

Adopted Minutes
Special Council/Planning Commission Meeting
March 20, 2007

Mayor Slavik called a Special Meeting of the Plymouth City Council and Planning Commission to order at 6:07 p.m. in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 3400 Plymouth Blvd., on March 20, 2007.

COUNCIL PRESENT: Mayor Slavik, Councilmembers Willis, Stein, Black, Hewitt, and Murdock

ABSENT: Councilmember Bildsoe

PLANNING COMMISSION PRESENT: Commissioners Davis, Aamoth, Holmes, and Weir

ABSENT: Commissioners Jaffoni, Naset, Cooney

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Ahrens, Community Development Director Juetten, Public Works Director Cote, Park and Recreation Director Blank, Planning Manager Senness, Senior Planner Drill, Planner Doty, and Deputy City Clerk Olson.

Community Development Director Juetten stated that the purpose of meeting is to identify which land use guide plan amendments should go forward to a public meeting process.

Mayor Slavik indicated she would like to discuss the City Center item first.

J. City Center

Community Development Director Juetten stated that staff is looking for ways to move forward with the City Center concept. He stated that the overriding theme is one of walkability. He stated that the guidelines developed for the City Center are a streetscape hierarchy, lively streets, a pedestrian environment, a strong streetscape, and usable open spaces to encourage gathering and interaction. He stated that the movie theater was not in the original planning of City Center, but they need to focus on now making it an asset to the City Center.

Community Development Director Juetten reported that the City Center is supposed to be pedestrian oriented but, as it is now, it pushes pedestrians toward Plymouth Blvd. & Vicksburg with nothing in the middle. He touched briefly on adding a north/south street from 36th Ave to 37th Ave. He added that another goal is to make it much more pedestrian friendly in front of Cub.

Mayor Slavik would like to encourage walking but not many places are connected. She felt they need a retail component. She said it is hard to establish a downtown feel with the current buildings.

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Councilmember Murdock would like to see some buildings on the outside of the Cub parking lot, closing in the parking lot.

Councilmember Black stated they should push pedestrian traffic in any development, and felt that if a sidewalk is put in, people will use it.

Councilmember Hewitt has received complaints about the danger of crossing from Cub to the library.

Gary Milne Rozek, architect with Bentz-Thompson-Rietow, Inc., was present at the meeting and will be working on the Hennepin County Library remodeling project. He stated that streets are missing in the City Center design and the streets currently in place are poorly designed. He added that if a north/south street is planned between 36th and 37th Avenues, it may impact the design of the Hennepin County Library. He would need to inform the County so they could incorporate it into their design.

Mr. Milne Rozek stated that driving areas need to be defined and showed examples of defined sidewalks, landscape, hardscape and drive ways. He suggested smaller city blocks and creating definite hard edges to slow traffic. He stated that there is very little street frontage and it would be difficult for small retail stores to survive. He stated that is all about rhythm, texture, size and frontage.

Councilmember Murdock had concerns about kids crossing Vicksburg. Mr. Milne Rozek replied that safe crossing can be accomplished with the use of paving and design for areas such as Vicksburg and between Cub and the library.

Mayor Slavik and the Council thanked Mr. Milne Rozek.

The Council discussed the area in which the City Center exists and whether the southwest corner of Hwy. 55 and Vicksburg should be included in the design. Councilmember Black stated it was not in the original design and Mayor Slavik felt they should improve the existing City Center area first before expanding it.

Commissioner Aamoth stated that the City Center can sustain a lot of traffic, but traffic goes slow when people are aware that there is pedestrian traffic. He would like it to be a destination for families.

Councilmember Willis stated that a north/south street between 36th and 37th Avenues makes sense and he would like to explore the possibility. He suggested staff come back with a few design concepts. Ms. Senness stated that the library is in the middle of its design process so they must move very quickly.

Directive: The Council directed staff to move forward with a concept plan for the City Center and north/south street between 36th and 37th Avenues.

A. Highway 55 corridor from I-494 to the western border of Plymouth

Directive: Add text to Land Use Plan to use preliminary highway plans to evaluate development or redevelopment proposals in the corridor and focus on improving pedestrian access.

B. Southwest Corner of Highway 55 and County Rd 101

Directive: Add text to the Land Use Plan supporting a Mixed Use classification for the three parcels.

C. North of Highway 55 and west of Medicine Lake Rd

Directive: Add language to the Transportation Plan to support consolidation or elimination of direct access to Hwy 55 and implement alternate access for any parcel that currently has direct access.

D. Southwest quadrant of Highway 55 and I-494

Directive: Add text to the Land Use Plan stating that the upgrading of Fernbrook Lane may spur development in this area. Plus if redevelopment does take place, it must consider plans for upgrading the I-494 and Highway 55 interchange. In addition, the City will encourage a scale of development similar to West Health.

E. Little Peninsula

Directive: Change guiding to LA-1 and carry over policy to consider acquiring areas of unique, high-quality open space or natural resources that are not adequately protected by regulations.

F. Southwest corner of Rockford Rd and Highway 169

Directive: Change guiding to Commercial Office and add text to the Transportation Plan that the city supports maintenance and potential expansion of a park and ride facility on the site.

G. Northwest quadrant of Highway 55 and County Rd 9

Directive: Change guiding on eastern parcels to Public/Institutional and change guiding on western parcels to Commercial Office while maintaining a transition from LA2 to CO.

H. North of Highway 55, west of Highway 169

Directive: Change the guiding 1) South of 10th Ave and 2) West of Nathan between 10th and railroad tracks from Industrial to Commercial Office. Change the guiding north of the tracks to LA-3.

I. Southeast quadrant of Highway 55 and Vicksburg

Directive: Change the guiding on the three lots east of Vicksburg and north of 32nd Ave to Commercial and change guiding on parcels east of Ranchview to Commercial.

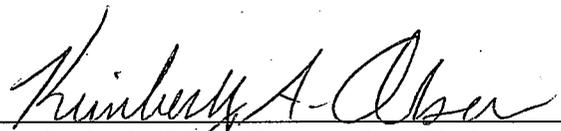
Community Development Director Juetten stated that the next step with land use changes would be to hold public meetings with landowners within and surrounding the affected property. Staff will go through the drafting process of the Comprehensive Plan changes and hope to bring it before Council in late August or September.

Councilmember Willis asked when the changes can be adopted stating he would like to see it by end of the calendar year.

The Council then discussed the property located at 3120 Dunkirk Lane N and noted a public hearing will be held on rezoning the property to RSF-1.

Adjournment

Mayor Slavik adjourned the meeting at 8:38 p.m.



Kimberly A. Olson, Deputy City Clerk