concept plans. The original master plan for the area was approved by the City and by NOHOA back in the 1999 East Oaks agreement. This plan covered 1,650 acres in the northeast and east area of the City and allowed for a total of 645 housing units spread out over thirteen individual neighborhoods. The plan allowed housing units to be clustered together at higher densities in order to create more open space. As part of the 1999 approvals North Oaks Company set aside 620 acres as a permanent Conservation Area and 220 acres as an Agricultural Conservation Area. The future use of the land is managed by the Minnesota land Trust and there are easements to NOHOA for private trails to be used by the residents of north Oaks and for the area to remain as open space. Seven of the original neighborhoods are fully developed or under development. The last remaining development areas were reviewed;

Nord – This parcel is located northwest of Deep Lake and consists of 10 single family housing units. The lots would be two acres plus in size. The Nord development would be accessed off an existing easement on North Deep Lake Road and would be served with municipal sewer and on site wells for water.

East Preserve – This parcel is located between the Nord parcel and Sherwood Road and consists of two lots that are two acres plus in size. The East Preserve lots would be accessed off Sherwood Road and would have on site wells and septic.

Wilkinson Villas (Phase 1A) – This consists of four villa homes (detached single family homes) located on an existing extension of Osprey Court. The lots are 1/3 of an acre in size, similar to the existing Villas of Wilkinson Lake. They would be served by municipal sewer and water from White Bear Township.

Anderson Woods Event Center – This is located approximately 700 hundred feet south of the closest home of the Villas of Wilkinson Lake along Centerville Road. The proposed event center would have a private access road from Centerville Road and would not have a road connection to any other part of North Oaks. The center would be approximately 11,700 square feet and could hold approximately 400 people and would be served by municipal sewer and water from White Bear Township. The access to this property would align with Anderson Lane on the east side of Centerville Road. There would not be any trail connection from the event center to the rest of the trails in the Conservation Area.

Gate Hill Villas – This is located approximately 2,200 feet south of the proposed event center on Centerville Road. The access to this property would align with the existing three way stop at County Road H2 and Centerville Road. This development would be 48 villa homes of approximately 1/3 of acre size, similar in size and character to the existing Wilkinson Lake Villas or to the homes in the Pines development.

Island Field – This is located approximately 1,300 feet south of the entrance to the proposed Gate Hill development on Centerville Road. This development would consist of 120 condominium units in two or three buildings and a 52,000 square foot commercial building with a mix of uses that could include office, retail and community service firms. This would have an access from Centerville Road and a road access from the west through Red Forest Way.

Red Forest Way South – This is located between Catbird Way and the proposed Island Field development. This would consist of three single family lots of over two acres with on site well and septic located adjacent to Catbird Lane and 57 single family lots east of those three lots which would average a half acre in size. The arrangement of these lots is configured to provide open vistas to the north or south with a green space buffer at the connection to Black Lake Road.

Staff Report: City Administrator Robertson and City Planner Kirmis noted that the East Oaks agreement approved in 1999 creates a “zoning contract” which supersedes the requirements of the City Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. They noted that, as proposed, the total number of units in the 13 neighborhoods of the East Oaks agreement would be 563 housing units, which 82 less than allowed for by the 1999 East Oaks agreement. Staff considers the proposed fewer housing units to be reasonable and conforming to the 1999 agreement.

As a concept plan, no formal vote will be taken at this time and all feedback from the Planning Commission will be considered advisory.

All proposed land uses are consistent with the current and proposed Comprehensive Plans. All proposed uses are consistent with the Zoning Ordinance and reflect the underlying zoning districts except that “event centers” are not specifically listed as approved uses in the RCM, Residential Commercial Mixed use district. This item must be addressed in any recommendation made to the City Council.

The proposed accesses to Centerville Road have to be approved by Ramsey County and staff recommends that the developer provide documentation of the County’s approval.

The internal trails provided as part of these developments should comply with the 1999 PDA agreement and reviewed by NOHOA as they will be responsible for trail maintenance. A decision on the proposed developments cannot be held pending NOHOA’s approval of any trail segment as the City cannot delegate its land use decision making authority. However City staff and NOHOA will work with North Oaks Company to locate trails in each development area.

There is a road proposed to extend from Centerville Road through the Island Field development to the Red Forest Way South development which could connect with existing roads such as Catbird Lane or Black Lake Road. Staff supports this road connection as it would improve emergency response time to the neighborhoods east and north of Pleasant Lake. The proposed development plans have been provided to the Fire Chief who will provide a specific estimate of the time saved. How the road could connect to existing internal roads is not set in stone and should be subject to future discussion.

No detailed drawings of infrastructure have been provided as this is a concept plan. Detailed drawings will be provided by the North Oaks Company in the future subject to the City Engineer's review and approval.

Planning Commission Comments: The Planning Commissioners had questions and comments about the development timeline, traffic on Centerville Road, future development on the east side of Centerville Road, the event center, impact on trees, wildlife impacts, water quality, sidewalks, separation between the condos and the commercial building, open space and trails.

Mark Houge and Gary Eagles responded that development would begin in 2019 though they haven't decided where yet. Development would be expected to be complete in 2024. The layout of roads in each development parcel is intended to retain trees whenever possible. There are very few trees in Gate Hill and Island Field. The City Forester would review the areas like he does in any development. City staff would work with NOHOA staff and North Oaks Company on the trails and would try to fill in any gaps. Centerville Road is a County Road so it's expected to handle increased traffic. Ramsey County will be contacted about its long term plans for Centerville Road. The land on the east side of Centerville road is guided industrial and it's unknown when it will be developed. A wildlife management strategy was part of the original 1999 agreement and is in place. Water quality is monitored by VLAWMO and the stormwater water systems will be designed to meet their standards. Most open space requirements have been fulfilled by the dedication to the public of the Conservation Area in 1999.

With no further Planning Commission comments Chair Ries opened the public hearing for comments at 7:58 p.m.

Gary Magner, 2 Catbird Lane.

He was concerned about a road tying into either Red Forest Way or Black Lake Road due to traffic issues.

Don Nightingale, 11 Nord Circle Road.

He was concerned about the lack of connections between some of the existing trails around Nord Circle and North Deep Lake. He wanted those connections made and required as part of this development. He would like the Nord parcel development to be accessed from Sherwood Road rather than North Deep Lake road.

Rich Dujmovic, 15 Black Lake Road.

He doesn't like that smaller lots might be allowed near their existing larger lots. He doesn't feel it's consistent with the 2008 Comp Plan and thinks it would decrease their home value. He was also concerned about traffic.

Bill McNee, 11 Sunset Lane.

Asked that NOHOA staff and engineer be involved. He prefers condos to commercial uses.

Bill Frels, 8 Black Lake Road.

He was concerned about whether White Bear Lake water level restrictions would prevent lawn irrigation in the municipal water areas. He asked that there be more green space.

Lisa Dujmovic, 15 Black Lake Road.

Would like any construction traffic to be restricted to the Centerville Road access and not come through her neighborhood. She also objects to small lots near her.

Jim MacGillis, 67 Deer Hills Court.

Concerned about traffic congestion on Centerville Road. It's tough to turn left out of Deer Hills in the morning. Though it's not a City issue he thinks that the current 50 mph speed on Centerville Road will need to be reduced.

Brad Kunz, 9 North Deep Lake Road.

Agrees that trail gaps need to be fixed. Noted that some trails are not listed on 2010 NOHOA trail map.

Kathie Emmons, 20 Duck Pass Road.

Thanked the Planning Commission for the presentation and said she likes to see that some of these neighborhoods will be connected to the rest of North Oaks as that is a concern for current unconnected neighborhoods.

Rob Fitzer, 11 Haycamp Road.

Objects to smaller lots as they look like every other suburb.

Helen Peltier, 14 Osprey Court.

Had some questions about the event center. North Oaks Company said it would be private and would not be operated by North Oaks Company.

With no further comments, Chair Ries said that the public hearing would be continued until Thursday, February 28, 2019 when this proposed development would next be discussed. There will be no Planning Commission meeting in January.

Proposed Comprehensive Plan

Administrator Robertson said that all changes approved by the Planning Commission had been made. He said Administrative Assistant Gretchen Needham is currently reviewing the document for any spelling, punctuation or similar errors. Joann Hanson of the NOHOA said she wasn't certain whether all of NOHOA's comments had been included. Chair Ries urged her to look at the document and to let Robertson know if any of their comments had not been included.

Commissioner Reid, seconded by Commissioner Yoshimura-Rank, moved to recommend approval of the Comprehensive Plan to the City Council.

City Update:

Administrator Robertson said that Commissioner Lesieur has asked to be re-appointed to the Planning Commission and that Commissioners Turkington and Pfuhl have said they are leaving as of the end of 2018. The openings have been advertised and there have been six applications so far with applications closing on January 2. Robertson said he thinks that an interview committee will be set up and start interviewing applicants soon.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Yoshimura-Rank moved to adjourn at 9:12 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Reid. The motion was approved unanimously.