

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS, MN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
June 20, 2012**

1. **Call to Order:** The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Rich Skordahl.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were Chairman Rich Skordahl, Commission Members, Roni Ronyak, William Murray, Greg Zutz, Todd Gardner, John Hane, Ray Steinke, City Planner Nate Sparks (Northwest Associated Consultants), and Planning Commission Secretary Kathy Lind. Also in attendance was Gina Mitchell from Bolten & Menk, Inc.
3. **Adopt Agenda:** MOTION BY ZUTZ, SECOND BY HANE TO ADOPT THE JUNE 20, 2012 PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA. MOTION CARRIED 7-0
4. **Approve Minutes:** MOTION BY STEINKE, SECOND BY ZUTZ TO APPROVE THE MARCH 21, 2012 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES WITH AMENDMENT TO ITEM 8 ON THE MINUTES. MOTION CARRIED 7-0
5. **Public Comment:** None
6. **Public Hearing – River Crossing**
Gina Mitchell, Study Project Manager, Bolten & Menk, Inc. presented the background and action request for the Northern Anoka County River Crossing Study.

Public Hearing opened at 7:44 p.m., with no public comments the Public Hearing closed at 7:44 p.m.

A MOTION BY STEINKE, SECOND BY ZUTS TO RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL:

- Accept and adopt the northern Anoka county river crossing study
- Include the findings in its next comprehensive plan update
- Continue to collaborate and coordinate with the cities of Nowthen, Oakgrove and Anoka County to implement the recommendations of the study as funding and needs allow.

The Planning Commission members also ask that the City Council consider safety concerns, specifically the area west of the river bridge.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

7. **Public Hearing – Comprehensive Plan Amendment: 23031 Ivywood Street.**
City Planner, Nate Sparks presented the background and proposed ordinance amendment.

BACKGROUND

The City of St. Francis owns a parcel of land at 230131 Ivywood Street. This parcel has been vacant since it was platted. The City acquired it to potentially develop as park land. Since that time, the City has acquired other land in the area more suitable for a neighborhood park. The City would like to explore other options for this parcel. In order to do so, a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to re-guide the parcel for a Single Family Residential use would be appropriate.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

The property in question is zoned, R-2 Single Family Residential and has single family uses to the north, south, and west of it, and to the east is the golf course. The property is in an inadequate location for a park as it has no connectivity to the City's trail system and is within the park service area for the Highland Woods Park, which is a short distance (3 blocks) to the north.

The Public Hearing opened at 8:03 p.m., with no public comments the Public Hearing closed at 8:05 p.m.

MOTION BY HANE, SECOND BY ZUTZ TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL ON THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT CHANGE TO TAKE THE PARCEL LOCATED AT 23031 IVYWOOD OUT OF THE CITY'S PARK SYSTEM AND RECLASSIFY IT AS RESIDENTIAL. MOTION CARRIED 7-0

8. **Public Hearing – Ordinance Amendment: Sandwich Board Signs:**

City Planner, Nate Sparks reviewed the background and the proposed ordinance amendment.

BACKGROUND

Recently, the City revised the regulations regarding temporary signs. In the revisions, sandwich board signs were allowed on a limited basis without a permit. Since this allowance was included in the ordinance, several business owners have expressed that the ordinance language was confusing and unclear. Thus, this ordinance amendment is intended to add a definition to more clearly express what a sandwich board is and to more concisely state the size limitations.

SANDWICH BOARD SIGN ORDINANCE UPDATE

Sign Definitions

Add:

Sandwich Board Sign. A self-supporting, temporary A-frame sign with two faces made of wood or other similar durable materials.

Revise:

2. One sandwich board sign per business may be allowed in the business districts without a permit and without using the time period allotted for temporary, portable signs provided:
 - a. The sign is placed within fifteen (15) feet of the entrance of the business.
 - b. The sign shall be placed on private property and may be placed on a private sidewalk provided there is five (5) feet of clearance for pedestrians.
 - c. The sign ~~may~~ *shall* not obstruct safety, visibility, or traffic.
 - d. The sign shall be freestanding, not attached to any other structure or device, *and shall not be illuminated, greater than 3 ½ feet in height, greater than 2 feet in width, or greater than 2 feet in depth.*
 - e. The sign shall be only displayed during business hours.
 - f. *The sign shall not be greater than three and one-half (3½) feet in height, two (2) feet in width, or two (2) feet in depth.*

The Public Hearing opened 8:10 p.m., with no public comments the Public Hearing closed at 8:11 p.m.

A MOTION BY HANE, SECOND BY ZUTZ TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL ON THE ABOVE ORDINANCE AMENDMENT AS PRESENTED BY STAFF. MOTION CARRIED 7-0

9. **Public Hearing – Ordinance Amendment: Required Landscaping.**

City Planner, Nate Sparks reviewed the background and the recommended proposed ordinance amendment.

BACKGROUND

The City of St. Francis has had some long held policies regarding tree plantings that were not accurately reflected in the ordinance. This amendment intends to incorporate these standards, as well as taking care of a few other issues found in the ordinance.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS

10-20-4-A is amended to clarify that landscaping requirements apply to all new development but that a landscaping plan is only required for commercial, industrial, institutional, and multi-family projects.

10-20-4-B-1 is amended to include other required trees rather than just deciduous. The ordinance calls for these other types of trees, as well.

10-20-4-B-3-c is changed to eliminate the use of deciduous trees for primary screening use.

10-20-4-C-5 is added to specify minimum required tree plantings. It has separate sections for single and two-family development and other uses. For single family it specifies the City's existing two tree requirement and states that one must be planted in the front yard. For other uses it requires one caliper inch of trees planted per every 320 square feet of building, which was the City's standard previous to the 2010 recodification. The new Section 5 also allows for existing trees to be counted towards minimum requirements.

CITY OF ST. FRANCIS – LANDSCAPING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

10-20-4: REQUIRED LANDSCAPING:— ~~All new residential subdivisions with three (3) or more lots, residential structures with four (4) or more dwelling units, commercial uses, industrial uses, and institutional uses shall be subject to minimum landscaping and planting material specification requirements outlined in this Section.~~

A. **Landscape Plan Required.** All new residential subdivisions with three (3) or more lots, residential structures with three (3) or more dwelling units, commercial uses, industrial uses, and institutional uses shall be subject to minimum landscaping and planting material specification requirements outlined in this Section. A landscape plan shall be developed with an emphasis upon the boundary of the subject site, parking lots, and foundation of the principal structure, in accordance with the information requirements outlined in Section 10-9-6 of this Ordinance.

B. **Design Standards and Criteria.** All landscaping incorporated in the landscape plan shall conform to the following standards and criteria:

1. Types of New Trees: Trees suitable for complying with this Chapter shall include those specified below, or similar if deemed acceptable by the Zoning Administrator:

| <u>Botanical Name</u> | <u>Common Name</u> |
|---|--|
| <u>Quercus (varieties)</u> | <u>Oak</u> |
| <u>Acer platanoides (and Varieties)</u> | <u>Norway Maple (and Schwedler, Emerald Queen, etc.)</u> |
| <u>Acer saccharum</u> | <u>Sugar Maple</u> |
| <u>Celtis occidentalis</u> | <u>Hackberry</u> |
| <u>Betula (varieties)</u> | <u>Birch</u> |
| <u>Gleditsia triacanthos</u> | <u>Honeylocust (Imperial, Majestic, Skyline, Sunburst & Thornless)</u> |
| <u>Tilia cordata (and Varieties)</u> | <u>Little Leaf Linden and Redmond, Greenspire, etc.</u> |
| <u>Tilia Americana</u> | <u>Basswood (American Linden)</u> |
| <u>Gymnoeladus dioicus</u> | <u>Kentucky Coffee Tree</u> |

- a. Deciduous Trees. Required plantings of deciduous trees shall be of the following type: White Oak, Northern Red Oak, Eastern Pin Oak, Swamp White Oak, Kentucky Coffee Tree, Basswood, Littleleaf Linden, Redmond Linden, Hybrid Elm, Sugar Maple, Red Maple, Norway Maple, or Black Cherry.

b. Evergreen Trees. Required plantings of evergreen trees shall be of the following type: Douglas Fir, White Fir, Hemlock, Austrian Pine, White Pine, Ponderosa Pine, Norway Pine, Scotch Pine, Eastern Red Cedar, Black Hills Spruce, Norway Spruce, and White Spruce.

c. Ornamental Trees. Required plantings of ornamental trees shall be of the following type: River Birch, Chokecherry, Crabapple, Dogwood, Hawthorn, Mountain Ash, Plum, or Serviceberry.

2. Minimum Size: All plants shall at least equal the following minimum sizes: (NOTE: Type and mode are dependent upon time of planting season, availability, and site conditions (soils, climate, ground water, manmade irrigation, grading, etc.)

| | <u>Potted/Bare Root or Balled or Burlapped</u> |
|---|--|
| Shade trees | 2 inch diameter |
| Ornamental trees (flowering crabs, Russian olive, hawthorn, etc.) | 2 inch diameter |
| Evergreen trees 4 feet | |
| Tall shrubs and hedge material (evergreen or deciduous) | 3 to 4 feet |
| Low Shrubs | |
| - Deciduous | 24 to 30 inches |
| - Evergreen | 24 to 30 inches |
| | 24 to 30 inch |
| - Spreading evergreens | 18 to 24 inches |

3. Spacing:

a. Plant material centers shall not be located closer than three (3) feet from the fence line or property line and shall not be planted to conflict with public plantings, sidewalks, trails, fences, parking areas, and driveways based on the judgment of the Zoning Administrator.

b. Where plant materials are planted for screening purposes in two (2) or more rows, plantings shall be staggered in rows unless otherwise approved by the Zoning Administrator.

c. ~~Deciduous trees intended for screening shall be planted not more than forty (40) feet apart.~~ Evergreen trees intended for screening shall be planted not more than fifteen (15) feet apart.

d. Where massing of plants or screening is intended, large deciduous shrubs shall be planted four (4) feet on center or closer, and/or, evergreen shrubs shall be planted three (3) feet on center or closer.

4. Design (except for pond slopes which shall be subject to the review and approval of the City Engineer):

- a. The landscape plan shall show some form of designed site amenities (i.e., composition of plant materials, and/or creative grading, decorative lighting, exterior sculpture, etc.) which are largely intended for aesthetic purposes.
- b. All areas within the property lines (or beyond, if site grading extends beyond) shall be treated. All exterior areas not paved or designated as roads, parking, or storage shall be planted into ornamental vegetation (lawns, ground covers, or shrubs) unless otherwise approved by the Zoning Administrator.
- ~~e. Each single family lot is to be provided a minimum of two (2) shade trees consistent with the size requirements of this Chapter.~~
- c. Turf slopes in excess of three to one (3:1) are prohibited.
- d. All ground areas under the building roof overhang shall be treated with a decorative mulch and/or foundation planting.
- e. All buildings shall have an exterior water spigot or irrigation system to ensure that landscape maintenance can be accomplished.
- f. Trees and shrubs shall not be planted in the right-of-way except as approved by the City Council.
- g. All plants required as part of an approved landscaping plan shall be maintained and kept alive. Dead plants shall be replaced in accordance with the approved landscape plan.

5. Minimum Required Plantings.

- ~~a. Single and Two-Family Residential. All new single family residences or duplex units shall follow the sodding and ground cover requirements found in Section 10-20-4-C of this Ordinance and two (2) deciduous trees, of which one shall be placed in the front yard.~~
- ~~b. Mixed Use, Multi-Family, Institutional, Commercial, and Industrial.~~
 - ~~(1) In order to achieve landscaping which is appropriate in scale with the size of a building site, the minimum number of caliper inches of trees required shall be determined by dividing the total gross square footage of all floors of a building by 320. A single story building in excess of twenty (20) feet in height shall be considered a two (2) story building for the purposes of determining its total gross footage. A mixture of plant material sizes shall be required.~~
 - ~~(2) The complement of trees fulfilling the requirement in Section 10-20-4.B.5.b.(1) shall not be less than twenty-five (25) percent deciduous, twenty-five (25) percent evergreen, and ten (10) percent ornamental. For the purposes of this ordinance a four foot tall evergreen tree is equal to two (2) caliper inches.~~
 - ~~(3) Deciduous and evergreen trees shall be of more than one (1) species each.~~
 - ~~(4) Planting islands may be required where necessary to visually break-up expanses of hard surface parking areas, for safe and efficient traffic movement, and to define rows of parking. Planting islands may occupy up to at least five (5) percent of the required parking area.~~
 - ~~(5) All parking, loading, service, utility, and outdoor storage areas shall be screened from all public roads and adjacent differing land uses. The screening shall consist of any combination of the following: earth mounds, walls, fences, evergreen trees, tall shrubs, or low shrubs. The height and depth of the screening shall be~~

consistent with the height and size of the areas for which screening is required. When natural materials, such as trees and hedges, are used to meet the screening requirements of this section, density and species of planting shall be such to achieve seventy-five (75) percent opacity year round.

(6) These standards may be waived for properties in the B-1 and I-2 Districts by the Zoning Administrator, provided steps are taken to lessen the impact of the development on adjacent residential properties.

6. Existing Trees. All existing, preserved trees or other vegetation on site that are suitable for the purpose intended by this Ordinance in the opinion of the Zoning Administrator may count towards any required plantings as long as they are in good condition and disease free.

C. **Sodding and Ground Cover:** All open areas of site not occupied by building, parking, or storage shall be either seeded or sodded.

1. The Developer shall assure that the front and side yards of each lot are properly graded, three (3) inches of top soil added, sod laid to complete front yard (including right-of-way), and seeding or sodding has been added to the remainder of the disturbed area of the lot. Seeding will be allowed in the front yard if a sprinkler system is also installed.

2. If a house or project is completed when weather conditions do not allow sodding or seeding, the Developer or Home Builder shall submit to the City the following:

a. A temporary certificate of occupancy granted for the building during the non-growing season provided that the owner establishes a cash escrow with the city equal to one and one-half (1½) times the estimated cost of ground cover or a minimum of three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) whichever is more, plus a seventy-five dollar (\$75.00) non-refundable administrative fee. Upon satisfactory installation of the ground cover, the escrow will be returned to the owner and a certificate of occupancy issued.

b. If the ground cover is not installed by June 1st of the following year, the owner will forfeit the escrowed funds and be required to vacate the property until the certificate of occupancy can be issued when ground cover has been installed. The cost to install the ground cover shall be at the homeowner's expense.

D. **Landscape Guarantee:** All new plants shall be guaranteed for twelve (12) months from the time planting has been completed. All plants shall be alive, of good quality, and diseases free at the end of the warranty period or be replaced. Any replacements shall be warranted for twelve (12) months from the time of planting. Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, the City may require a Performance Bond, with a corporation approved by the City as surety thereon, or other guarantee acceptable to the City, in an amount to be determined by the City, but for not less than one and one-half (1½) times and no more than two (2) times the amount estimated by the City as the cost of completing said landscaping and screening.

The Public Hearing opened at 8:21 p.m., with no public comments the Public Hearing closed at 8:22 p.m.

A MOTION BY STEINKE, SECOND BY RONYAK TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL ON THE ABOVE ORDINANCE AMENDMENT AS PRESENTED BY STAFF. MOTION CARRIED 7-0

10. **General Discussion Items by Planning Commissioners:** City Planner, Nate Sparks suggested the commission possibly review "Bee Keeping" at the next Planning Commission meeting.

11. **Adjournment:**

MOTION BY HANE, SECOND BY STEINKE TO ADJOURN MEETING AT 8:26 P.M. MOTION CARRIED 7-0

Kathy Lind, Zoning Secretary

Date