

I. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Planning Commission was held on Monday, January 13, 2020, commencing at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Chairperson Asmus called the meeting to order.

A. ROLL CALL:

Chairperson	Shannon Asmus	Present
Commissioner	Michael Flaata	Present
Commissioner	Judy Hudson	Present
Commissioner	Larry Dahl	Present
Commissioner	Eric Mathwig	Present
Commissioner	Jeff Woods	Present
Commissioner	Tom Zens	Present
City Planner	Hannah Rybak	Present

B. ANNOUNCEMENT OF ADDITIONAL ITEMS

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Commissioner Dahl, seconded by Commissioner Flaata, to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2019, meeting. All members present voted aye.

Motion Carried.

III. SCHEDULED ITEMS

A. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- 1. Conditional Use Request – by Gary & Catherine Irons at 809 South Gilman Avenue
*To allow for an accessory structure relocation onto the property***

City Planner, Hannah Rybak, provided an overview of the request. She reviewed the consistency of the request with the standards for granting a conditional use.

10 findings of fact offered by staff were presented to the Commissioners by City Planner Rybak.

Staff recommendation and potential action were reviewed.

Commissioner Asmus asked about when the inspection would take place. City Planner Rybak responded that immediately following relocation the Building Official will do a preliminary inspection.

Commissioner Flaata asked about a final inspection. Rybak stated that the applicant will need to get a building permit for the project. That permit will require a final inspection before it will be closed.

Commissioner Woods asked City Planner Rybak how long the conditional use is good for. She explained that it is good for six (6) months. The applicant just wants to get a head start on everything.

Commissioner Asmus opened the Public Hearing.

This being the time, date and place set, with all mailed and published notices given as required by law, the hearing was opened at approximately 5:37 p.m., January 13, 2020, to consider a Conditional Use Request by Gary & Catherine Irons at 809 South Gilman Avenue to allow moving a detached garage that is older than ten (10) years old onto the property.

An attendance list is on file.

No written comments were received.

No comments were heard and the hearing was closed at approximately 5:38 p.m.

Commissioner Flaata made a motion to recommend approval of the requested conditional use permit, at the property located at 809 South Gilman Avenue, based on the findings of fact, submitted plans, and the three conditions outlined in this motion:

1. The structure must be in good repair and physical appearance. No holes, breaks, gaps, missing siding or shingles, chipped paint, overall deterioration or any other item that would be a violation of Litchfield's property maintenance code.
2. The applicant must obtain a building permit prior to the structure being relocated to the property.
3. The applicant must make any repairs deemed necessary by the Building Official following his inspection.

This motion was seconded by Commissioner Dahl. Upon roll call vote, all members present voted aye.

Motion Carried.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. *CONCEPT REVIEW OF GREGG SCHILLING & DAVID TYSK PROJECTS*

City Planner, Hannah Rybak, explained the purpose of this discussion is for the commissioners to give feedback on questions provided to them in the packet and for the developers to listen and decide if they want to continue with their plans or walk away at this point.

Commissioner Flaata commented that parking and green space is a concern of his especially after seeing how little was provided in the most recent development.

Commissioner Asmus stated that the City needs to work with the applicants to provide adequate parking space.

Commissioner Woods expressed that he is all for more housing in town, but questioned the infrastructure in both sites. Commissioner Asmus reminded all that they are not here to discuss financial issues.

Commissioner Asmus said that there are many positives from both developments. His concern is 5th Street is a major thoroughfare in the City. These developments will add density to both ends. A safety concern is there is no sidewalk from North Gilman to County Road 34, and likewise on the other end of 5th Street from South Swift to CSAH 1.

Commissioner Dahl stated he would like to see more senior housing. There is currently 1 to 3 year waiting lists for those areas.

Gregg Schilling Project

Commissioner Asmus expressed concern on this development adding density to Willmar Avenue. He feels there is limited play area. He would like to see the City work with Schilling on the design; parking, garbage, landscaping, etc. Asmus explained that the Minnesota average number of cars per household is two. This would add a lot of traffic on Willmar Avenue and 5th Street. He thinks there needs to be work done on safety to get people in and out of the development.

Commissioner Flaata commented that he likes that the development includes townhomes and duplexes besides just apartments.

Commissioner Hudson had a list of items that she disliked or had concern with. Those items included things such as density, trash location, lack of public amenities and parking, and traffic flow. She would like to see screening from the other neighborhoods, sidewalks, playground, picnic area, etc.

Commissioner Mathwig proposed if it would be possible to redesign the east end of the development to give access to 7th Street. Commissioner Woods agreed and said he would like to see more access roads in and out of the development.

All commissioners agreed that this development won't have a negative impact on the neighboring properties if it is done neatly and properly.

Gregg Schilling addressed the Commission. He explained that State Code requires 1.3 parking stalls per bedroom of each unit. His plan is to have 3 per unit. Schilling explained that there is extra green space available. As far as traffic safety, he stated that there will be a traffic concern everywhere, no matter what kind of housing is going in.

Commissioner Asmus said to Schilling to be ready to address the parking issue and expect to hear that 3 stalls per unit is not enough.

David Tysk Project

Commissioner Asmus started by explaining his concerns. He feels this will create heavy concentration of building on the east end of 5th Street with the other townhome developments and residential housing already in the area. Accessing Cottonwood Avenue is also a concern, causing congestion in the area. Asmus questioned how the City will handle traffic cutting through

on 10th Street to get to the school. He wondered if the City and County could work together to slow down the speed limit on County Road 34. Turning lanes on 34 and 10th Street accessing 34 were also questions that he had.

Commissioner Flaata and Commissioner Hudson both stated the development looks nice and is needed.

Commissioner Zens explained to the Commission that he feels that there will be changes that take place with growth and development, i.e. lower speed limits, walking trails, etc.

David Tysk spoke to the Commission. He said there are currently 40 parking spots proposed per apartment building and more can be added where needed. As far as access onto County Road 34, comments from the County were that having an access at the north and south end as well as 10th Street would be too much.

Commissioner Hudson asked City Planner Rybak if a PUD is what is recommended for the development projects. Rybak said it may be just a developer's agreement. There are multiple steps in getting both projects going; subdivision, rezoning, site plan review including landscaping and parking. If the Commission feels it doesn't meet City standards, it can be denied.

No formal action was taken.

VI. **ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

A. **POTENTIAL ORDINANCE AMENDMENT** – *Allow residences within certain business districts*

City Planner Rybak explained to the Commission that she has been approached by several property owners in Business Districts, mainly on Sibley Avenue, about converting a building that is currently a business back to its original form as a home. City Ordinance does not allow homes that were converted to businesses to go back to a home in the Business District.

Rybak has recommended the Commission looks at the option of making an amendment to the Ordinance. This item will be brought back for formal action.

B. **JOINT PRESENTATION ON DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES** – *for City Council & Planning Commission*

Presented by WSB on Tuesday, February 25th, 2020, 3:00 p.m. at City Hall

The proposed date of February 25th does not work for some Commissioners. City Planner Rybak asked that the Commission provide her with three different dates in February that will work for them and she will present them to WSB and the Council.

VII. **SET HEARING DATES AND TIMES**

The next scheduled meeting is Monday, February 10, 2020, at 5:30 p.m.

VIII. **REVIEW OF COUNCIL ACTIONS**

A. **VARIANCE REQUEST GRANTED** – *by First District Association at 101 South Swift Avenue*

To allow for a building 82' in height where a maximum building height of 40' is allowed

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Asmus adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Hannah Rybak
City Planner