PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES – CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Tuesday, June 4, 2024 – 7:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers – 8150 Barbara Avenue

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Weber called the Planning Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. OATH OF OFFICE

Community Development Support Specialist Bodsberg administered the Oath of Office to incumbent Planning Commissioners Robert Heidenreich and Aida Schaefer and new Planning Commissioner Amy Hunting.

3. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present:	Jonathan Weber *(Chair)* Trisha Presley *(Secretary)* Amy Hunting Jason Teiken Lance Twedt Robert Heidenreich Aida Schaefer Dennis Wippermann
Commissioners Absent:	Scott Clancy *(Vice-Chair) – excused.*
Staff Present:	Allan Hunting, City Planner Stacy Bodsberg, Community Development Support Specialist

4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chair Weber stated that new commissioners are seated annually and that the election of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary would be conducted.

Motion by Heidenreich, Second by Teiken, to close nominations and elect Jonathan Weber by unanimous consent to the position of Chair.
Ayes: 7 (Weber Abstained)
Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Motion by Heidenreich, Second by Teiken, to close nominations and elect Scott Clancy by unanimous consent to the position of Vice-Chair.
Ayes: 8
Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Motion by Teiken, Second by Twedt, to close nominations and elect Trisha Presley by unanimous consent to the position of Secretary.
Ayes: 7 (Presley Abstained)
Nays: 0 Motion carried.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes of the May 7, 2024, Planning Commission Meeting.

Motion by Twedt, Second by Teiken, to Approve the minutes as submitted.
Ayes: 7 (Hunting Abstained)

Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Variance to allow outdoor storage in the IOP, Industrial Office Park District for Simpson Strong Tie Company located at 8450 Courthouse Boulevard. (Toll Company – Case No. 24-15V)

Reading of Public Notice

Secretary Presley read the Public Hearing Notice. Notices were mailed to 18 property owners on May 16, 2024.

Presentation of Request

City Planner Hunting presented a summary of the staff report.

Planning Commission Discussion

Commissioner Schaefer inquired what the requirements would be for the tank to be stored inside.

Commissioner Wippermann questioned if the Variance was approved, would it allow for outside storage of other materials.

Opening of Public Hearing

Tom Litzkow, 14787 Endicott Avenue NW, Clearwater, MN, Applicant, stated that storing the nitrogen inside would require plumbing vents to the outside, putting in an outside fill box, and adding oxygen monitoring inside to monitor the atmosphere.

Commissioner Schaefer questioned what the cost would be. Mr. Litzkow stated that the oxygen monitor alone would be a few thousand dollars, but the cost is not the main consideration for the business preferring outside storage. Schaefer questioned if indoor air exchanges would be needed to ensure safety. Mr. Litzkow stated that the oxygen monitor would suffice for emergency evacuation in case of a leak.

Commissioner Hunting questioned if there would be locks on the security fencing around the nitrogen tank. Mr. Litzkow stated that the fencing would be locked, as well as lit at night, for security.

Commissioner Wippermann inquired as to how long the business has been in operation at the current location. Mr. Litzkow stated three years at the current location, but the business has been in operation much longer. Wippermann inquired as to how the nitrogen is currently being stored. Mr. Litzkow stated that the business currently has some nitrogen stored indoors. They are purchasing a larger tank to increase their laser cutting capacity.

Commissioner Schaefer inquired whether the business has been operating without an outdoor storage tank. Mr. Litzkow stated in the affirmative and safety is the main reason for the Variance request. Commissioner Schafer questioned whether he was aware of the limitations on outside storage when he signed the lease. Mr. Litzkow clarified that he is the tank vendor, not the business owner and stated that it would have been difficult for the business owner to anticipate the necessity of an outdoor tank when they signed the lease.

Commissioner Hunting asked for clarification on the types of outdoor storage limited by City Code. City Planner Hunting quoted the following section of code: "no outdoor storage of materials, product, refuse, or any other material construed as outdoor storage." Hunting stated that he interpreted this use as outdoor storage.

Chair Weber closed the Public Hearing.

Planning Commission Discussion
Commissioner Heidenreich stated that he supported approving the Variance. Safety concerns, the small size of the tank, and the increased importance of laser cutting in manufacturing.

Commissioner Teiken stated that he agreed with Commissioner Heidenreich and that nitrogen is less dangerous than other substances involved in Variances that the Commission has considered. Was also further reassured by the six-foot security fencing included in the request.

Chair Weber questioned whether the wording of the Variance could specify that the outdoor storage is approved for nitrogen only. City Planner Hunting confirmed that specific conditions could be included.

Planning Commission Recommendation
Motion by Heidenreich, Second by Presley, to Approve the Variance to allow outdoor storage of a nitrogen tank subject to the condition listed in the staff report.
Ayes: 8
Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

The item is tentatively scheduled to go before the City Council on June 24, 2024.

B. Planned Unit Development Amendment to construct a daycare facility located at 7761 Amana Trail. (InSite Development Services – Case No. 24-16PUD)

Reading of Public Notice
Secretary Presley read the Public Hearing Notice. Notices were mailed to 11 property owners on May 16, 2024.

Presentation of Request
City Planner Hunting presented a summary of the staff report.

Opening of Public Hearing
Sean Graham, 1400 16th Street, Suite 300, Oak Brook, IL, Applicant, Project Engineer with InSite Development Services, stated that InSite has been focusing resources on commercial daycare sites because of the massive growth in demand. He said there will be one entrance in the property's north end and one in the southwest to improve site circulation and safety. He added that the plan is to connect to utilities and reroute proposed drainage through a stormwater management system to a regional detention basin. He said the building will have a variety of materials in colors matching adjacent retail uses. He said that the proposed use will serve as a transition from retail to residential. He said that he had no questions about the report.

Chair Weber inquired about reconstructing the rain garden in the northwest corner and whether that part of the property was under the same ownership. Mr. Graham stated that the northwest corner is part of an Operating and Maintenance Easement Agreement applying to all parcels in the shopping center.

Chair Weber questioned if the originally approved PUD had any specification about building orientation. City Planner Hunting stated that there had already been an amendment to the plan for the bank building. He said that the proposed building is generally in alignment to the main street.

Commissioner Wippermann questioned what the maximum enrollment for the daycare would be. Mr. Graham stated that the site layout and playground space were designed for approximately 150 children maximum. The company's other daycare sites have been operating at 60 to 70 percent capacity, so full capacity operation is not anticipated.

Commissioner Schaefer clarified that the access drive will remain available for others to use. Mr. Graham confirmed that and said access for all parcels within the shopping center will remain.

Chair Weber closed the Public Hearing.

Planning Commission Discussion
Commissioner Teiken stated that a daycare is exactly what is needed in the area given all the housing being added and is not concerned about the building's orientation.

Planning Commission Recommendation
Motion by Heidenreich, Second by Schaefer, to Approve the PUD Development Plan Amendment to allow a daycare facility on lot 3, block 2, Argenta Hills, subject to all conditions listed in the staff report.
Ayes: 8
Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

The item is tentatively scheduled to go before the City Council on June 24, 2024.

C. Ordinance Amendment to Title 10 of the City Code (Zoning Regulations) specifically Chapter 2, Section 10-2-2, Chapter 9C, Section 10-9C-1, Chapter 9C, Section 10-9C-2, Chapter 9C, Section 10-9C-3, Chapter 13, Article J, Section 10-13J-5, and Chapter 15 relating to regulations for multiple family districts. (City of Inver Grove Heights – Case No. 24-17X)

Presentation of Request
City Planner Hunting presented a brief summary of the staff report explaining that the amendments were not ready for discussion.

Opening of Public Hearing
Motion by Twedt, Second by Presley, to Table item until the June 18, 2024, Planning Commission meeting.
Ayes: 8
Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

7. REGULAR BUSINESS

None.

8. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Will Clashe, Recording Secretary.