

# Planning Commission

June 8, 2020 – 7 pm

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

This meeting was held via Webex in accordance with the local emergency declaration made by the City under Minn. Stat. § 12.37. In accordance with that declaration, beginning on March 16, 2020, all Planning Commission meetings held during the emergency were conducted electronically. The City used Webex to conduct this meeting and members of the public were able to monitor the meetings by watching it on Comcast cable channel 16, by streaming it on CCXmedia.org, or by dialing in to the public call-in line. The public was able to participate in this meeting during public comment sections, by dialing the public call-in line.

### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 by **Chair Blum**.

#### Roll Call

Commissioners present: Rich Baker, Ron Blum, Adam Brookins, Andy Johnson, Lauren Pockl, Ryan Sadeghi, Chuck Segelbaum,

Commissioners absent: None

Staff present: Jason Zimmerman – Planning Manager, Myles Campbell – Planner

Council Liaison present: Gillian Rosenquist

Prior to a motion, **Chair Blum**, asked if there would be a discussion on the Zoning Code Text Amendment or if the group would go right to a motion after the hearing. **Commissioner Baker** said he'd like a discussion and noted the agenda didn't explicitly state a recommendation was required at the end of this meeting. **Commissioner Segelbaum** asked staff for clarification on the need for a recommendation. **Jason Zimmerman, Planning Manager**, stated that a recommendation today is assumed as that's typical after a hearing. **Zimmerman** added that after the hearing, the item may be tabled before the vote and the Commissioners would be able to vote at the next meeting.

### 2. Approval of Agenda

**Chair Blum** asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

**MOTION** made by **Commissioner Baker**, seconded by **Commissioner Sadeghi** to approve the agenda of June 8, 2020, as submitted. Staff called a roll call vote and the motion carried unanimously.

### 3. Approval of Minutes

**Chair Blum** asked for a motion to approve the minutes from May 27, 2020.

**MOTION** made by **Commissioner Pockl**, seconded by **Commissioner Brookins** to approve the May 27, 2020 meeting minutes. Staff called a roll call vote and the motion carried unanimously.

### 4. Informal Public Hearing – Zoning Code Text Amendment



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Applicant: City of Golden Valley

Purpose: Proposed Adjustments to Narrow Lot Regulations

**Jason Zimmerman, Planning Manager**, gave a presentation on this item's history and background from November 2017 when the initial discussion took place through May 2020 when the Planning Commission reviewed and discussed the staff's draft of changes. He reviewed the City Council's request, locations where these lots exist, and all the meetings held to address this concern.

**Zimmerman** displayed the list of nine items for code amendments and staff recommends 1-8 have changes and 9 stays as is:

1. Side yard setbacks
2. Garage stall requirements
3. Slope of "tent" portion of building envelope
4. Side wall height at side setback line
5. Second story dormers
6. Side wall articulation
7. Secondary front yard setbacks
8. Lot coverage
9. Amount of impervious surfaces (to stay as is)

**Zimmerman** expanded on each item throughout the presentation and responded to questions as Commissioners posed them.

**Zimmerman** moved on to review the public comments that City staff received regarding the narrow lot topic. 54 total comments were received via the Golden Valley website or email to Planning staff. 10 of those comments were from folks living on a narrow lot, 8 addresses total as more than one person at an address made comment. 44 comments were from people not on a narrow lot and the commenters were mostly from the North Tyrol area. None of the commenter addresses were immediately adjacent to blocks with narrow lots. Most commenters were within a block or two but some were over a mile and a half away.

The top 5 comment themes were as follows:

1. Don't reduce lot sizes or allow more lot splits.
2. Do more to restrict home construction on narrow lots.
3. Do more to protect open/green/landscaped/natural areas.
4. Certain proposed changes are too restrictive or problematic (single car garage provision, limiting second floor space)
5. Changes seem reasonable and help provide housing diversity.

In addition to these comments, a local designer/builder that has offered perspective before commented on their concern for reducing building envelope and imposing garage restrictions.

**Commissioner Baker** chimed in to clarify by saying staff is not proposing tighter garage restrictions but rather loosening them. **Zimmerman** responded by saying that staff is no longer requiring two garage stalls even though most people want them. Limiting a garage façade may lead to a single stall garage for some lots. **Commissioner Segelbaum** asked if in general, these new regulations are more restrictive for builds than currently exist. **Zimmerman** responded that's accurate except for dormer space, however that's in response to being more restrictive in other areas.

**Chair Blum** opened the public hearing at 7:42 pm, there were two callers in the queue at the time of opening.

Public Comments:

**Ruth Paradise, 8515 Duluth Street**, said designers may have mentioned a trend of more bedrooms, but in her neighborhood, there are a few houses with one person living there. Some have said they wanted a smaller house but couldn't find one. Ms. Paradise stated this could be an opportunity for smaller single-family homes.

**Cathy Waldhauser 3220 Orchard Ave N**, stated that the Planning Commission compromises are spot on, they will solve most concerns about homes being too large for narrow lots. Waldhauser stated that she hopes development can occur in other parts of the city with this compromise. She'd like to see clusters of smaller homes on smaller lots in the city, she understands this isn't the goal now but maybe Golden Valley can head in that direction.

**Commissioner Baker** stated he's becoming convinced that the dormer size/information with only details from designers and builders isn't sufficient and would like input from others who are thinking ahead to the future of construction and who are focused on housing equity and affordability. **Commissioner Segelbaum** responded he believes the Commission has been careful not to weigh too heavily any one opinion, but to look at the collective. The conversation moved into lots that are marketable and buildable.

**Mary-Jane Pappas, 20 Ardmore Drive**, stated when thinking about the future, we all need to be more mindful of how much raw material is being used. We also need to be more economic when considering building a home and leaving green space when possible. Pappas agrees with two bathrooms and two garage stalls because it creates resale value but economic value needs to be considered. Many people prefer smaller homes as it cuts down on costs and maintenance.

**Commissioner Brookins** stated the group shouldn't require minimum or max garage size. He would feel more comfortable not having that requirement at all as he feels that he can't justify it.

The conversation continued regarding the topics listed by staff, past conversations, public input, and the idea of considering building for projected demand instead of what's desirable today. A number of Commissioners stated they considered public input and were troubled that some residents didn't feel their input was actually considered.

**Baker** requested discussion on dormer dimensions and stated he would not support a recommendation today. **Blum** then suggested the group go through each of the 9 items and assess the group's agreement. **Segelbaum** pointed out that each item is dependent on another so if one changes then the others will too. **Brookins** stated the group should come to a decision otherwise the conversation may continue for a few more months.

**Mary-Jane Pappas, 20 Ardmore Drive**, commented on Baker’s statement about needing a model to see what the shading is with dormers. She suggested looking at an architect’s plans and using that as a guide for minimum requirements.

**Commissioner Sadeghi** stated that he has access to a program that has a sun setting and that creating a model and utilizing the sun shade setting would be easy.

The Commission moved on with staff to review all the listed items and restate Commissioners previous opinions on each; discussion followed.

**Chair Blum** closed the public hearing at 8:44pm

Commissioners entered in to a conversation regarding the garage stall requirements and transitioned into a conversation about dormers. **Baker** wanted to know the shadowing effect based on dormers at different percentages. **Commissioner Pockl** asked if the regulations presented are similar to those a previous builder suggested. Staff clarified that the dormer regulations were stricter than the builder originally stated they’d like to see. These dormer regulations are to address second floor usability but not to “give back” space and mimic a full second floor. **Brookins** stated he likes the dormer percentages even if they seem a bit too strict to him. Based on questions, staff clarified gable and shed dormers.

The discussion transitioned into specific percentages, measurements, and the desire to see modeling to understand proximity and shading.

**MOTION** made by **Commissioner Baker** and seconded by **Commissioner Johnson** to table the item to the June 22, 2020 meeting with staff providing more information on dormers.

Staff took a roll call vote and it passed 5-2.

Aye: Baker, Blum, Johnson, Pockl, Segelbaum

Nay: Brookins, Sadeghi

**Televised portion of the meeting concluded at 9:46 pm**

## 5. Council Liaison Report

**Council Member Rosenquist** updated the Commission on the City Council meeting where the Schuller’s rezoning was discussed. The applicant withdrew prior to the staff presentation and will work to find a compromise solution before the summer of 2021. She also mentioned the recent Council/Manager meeting and the fact that the City will move forward with hiring an Equity, Inclusion, and Volunteer Manager. **Chair Blum** asked a question about composting.

## 6. Reports on Meetings of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority, City Council, Board of Zoning Appeals, and other meetings

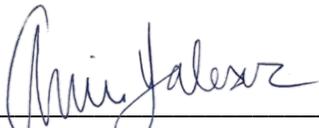
**Planning Manager Zimmerman** confirmed that Commissioner Brookins would be the Planning Commission representative at the next Board of Zoning Appeals meeting.

**7. Other Business**

None.

**8. Adjournment**

**MOTION** made by **Commissioner Pockl**, seconded by **Commissioner Baker** and the motion carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 PM.



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Amie Kolesar, Planning Assistant



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Adam Brookins, Secretary