



**ST. FRANCIS PLANNING COMMISSION**

**ISD #15 DISTRICT OFFICE BUILDING  
4115 AMBASSADOR BLVD.  
JUNE 19, 2013**

**7:00 PM**

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Adopt Agenda                      June 19, 2013
4. Approve Minutes                  April 17, 2013
5. Public Comment
6. Public Hearing – Variance: 23671 St. Francis Blvd
7. Ordinance Discussion – Residential Off Street Parking
8. General Discussion Items by Planning Commissioners
9. Adjournment

There may be a quorum of St. Francis Council Members present at this meeting.

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS  
ST. FRANCIS, MN  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
April 17, 2013**

1. **Call to Order:** The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Rich Skordahl.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were Roni Ronyak, Ray Steinke, Rich Skordahl, Todd Gardner, Greg Zutz, Joel Olson, Council Liaison Tim Brown, and City Planner Nate Sparks. William Murray was excused. Olson arrived at 7:10.
3. **Adopt Agenda:** MOTION BY STEINKE, SECOND BY GARDNER TO ADOPT THE APRIL 17, 2013 PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.
4. **Approve Minutes:** MOTION BY STEINKE, SECOND BY RONYAK TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 20, 2013 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.
5. **Public Comment:** None
6. **Public Hearing – Lot Line Adjustment with Variance – Jim Jones – 23725 Nacre Street**

Sparks stated Jim Jones at 23725 Nacre Street received approval for a Minor Subdivision with Variance in 2012 for turning 2 parcels into 3. He is now seeking to adjust one lot line one half foot between the two southerly parcels from this division.

Skordahl opened the Public Hearing at 7:05 Public Hearing Closed at 7:06 pm.

Skordahl said that the adjustment appears to be generally consistent with the City's previous variance approval.

MOTION BY RONYAK, SECOND BY ZUTZ TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE LOT LINE ADJUSTMENT WITH VARIANCE. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

8. **Public Hearing – Meridian Behavioral Health – Rezoning, Conditional Use Permit, and Preliminary Plat – Outlot A, Meadows of St. Francis**

Sparks stated Meridian Behavioral Health is seeking to establish a 48 bed substance abuse treatment center on an 8 acre site located west of 229<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Cree Street on Outlot A of the Meadows of St. Francis. This outlot was originally approved as the second phase of the Meadows of St. Francis development. The site needs to be replatted from the townhome configuration. The site is currently zoned R-3, Medium Density Residential and guided for a High Density Residential Land Use. Treatment centers are allowed as a Conditional Use in the R-4, High Density Residential District. Therefore, the application requires a rezoning and a CUP in addition to the plat. If the Planning Commission finds that the rezoning and CUP are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the review criteria in the ordinance, Staff has a list of required plan revisions and other general conditions that need to be met by the applicant and to meet certain ordinance and engineering standards.

John Seymour of Meridian Behavioral Health stated that they have no problems with the conditions and will work with City Staff to adjust the plans as needed. He said Meridian has 5 residential and 13 outpatient treatment centers. This center is proposed as a residential facility. They only accept people that aren't a threat and have 24 hour staffing. The building is to be brick with a metal roof. The facility will provide about 50 full time jobs. The zoning is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and this type of facility may assist the City in leveraging for additional health care type industries in the future.

Olson asked if there was any outpatient programs proposed. Seymour said no.

Olson asked why they are looking at St. Francis. Seymour said they have a strong relationship with Anoka County. Fran Savreau from Meridian Behavioral Health added they like the community.

Olson asked about security for the townhomes adjacent to the site. Savreau said their clients are seeking sobriety and are choosing to be there. They have a secure environment with around the clock staffing and strive to be safe for their clients and the neighborhood.

Zutz asked how many townhome units are being replaced by this facility. Sparks stated 64.

Skordahl opened the public hearing at 7:50.

Matt Webster at 4178 228<sup>th</sup> in St Francis said there are 20 finished townhome units, the facility's proposed appearance is out of character for this neighborhood, this parcel is supposed to be residential, and the type of use proposed doesn't fit.

Darren Knight at 2276 Eldorado in St Francis said he moved to this area to be safe and feels that this type of facility would be harmful to the neighborhood. The property owner should put up the townhomes that are supposed to go here instead of allowing a treatment center to be built.

Jeremy Zeicheck representing the First Baptist Church and School expressed concerns about safety and asked about drug treatment and the length of stay. Savreau said they do have clients treated for drug abuse after a screening process and the length of stay is typically 20 days.

Skordahl closed the public hearing at 8:02.

Steinke said he believes the rezoning is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Olson said he questions the compatibility of this use with the neighborhood and that it seems the City would be rezoning for an opportunity.

MOTION BY STEINKE, SECOND BY ZUTZ TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE REZONING FROM R-3 TO R-4. MOTION CARRIED 4-2 (Ronyak, Olson).

Skordahl stated the proposed CUP appears to be generally consistent with the review criteria. Olson asked if any additional safeguards can be put in place to mitigate any incompatibilities. Zutz suggested the vegetative buffer have a higher number of conifers and that private drive signage be placed at the entrance of the townhome development's private street.

MOTION BY STEINKE, SECOND BY GARDNER TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT WITH THE CONDITIONS IN THE STAFF REPORT AND THE INCREASED NUMBER OF CONIFERS IN THE BUFFER AND PRIVATE DRIVE SIGNS. MOTION CARRIED 4-2 (Ronyak, Olson).

Skordahl stated the Commission needs to make a recommendation on park dedication with any action on the preliminary plat. The options are to take cash-in-lieu or construct trails. If cash-in-lieu is taken, the Commission should review the trail plan. Sparks said the plan may need to be revised as initially the Highway 47 crossing was planned near this site but that has since been moved to Pederson. Olson said the trail system is an important amenity.

MOTION BY STEINKE, SECOND BY GARDNER TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE PRELIMINARY PLAT WITH CASH-IN-LIEU OF PARKLAND DEDICATION. MOTION CARRIED 4-2 (Ronyak, Olson).

MOTION BY ZUTZ, SECOND BY STEINKE TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE SITE & BUILDING PLAN REVIEW. MOTION CARRIED 4-2 (Ronyak, Olson).

9. **Public Hearing - Ordinance Amendment – Variance Review Criteria**

Sparks stated that the State Statute from where the City's variance review criteria was from has been changed. This amendment makes the ordinance consistent with the statutory change.

Skordahl opened the public hearing at 9:13. Public hearing closed at 9:14.

MOTION BY OLSON, SECOND BY GARDNER TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE AMENDMENT. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

10. **Ordinance Amendment – Rental Housing Ordinance**

Sparks stated that this ordinance was referred to the Planning Commission by the City Council for review. Olson questioned the need for the ordinance.

MOTION BY STEINKE, SECOND BY ZUTZ TO TABLE THE ORDINANCE REVIEW TO A FUTURE MEETING. MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

11. **Adjournment:** MOTION BY STEINKE, SECOND BY GARDNER TO ADJOURN MEETING AT 9:30 PM. MOTION CARRIED 6-0

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Nate Sparks, City Planner

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Date

Draft



## **PLANNING MEMO**

TO: St. Francis Planning Commission  
Matt Hylan, City Administrator

FROM: Nate Sparks

MEETING DATE: June 19, 2013

DATE: June 14, 2013

RE: Setback Variance - 23671 St. Francis Blvd

## **BACKGROUND**

The property owners of the building at 23671 St. Francis Blvd have made an application for a variance to the setback for a sign from Highway 47. The current sign is set 1 foot back from the right-of-way and the applicant would like to enlarge its size. Any expansion within the setback requires a variance.

## **REQUEST REVIEW**

The property currently has a 40 square foot sign set back 1 foot from the property line. This sign was originally built in a conforming location. The Highway 47 project resulted in additional right-of-way being taken thus moving the property line and making the sign a grandfathered nonconformity. The applicant is seeking to expand the size of the sign to 80 square feet, which is permitted via the City's sign ordinance. To move the sign 9 feet back would place the sign behind the required landscaping screening provided for the auto body shop next door which could potentially obscure the view of the sign.

## **VARIANCE REVIEW**

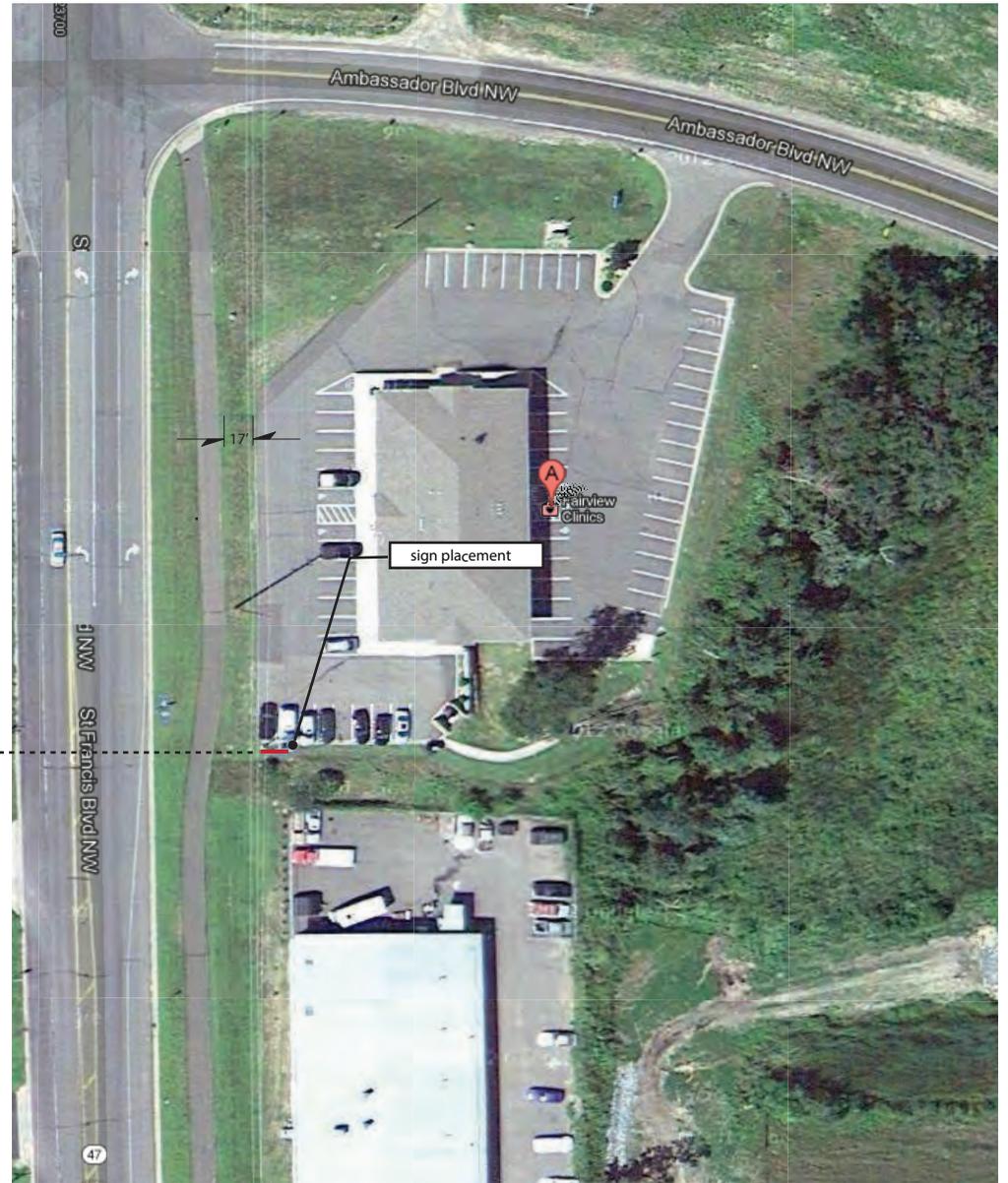
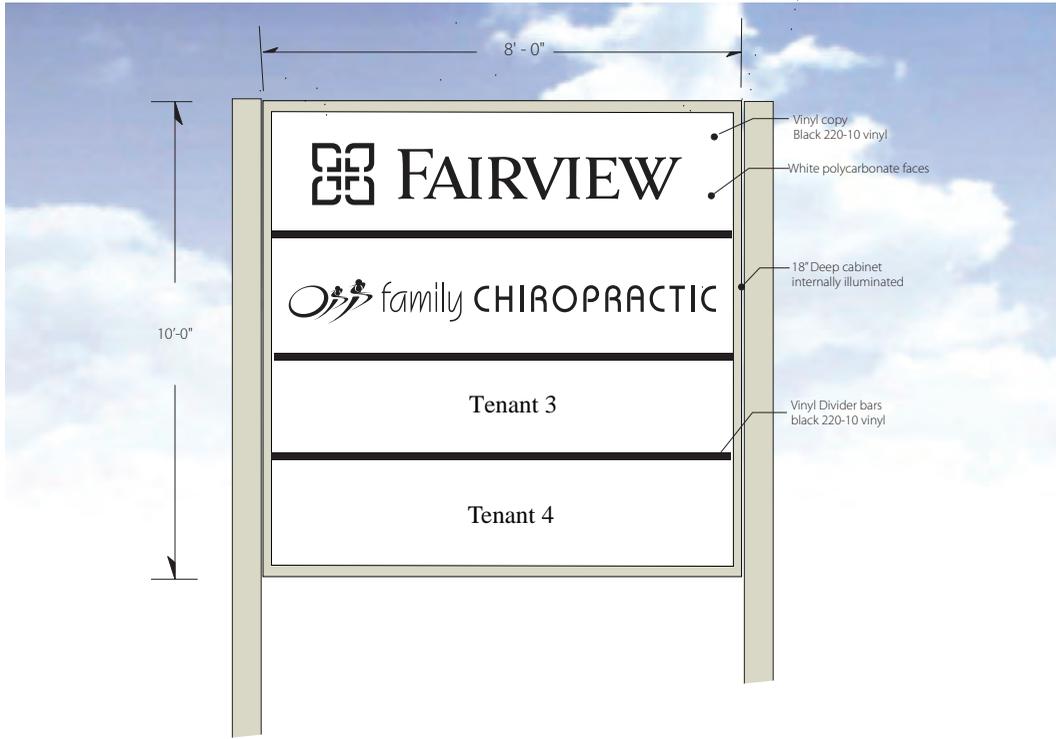
There are procedures and criteria by which the City may grant variances from the minimum standards on the ordinance. A variance request may not be approved unless the following criteria have been met:

- A. A variance shall only be granted when it is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the ordinance.
- B. A variance shall only be granted when it is consistent with the comprehensive plan.
- C. A variance may be granted when the applicant for the variance establishes that there are practical difficulties in complying with the zoning ordinance. Economic considerations alone do not constitute a practical difficulty. In order for a practical difficulty to be established, all of the following criteria shall be met:

1. The property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner. In determining if the property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner, the board shall consider, among other factors, whether the variance requested is the minimum variance which would alleviate the practical difficulty and whether the variance confers upon the applicant any special privileges that are denied to the owners of other lands, structures, or buildings in the same district.
  2. The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner.
  3. That the granting of the variance will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood in which the parcel of land is located.
- D. The variance does not involve a use that is not allowed within the respective zoning district.

**REQUESTED ACTION**

The Planning Commission should review the request and make a formal recommendation to the City Council.



Sign placement



D/F Monument / Alum. cabinet and frame - MOUNTED TO EXISTING SIGN UPRIGHTS

23671 Monument / St. Francis, MN.



**PLANNING MEMO**

TO: St. Francis Planning Commission  
Matt Hylan, City Administrator

FROM: Nate Sparks

MEETING DATE: June 19, 2013

DATE: June 14, 2013

RE: Ordinance Review – Residential Off-Street Parking

**BACKGROUND**

The City’s Code Enforcement Division has been receiving complaints regarding the parking of vehicles on grass in residential areas. This practice is not expressly prohibited by code. The City Administrator has requested that the Planning Commission review this section of ordinance.

**ORDINANCE REVIEW**

Section 10-16-15-D of the Zoning Ordinance discusses the parking of vehicles on property. It does not mention the parking of licensed or operable vehicles nor does it extend to any property outside of the Urban Service Area:

**D. Recreational Camping Vehicle, Utility Trailer, Boat, Unlicensed Vehicle, and Parking:**

1. Definition. The term “Recreational Camping Vehicle, Utility Trailer, Boat and Unlicensed Vehicle (Operable)” means any of the following:
  - a. “Travel Trailer” – A vehicular, portable structure built on a chassis, designed to be used as a temporary dwelling for travel, recreational, and vacation uses, permanently identified “Travel Trailer” by the manufacturer of the trailer.
  - b. “Pickup Coach” – A structure designed to be mounted on a truck chassis for use as a temporary dwelling for travel, recreation and vacation.
  - c. “Motor Home” – A portable, temporary building to be used for travel, recreation and vacation, constructed as an integral part of a self-propelled vehicle.
  - d. “Camping Trailer” – A folding structure, mounted on wheels and designed for travel, recreation and vacation uses.

- e. “Utility Trailer” – A trailer used for the transporting of items typically associated with a residential use. Utility Trailers shall not include trailers used to transport equipment used for commercial use.
  - f. “Boat” – For the purpose of this definition, “boat” shall include a water craft of less than twenty-two (22) feet in length, that is intended for personal use by the resident.
  - g. “Unlicensed Vehicle (Operable)” – Any passenger vehicle which does not have a current registration, but is capable of legally being operated on a public street. A vehicle having a flat tire or tires, missing wheel or wheels, lack of an engine or critical component parts thereof preventing immediate ignition of the engine, broken or cracked windshield, broken or non-functioning headlights, or other characteristics of a vehicle not capable of being immediately legally driven on a public road shall be presumed to be inoperable.
2. It is unlawful for any person to park or store a recreational camping vehicle, utility trailer, boat or unlicensed vehicle (operable) in the required setback area of any property.
  3. Properties which are less than seven (7) acres in size and are zoned for or used for residential purposes, located within the Urban Service Area of the City, shall be limited to a maximum of three Recreational Camping Vehicles, Utility Trailers, Boats or Unlicensed Vehicles (operable), or a combination thereof, stored outside of an accessory structure or attached garage; provided a property shall be limited to a number of one Unlicensed Vehicle (operable) and all such vehicles must be parked on an Approved Parking Surface. For purposes of this Section, an “Approved Parking Surface” shall mean a parking surface paved with a bituminous or concrete surfacing not less than two inches in depth, or covered with a Class V aggregate, landscaping rock (with landscaping fabric installed under the rock) or concrete paver blocks all of which are maintained adequately to prevent the growth of vegetation. The total outside storage area for the permitted vehicles shall be limited to a maximum of five hundred (500) square feet in size.

Section 10-16-15-E goes on to address the parking of trucks. It also exempts the rural areas:

- E. **Truck Parking:** It is unlawful to park a truck (other than a truck of twelve thousand (12,000) gross vehicle rated weight or less), a truck tractor, semi-trailer, bus, construction equipment, construction trailers, or manufactured home within the Urban Service areas of the City that are zoned and/or used for residential purposes, except for the purpose of loading or unloading the same, and then only during such time as is reasonably necessary for such activity. For purposes of this section “construction equipment” and/or “construction trailers” shall mean only such equipment and trailers as is decalated per

Minnesota Department of Transportation requirements and actively used in connection with the operation of a construction-related business.

The City has been receiving some complaints about properties where people are parking on the grass in the front yard. Additionally, this practice has caught the attention of the Public Works Department as many times the property is being accessed by driving on the grass into the yard rather than using the driveway. This causes the grassed area adjacent to the street to suffer from erosion control issues. Erosion control issues lead to clogged storm sewers.

The City also exempts rural properties from this ordinance. This does cause some concerns for residents in rural residential areas. There are properties that the City receives frequent complaints about parking and storage of vehicles but the current ordinances do not apply due to the properties being outside of the urban service area. The Planning Commission should consider whether or not such exemptions are appropriate for certain smaller rural residential properties where the excess outdoor storage can negatively impact neighboring properties.

### **OTHER ORDINANCES**

The cities of Cambridge and Big Lake both utilize a slightly different method for this particular issue. Both require all parking areas to be surfaced:

#### **Cambridge**

(E) Vehicle storage and parking.

(1) All vehicles parked or stored outdoors shall be licensed and operational.

(2) All vehicles parked or stored outdoors shall be on poured bituminous or concrete surface, or on a continuous brick paver parking pad or other hard surface as approved by the Zoning Administrator, or on the same material as that of the established driveway. Other materials, including decorative landscape rock, gravel, sand, bare soil, crushed rock, or any crushed material shall be prohibited for use as a driveway or parking surface unless the existing driveway is already constructed of one of these

#### **Big Lake**

1030.08 PARKING PADS:

Subd. 1. General Rules:

1. Parking on landscaping is prohibited.

2. All motor vehicles must be operable and licensed.

3. Parking pad must meet all yard setbacks and is considered an accessory structure when defining setbacks.

4. Pad surface materials shall be orderly contained by delineated edging or in some other effective fashion.

5. All parking must not disturb proper drainage or utilities.

Subd. 2. Rear Yard.

1. A parking pad is allowed.

2. A maximum of two (2) operable and licensed vehicles are allowed on all surface

types.

3. Grass or weeds growing around vehicles shall be regularly cut and subject to the noxious weed ordinance.

**Subd. 3. Side Yard.**

1. A parking pad is allowed on garage side only or in other cases subject to the judgment of the Zoning Administrator

2. Unimproved surfaces are not allowed.

**Subd. 4. Front Yard.**

1. A parking pad is not allowed unless determined to be acceptable by the Zoning Administrator.

2. Unimproved and semi-improved parking surfaces are not allowed.

3. However, the access portion to a side yard parking pad may be a semi-improved surface.

**REQUESTED ACTION**

City Staff would like to get input from the Planning Commission on the current parking ordinance for residential properties. Further discussion could be held at future meetings.