

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES - CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS

Wednesday, August 6, 2025 - 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. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Jonathan Weber (Chair)
Scott Clancy (*Vice-Chair*)
Jason Teiken
Collin Gosell
Robert Heidenreich
Dennis Wippermann

Commissioners Absent: Lance Twedt (*Secretary*) - *excused*
Aida Schaefer - *excused*
Amy Hunting - *excused*

Staff Present: Jason Ziemer, Community Development Director
Kevin Shay, Planning Manager
Ben Schneider, Senior Planner
Stacy Bodsberg, Community Development Support Specialist

3. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes of the July 1, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting.

Motion by Wippermann, Second by Clancy, to Approve the Minutes as Submitted.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

4. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Consider a Request for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to re-guide the parcel from MDR, Medium Density Residential to HDR, High Density Residential; a Planned Unit Development Amendment to allow for the development of an additional senior housing building on the vacant northern portion of the parcel; a Major Site Plan Review for the development of a 3-story, 57-unit senior housing building located at 9170 Cahill Avenue; and a Vacation of Drainage & Utility Easement over an existing stormwater pond that is proposed to be moved

Reading of Public Notice

Vice-Chair Clancy read the Public Hearing Notice.

Presentation of Request

Senior Planner Schneider presented the staff report.

The Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) owns the property, currently operates a 66-unit senior housing facility there, and wishes to build another similar facility on the

same site. The surrounding land uses include a Walmart to the west, a shopping center to the north and single-family neighborhood to the east and south.

Comprehensive Plan Amendment

The Applicant is seeking High Density Residential due to the proposed density of 21.6 units/acre, which exceeds the 12 units/acre threshold for Medium Density Residential (current guiding).

Staff Evaluation

1. Both the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and the Dakota County Needs Assessment identified senior housing as a need.
2. The new building will be designed to mirror the existing building, which preserves the character of the area.
3. The project will preserve the character of the adjacent area by preserving many of the mature bordering trees.
4. The development will maximize use of the site while minimizing impacts to the surrounding area.
 - a. The new building will have the same access as the existing building.
 - b. Senior housing tends to have fewer impacts on traffic.

PUD Amendment

The property is governed by the Arbor Pointe PUD, which has development districts rather than zoning districts. The property is currently in the R-III, Medium Density Residential district, so the PUD Amendment is needed to place it in the R-IV, High Density Residential district due to the proposed density.

Major Site Plan Review

- Building height: About 35 feet tall
- Parking: 58 underground parking stalls, 29 surface spaces (total: 87; required: 86)
- Setback requirements: Exceeded on all sides (not requesting any flexibility from performance standards)
- Landscaping and tree preservation requirements: Satisfied (removing about 60% of trees)

Drainage & Utility Easement Vacation

The Applicant requests a Vacation for a stormwater pond, which will be moved to a new site on the property.

Recommended Actions

Motion to recommend approval of the following requests with the conditions listed below:

- Approving the Comprehensive Plan Amendment to change the designated land use of the Subject Property from MDR, Medium Density Residential, to HDR, High Density Residential.
- Approving the Amendment to the Arbor Pointe PUD to change the Development District of the Subject Property from Medium Density Residential, R-III, to High Density Residential, R-IV.
- Approving the Major Site Plan Review to construct a 3-story, 57-unit senior housing facility.
- Approving the Vacation of Drainage and Utility Easement.

Conditions:

- The Metropolitan Council shall review and approve the Comprehensive Plan Amendment.
- The applicant shall address the outstanding comments in the Engineering Memo attached to the staff report, dated July 10, 2025.

Opening of Public Hearing

Kari Gill, 1228 Towne Centre Drive, Eagan, Dakota County CDA, Applicant, stated that she had read and understood the staff report. She noted changes made to the proposal based on feedback at a neighborhood meeting held in February: creating a larger buffer zone (by moving the building further south), preserving more trees (by moving the retaining wall closer to the new building), shrinking the overall building footprint (by increasing the number of one-bedroom units in the unit mix), and lowering building height (by moving the stormwater pond). She also mentioned that affordable senior housing is in high demand: there are over 1,000 people on the Dakota County CDA Senior Housing wait list.

Chair Weber inquired as to what the most extreme height of the retaining wall would be.

Planning Manager Shay stated that it would be 15.9 feet. There will be safety fencing on any portions of the wall under 4 feet, and structural engineering will be required.

Christopher Riess, 9281 Cheney Trail, stated that he lives across the street and expressed concern about the removal of trees. The Walmart nearby has lights on 24/7, which may bother residents of the new facility. He asked for something to be done about the lights. He acknowledged that demand for senior housing was high.

Christy Moen, 9282 Cheney Trail, stated that she hoped all the trees and habitat in the 80-foot buffer could be preserved. She also expressed concern about the parking lot lighting at Walmart.

Senior Planner Schneider stated that many trees to the east will be protected.

Chair Weber confirmed that 30 mature trees will remain.

Planning Commission Discussion

Commissioner Clancy stated that this proposal meets the needs of the community, and the Dakota County CDA have been respectful to surrounding neighbors. He stated that he is in favor of the proposal.

Commissioner Wippermann stated that other Dakota County CDA facilities have been well maintained and well managed. He commended the changes made based on the neighborhood meeting. He stated that he is also in favor of approval.

Motion by Clancy, Second by Teiken, to Approve the request for the Comprehensive Plan Amendment to change the designated land use of the Subject Property from MDR, Medium Density Residential to HDR, High Density Residential; Approve the Amendment to the Arbor Pointe PUD to change the Development District of the Subject Property from "Medium Density Residential, R-III" to "High Density Residential, R-IV"; Approve the Major Site Plan Review to construct a 3-story, 57-unit senior housing facility; and Approve the Vacation of Drainage and Utility Easement as proposed including the conditions listed in the Staff Report.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

This item is tentatively scheduled to go before the City Council on August 25, 2025.

B. Consider Requests for a Preliminary Plat and Preliminary Planned Unit Development (PUD) to develop a 119-unit townhome development to be known as Nord Sixty-One Degree located at PID Numbers 20-00600-25-012 and 20-00600-52-011.

Reading of Public Notice

Vice-Chair Clancy read the Public Hearing Notice.

Presentation of Request

Planning Manager Shay presented the staff report.

The two properties are 2.5 acres and 21.4 acres (23.9 acres total, 20.53 net developable acres), located off Argenta Boulevard and 65th Street West, in both the Northwest Area Overlay District and the Shoreland Overlay District.

The current zoning is R-3A, and the future land use is LMDR, Low Medium Density Residential.

There will be two access points. There will be a mix of two-to-six-unit buildings (119 units total) with a clubhouse, pool, and pickleball courts. Guest parking will be located by the club house and interspersed throughout.

There is a wetland in the southwest corner of the property. The stormwater basin will be in the center of the loop on the east side.

Because the site is in the Northwest Area, 20% of the site is required to be maintained as open space. This requirement is met in the proposal (7.97 acres, 4.11 required). The proposal also meets the Contiguous Area requirement.

In terms of development capacity, the 119 units fit within the 82-164-unit range allowed.

Because the site is in the Shoreland Overland District (within 1000 feet of lakes), the minimum lot size is 15,000 square feet. However, if the units are located further from the lake, more density is allowed under a Shoreland PUD, with two conditions that differ from R-3A: a 50% open space requirement (defined as any land without development) and an impervious surface limit of 25%. The proposal meets the Shoreland PUD density requirements (per Shoreland tier analysis). The open space condition is met.

Development Standards

- Setbacks: Satisfied, except front yard setback with sidewalk
 - PUD Flexibility: 17 feet (20 required)
 - Requested due to the 53-foot right of way (including the 3-foot sidewalk)
- Impervious surface: Not satisfied
 - PUD Flexibility: 36.4% (25% maximum)
 - Note: request comes with approved stormwater management plan
- Undisturbed open space: Not satisfied
 - PUD Flexibility: 12.6% (50% required)
 - Requested due to site grading challenges
- Density: Not satisfied

- PUD Flexibility: 6 units (4 maximum)
 - Requested due to site grading challenges
- Building coverage: Satisfied (15% proposed, limit is 20%)
- Parking: Exceeded, with 476 parking spaces proposed, including enclosed and driveway spaces, plus 34 guest parking spaces (20 required)

Landscaping/Tree Preservation

- Current tree inventory: 2,133 caliper inches
- 100% proposed removal - 674 caliper inches required for replacement
- 119 trees required (1 per dwelling unit)
- 395 tree equivalents proposed as part of landscaping and mitigation (can be achieved with a complement of shrubs and ornamentals)
- In the proposed plan, requirements are satisfied (1 caliper inch above required amount)

Planning Manager Shay showed elevations with materials including gray lap siding, wood accents, board and batten siding, and stone accents on the clubhouse.

Staff Evaluation of PUD Flexibility Requests

- Front yard setbacks: Reasonable; units on both sides of the street have the same distance from curb line.
- Impervious surface: Reasonable; 36.4% is below the R-3A maximum of 40% and the Applicant is meeting the additional conditions that would be required for a Conditional Use Permit.
- Undisturbed open space: Reasonable; the overall open space for the site is almost double what is required.
- Units per building density: Reasonable considering grading challenges.

Recommended Actions

Motion to recommend approval of the following requests:

- Preliminary Plat and Preliminary Planned Unit Development (PUD) for a 119-unit townhome development subject to conditions listed in staff report.

Opening of Public Hearing

Dave Stofer, 2685 Viking Circle, Eagan, MV Ventures, Applicant, stated that he had read and understood the staff report. He commented that the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the Northwest Ordinance, Shoreland Overlay District, and neighbor feedback were all considered in the proposed plan.

Chair Weber raised a concern about traffic to staff, about the potential issue with a cut-through in the area (bypassing Argenta Boulevard).

Robin Eggum, 6770 Argenta Trail, stated that he lives nearby and has for 40 years. He said it would significantly change the character of the neighborhood, which is currently single-family homes. He expressed opposition to the project. He said he would be in favor of a development that was only single-family homes.

Mark Van, 6660 Argenta Trail, stated that he lives to the south of the site. He asked about the 30-foot buffer and asked for a barrier fence.

Mr. Stofer stated that a vegetative buffer is being investigated with the landscape designer. He also said pitched roofs are being considered (versus the initially proposed flat roofs). He commented that a stormwater reuse plan has been proposed.

Commissioner Wippermann asked if the rentals will be market-rate and if they would all have two-car garages. He also asked if 6 would be the maximum number of units per building.

Mr. Stofer answered yes to all three questions.

John Todd, 6689 Argenta Trail, stated that his family has lived in the area for three generations and expressed opposition on the grounds of changing the character of the neighborhood. He asked whether the current system has capacity to handle the increased drainage due to the development. He is concerned about the potential for his driveway to flood.

Chad Hagman, 6710 Argenta Trail, asked whether neighbor comments had been shared with the Commission. He said he did not feel that six shrubs were really equivalent to one tree. He asked for a fence and/or a berm to be added to the buffer area to the south. He said the architecture does not fit the surrounding area. He asked where the storm basin would drain to and had water quality concerns.

Chair Weber confirmed that neighbor comments had been shared. He commented that the shrubs-to-tree conversion was part of the City Code.

Nicola Abbott, 6720 Argenta Trail, stated that she opposed the proposal based on the appearance of the buildings and the density. The increased traffic from people trying to take the gravel road shortcut onto Lone Oak was of major concern. She also expressed concern about them being rental properties. She also asked if neighbors would be able to swim in the pool.

Chad Hagman, 6710 Argenta Trail, added that the adjacent neighborhood would also be affected by traffic. They should have been notified despite being outside the 1000-foot notification radius and suggested a traffic study to alleviate concerns.

Robin Eggum, 6770 Argenta Trail, raised additional concerns about traffic safety.

Planning Manager Shay stated that there is no proposed fence, but a vegetative buffer is being planned. There are three stormwater basins being planned (two next to the wetland and one in the loop of homes). The Engineering Department concluded that the proposed plan meets stormwater management requirements (retaining all water onsite for treatment in the basins). There are few minor tweaks remaining, but nothing major to address. There are outlets and hydrological connections between basins. He commented that the majority of planned landscaping involves trees - there are limits on the percentage of shrubs and ornamental allowed under City Code. The stormwater plan addresses the additional stormwater created by impervious surfaces. The pool/clubhouse use would be up to the HOA.

John Todd, 6689 Argenta Trail, raised concern about the stormwater basins being adjacent to the wetland.

Planning Manager Shay stated that only in significant flooding (hundred-year events) would water overflow from the stormwater basins into the wetland.

Planning Commission Discussion

Commissioner Gosell stated that he wanted to see more tree replacement (above the requirements) given the number of PUD flexibility requests.

Commissioner Clancy commented that this area was identified and targeted for development given local housing demand and feels that the flexibility being requested is reasonable given the stringent requirements of Shoreland Overlay Districts. He is in support of the proposal.

Commissioner Teiken stated that rental properties are a significant housing need in the area, and this development addresses that need. He is in support of the proposal.

Chair Weber stated that he understands that there are neighbor concerns about rental properties, but the similar Canvas development to the east has had no issues with crime. In response to concerns about changing the character of the neighborhood, he said that this is a Preliminary Plat and PUD.

Motion by Clancy, Second by Teiken, to Approve the Preliminary Plat and Preliminary PUD subject to the conditions listed in the Staff Report.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

This item is tentatively scheduled to go before the City Council on August 25, 2025.

7. REGULAR BUSINESS

The Planning Commission meeting scheduled for August 19, 2025, has been canceled.

Commissioner Teiken inquired as to whether there will be a Planning Commission hearing on the Northwest Expansion Area AUAR (Alternative Urban Areawide Review).

Community Development Director Ziemer stated that it would be a presentation and discussion at a future City Council meeting. That is because it is an update to the existing plan, not a new plan, there will not be a public hearing.

The next Planning Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, as scheduled.

8. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Will Clashe, Recording Secretary.