

**UNAPPROVED  
CITY OF BLAINE  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
October 13, 2015**

The Blaine Planning Commission met in the City Hall Chambers on Tuesday, October 13, 2015. Vice Chair York called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Commission Members: Bergstrom, Olson, Ponds, and Vice Chair York

Members Absent: Commissioner Goracke, Homan and Chair Ouellette

Staff Present: Bryan Schafer, Community Development Director  
Shawn Kaye, Associate Planner  
Erik Olson-Williams, Planning Intern  
Tom Scott, Project Coordinator  
Dan Schluender, Assistant City Engineer

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion by Commissioner Ponds to approve the minutes of September 8, 2015, as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Olson. The motion passed 4-0.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Item 4.1 – Case File No. 15-0060 – Public Hearing – The applicants are requesting a waiver of platting to adjust the lot line between 704 and 708 119<sup>th</sup> Lane NE to allow for the construction of a detached garage at 704 119<sup>th</sup> Lane NE.

KRISTINA SAHR AND CRAIG MERKEL, 704 AND 708 119<sup>TH</sup> LANE NE.

The report to the Planning Commission was presented by Shawn Kaye, Associate Planner. The public hearing for Case File 15-0060 was opened at 7:04 p.m. As no one wished to appear, the public hearing was closed at 7:05 p.m.

Commissioner Bergstrom appreciated the fact that the neighbors were willing to work together to bring about a positive resolution.

Vice Chair York agreed.

**Motion by Commissioner Bergstrom to recommend approval of Planning Case 15-0060 based on the following conditions:**

Case 15-0060:

1. The proposed new garage and driveway must meet all requirements of the R-1 (Single Family) zoning district. A building permit must be obtained for the garage.
2. Traded parcels be combined with the balance of each lot at Anoka County Recorder's Office.

**Motion seconded by Commissioner Ponds. The motion passed 4-0.**

Vice Chair York noted this would be on the agenda of the November 5, 2015 City Council meeting.

Item 4.2 – Case File No. 15-0059 – Public Hearing – The applicant is requesting a conditional use permit to allow for an 8 (eight) foot fence to be placed along a county roadway located in an R-1B (Single Family) zoning district.  
DEB ZURN AND ROLLIN ERICKSON, 2849 108<sup>TH</sup> LANE NE.

The report to the Planning Commission was presented by Erik Olson-Williams, Planning Intern. The public hearing for Case File 15-0059 was opened at 7:09 p.m. As no one wished to appear, the public hearing was closed at 7:09 p.m.

**Motion by Commissioner Olson to recommend approval of Planning Case 15-0059 based on the following conditions:**

Case 15-0059:

1. Fence plan reviewed and approved by a structural engineer.
2. Eight-foot section of fence only installed along rear of property. Fence must stay out of any wetlands on property.

**Motion seconded by Commissioner Bergstrom. The motion passed 4-0.**

Vice Chair York noted this would be on the agenda of the November 5, 2015 City Council meeting.

Item 4.3 – Case File No. 15-0057 – Public Hearing – The applicant is requesting the following:  
a.) Comprehensive Plan Amendment from LDR (Low Density Residential) to MDR (Medium Density Residential)  
b.) Rezoning from R-1 (Single Family) to DF (Development Flex)

- c.) Preliminary Plat approval to subdivide 4.85 acres into one lot (6 existing lots) and a portion of a lot) to be known as Aspen Gardens
- d.) Conditional use permit to construct a 34,590 square foot, 41 unit assisted living facility in a DF (Development Flex) zoning district.  
ASPEN GARDENS ASSISTED LIVING, 9103 LEXINGTON AVENUE NE.

The report to the Planning Commission was presented by Shawn Kaye, Associate Planner. The public hearing for Case File 15-0057 was opened at 7:16 p.m.

Lil Schmidt, 8983 Lexington Avenue, explained she lives near and supports the proposed development. She questioned what extra 30 feet of land the developer would be purchasing.

Associate Planner, Shawn Kaye advised that the developer would be purchasing the west 30 feet of property from the church.

Brad Lang, 4304 92<sup>nd</sup> Circle NE, indicated his property abutted the proposed development. He was concerned with how the stormwater would be addressed.

Project Coordinator, Tom Scott reported that the applicant would be ponding all stormwater onsite and the discharge would be runoff to the south.

Rick Leier, 4370 92<sup>nd</sup> Circle NE, requested further information regarding the 30 feet of land. He wanted to see an environmental impact statement completed by the applicant. He did not want to see the wetlands disturbed.

Project Coordinator, Tom Scott discussed how the applicant would be using this land for the proposed development and did not recall that an environmental impact statement was necessary.

The public hearing was closed at 7:23 p.m.

Commissioner Olson questioned how the trees would be impacted.

Project Coordinator, Tom Scott stated a number of trees would be taken down. He then reviewed the applicants landscaping plan for the project.

Commissioner Ponds asked if this site would have less traffic than a typical apartment complex.

Project Coordinator, Tom Scott reported this was the case.

Commissioner Bergstrom inquired how many parking stalls would be required for the assisted living facility.

Associate Planner, Shawn Kaye commented the parking requirements would cover employee and guest parking needs.

**Motion by Commissioner Bergstrom to recommend approval of Planning Case 15-0057A a Comprehensive Plan Amendment from LDR (Low Density Residential) to MDR (Medium Density Residential) based on the following conditions:**

Case 15-0057A:

1. The amendment is required to accommodate the density proposed for the residential development.
2. The amendment and land use are consistent with other approvals and developments for senior housing in Blaine.
3. The designation of MDR, granting the land use ability to build senior housing, continues and is consistent with the City's comprehensive plan policy of supporting all types of housing products and in particular services to senior residents.

**Motion by Commissioner Bergstrom to recommend approval of Planning Case 15-0057B a rezoning from R-1 (Single Family) to DF (Development Flex) based on the following conditions:**

Case 15-0057B:

1. The DF zoning standards to be incorporated are consistent with other assisted living facilities that have been constructed within recent developments. The standards will create an attractive building in appearance, style, density, and market appeal.
2. The DF zoning district allows the City the opportunity to have some flexibility when approving developments that warrant higher standards than what is allowed with the traditional zoning districts. It affords the City the opportunity to provide input on items that would benefit the surrounding neighborhoods and the City as a whole.
3. Other medium density residential projects in Blaine fall under the DF (Development Flex) zoning designation and this development would be consistent with the other projects.
4. The DF zoning designation is used because the developer is proposing a different housing/building style with different design issues. Specifically the project has multiple design styles from independent apartments that meet typical multi-family standards to assisted and memory care units that could not be accommodated using the City's more typical multi-family zoning standards.

**Motion by Commissioner Bergstrom to recommend approval of Planning Case 15-0057C Preliminary Plat approval to subdivide 4.85 acres into one lot to be known as Aspen Gardens based on the following conditions:**

Case 15-0057C:

1. Park dedication is required at the commercial rate (2015) of \$8,704 per acre for 3.41 acres. A total of \$29,680.64 is due prior to release of final plat mylars for recording purposes at Anoka County. If the fee is not paid in 2015 the amount due will be recalculated at the rate in effect at time of payment.
2. Sanitary Availability Charges (SAC) and sanitary usage fees shall be paid to the City of Blaine. A permit from the Met Council for sewer connection must be issued prior to plan approval by the City.
3. Water Availability Charges (WAC) and water usage fees shall be paid to the City of Lexington. WAC fees, if paid in 2015, shall be based on the City of Blaine's rate (2015 rate \$4,200 per acre). Water usage fees shall be based on the City of Lexington's rates. A permit from the City of Lexington must be issued prior to plan approval by the City.
4. The fire access road must be City of Blaine Fire Department Standards for width and thickness. A permit from the Anoka County Transportation Department is required for the access drive construction must be issued prior to any plan approval by the City.
5. A Rice Creek Watershed District permit is required prior to plan approval by the City.
6. The Mayor, City Clerk and City Manager are hereby authorized to execute any and all necessary documents, agreements and releases related to the approval, recording or administration of Aspen Gardens.

**Motion by Commissioner Bergstrom to recommend approval of Planning Case 15-0057D a Conditional Use Permit to allow for construction of an assisted living facility in a DF (Development Flex) district with the following conditions:**

Case 15-0057D:

1. Site development and building construction to be generally guided by the CUP approval and consistent with the site and building plans that are attached to this application. The developer must install all site improvements in accordance with City Performance Standards and zoning code Section 27.09, including the financial guarantee and site improvement agreement.
2. The building for the site must meet the Highway Overlay District requirements.
3. The following landscaping is required on site:
 

Overstory Trees	18
Conifer Trees	17
Ornamental Trees	17
4. Underground irrigation is required for the entire site.

5. Signage will be issued under a separate permit. The site is permitted to have one freestanding sign and the monument sign is limited to 10 feet in height and 80 square feet.
6. All lighting on site must meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. All lighting must be downlit and shielded to prevent glare or spill and pole mounted lighting is limited to 20-feet in height.
7. Site plan approval is required prior to any work being performed on site.
8. Building floor elevations must meet the requirements in the City's Comprehensive Water Resource Management Plan.
9. Noise Reduction Standards must be incorporated into the residential building.

**Motion seconded by Commissioner Ponds. The motion passed 4-0.**

Vice Chair York noted this would be on the agenda of the November 5, 2015 City Council meeting.

Item 4.4 – Case File No. 15-0046 – Public Hearing – The City is initiating a comprehensive land use amendment from A (Airport) to ABD (Airport Business District) and MDR (Medium Density Residential).  
CITY OF BLAINE, COUNTY ROAD J/93<sup>RD</sup> LANE EXTENSION.

The report to the Planning Commission was presented by Bryan Schafer, Community Development Director. The public hearing for Case File 15-0046 was opened at 7:31 p.m.

Vice Chair York noted for the record a petition from the neighbors (22 signatures) to the south of the proposed site that opposed the comprehensive land use amendment to MDR.

Rosemary Bonnet, 1873 86<sup>th</sup> Lane NE, thanked the Commission for considering her petition. It was her hope that the property would be changed from Airport to Light Industrial. She believed this would be the best use for the space. She commented that her neighbors were not in favor of medium density residential given the fact the site has only one entrance/exit point.

Greg Henderson, 8789 Hastings Circle NE, adjacent townhome owner, did not believe that his neighbors wanted medium density housing on the proposed site. He questioned who supported MDR.

Community Development Director, Bryan Schafer stated this consideration was raised by the City Council and Councilmember Swanson in that MDR may be a preferable use for the site. This question was then brought to the Planning Commission and MAC for discussion. He reported that MAC did not support MDR on the site.

The public hearing was closed at 7:37 p.m.

Commissioner Bergstrom did not believe that the Planning Commission should support the proposed comprehensive land amendment as it was not supported by the neighboring residents or MAC. She thanked all of the residents for signing a petition and for making their voice heard.

**Motion by Commissioner Bergstrom to recommend denial of Planning Case 15-0046 a comprehensive land use amendment from A (Airport) to ABD (Airport Business District) and MDR (Medium Density Residential). Motion seconded by Commissioner Olson. The motion passed 4-0.**

Vice Chair York noted this would be on the agenda of the November 5, 2015 City Council meeting.

Item 4.5 – Case File No. 15-0051 – Public Hearing – The applicant is requesting the following:

- a.) Comprehensive land use amendment from LI (Light Industrial) to HI (Heavy Industrial)
- b.) Rezoning from I-1 (Light Industrial) to I-2A (Heavy Industrial)
- c.) Conditional Use Permit to allow for development of a truck terminal/transfer facility. CROWN ENTERPRISES, INC., 9949 NAPLES STREET NE.

The report to the Planning Commission was presented by Bryan Schafer, Community Development Director. The public hearing for Case File 15-0051 was opened at 7:44 p.m.

Peter Coyle, Larkin Hoffman, stating he was the legal representative for Crown Enterprises, Inc. He briefly discussed with the Commission the proposed truck terminal/transfer facility.

Dan Onifer, Crown Enterprises, Inc., introduced himself to the Commission and explained that Crown Enterprises was the owner and would be the developer of the property at 9949 Naples Street. He reported that one of Crown Enterprises companies was Central Transport, which would be the operator of the proposed truck terminal facility. He provided further background on his request and noted it was presented to the City Council in a worksession meeting. He then discussed the merits of the property.

Michael Samhat, Crown Enterprises, Inc., explained who Crown Enterprises was in detail with the Commission. He indicated Crown Enterprises was a privately owned real estate development and management company that focuses on transportation and logistics facilities with holdings of more than 16,000,000 square feet and 700 properties in North America. He then reviewed the positive aspects of the proposed parcel and how it would meet the needs of Central Transport. He explained that its close proximity to the freeway was a great asset. He encouraged the Commission to not see the trucking terminal as offensive and believed the proposed project would be an improvement to the street.

Mike Forseer, Central Transport Terminal Manager, explained he oversaw operations for Central Transport in Mounds View. He discussed the day-to-day operations of his facility further with the Commission. It was his hope that Crown Enterprises would be able to create a relationship

with the City of Blaine in order to allow for the expansion of his company, while also bringing new jobs to the community.

Vice Chair York questioned how many new jobs would be brought to the proposed trucking facility.

Mr. Forseer estimated that Phase I of the development would bring 40 to 50 new jobs to the City of Blaine.

Commissioner Olson asked if any mechanical work would be done on the trucks onsite.

Mr. Forseer commented maintenance and mechanical work would take place onsite.

Mr. Samhat reviewed building elevations and architectural designs for the truck terminal. He then discussed how the site would be accessed. He explained that Crown Enterprises and Central Transport were excited to become the newest members of the Blaine community and requested the Commission support their request.

Mr. Coyle discussed the zoning of the property and believed the only reason the truck terminal did not fit under the I-1 zoning use was because the truck terminal was a conditional use within another zoning district. It was his opinion that the property should be rezoned to I-2A as it was along a freeway corridor and was surrounded by other industrial properties.

Vice Chair York understood the front 12 acres would be developed as a truck terminal. He asked if the applicant had any intention of developing the back portion of the lot in the future.

Mr. Samhat stated the rear of the lot was wetlands and County designated storm drain.

Community Development Director, Bryan Schafer reviewed staff's stance on the request with respect to the City's comprehensive land use. He then discussed the importance of holding to the Naples Street corridor and not allow trucking on the proposed site. He provided comment on the number of truck trips that would be generated by the proposed truck terminal and explained how this would impact surrounding uses. While staff supported Central Transport moving into the City of Blaine, staff believed another location should be considered.

Wayne Jacobsen, Jacobsen Environmental, explained he was a consultant working with Crown Enterprises. He explained an alternative site was proposed by staff on the west side of Naples Street, however, this site would have greater wetland impacts. He believed that the proposed site was a better option as the property adjacent to the freeway would be preserved as a wetland buffer. He advised that extensive efforts were being proposed for wetland mitigation for the site.

Mr. Samhat did not believe that additional trucking companies would be looking to move to the City of Blaine. He explained that the major players were already located in Minneapolis. He encouraged the Commission to support the request, as it would bring high quality jobs to the community.



Vice Chair York asked how many employees would be working at the site, other than truck drivers.

Mr. Forseer estimated that 20 to 30 dock, office staff and maintenance workers would be hired to run this facility.

John Miller, attorney representing the parcel immediately to the south of the subject property, he noted for the record that his client supports the staff recommendation for denial.

Greg Henderson was concerned with the domino effect and that by allowing a trucking facility on the proposed parcel that others will follow. He asked if the Commission could allow one and not another in the future.

Vice Chair York stated that once one was approved, others would also have to be allowed.

The public hearing was closed at 8:21 p.m.

Commissioner Olson expressed concern with how the park and ride would be impacted by the proposed trucking terminal.

Vice Chair York questioned how many trucks per day would be coming and going from the proposed site.

Community Development Director, Bryan Schafer estimated 125 to 130 trips per day would be generated by the site. He reiterated that the City has said no to similar and smaller uses that have proposed locating along this corridor in the past.

Commissioner Bergstrom did not like the idea of setting a precedent for the surrounding corridor. While she appreciated the presentation made by the applicant, she respected the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan in addition to staff's recommendation.

Mr. Samhat commented that the traffic going to and from the proposed site would not be all at once. He encouraged the Commission to consider approving the project as it would be a \$10 million in the City of Blaine.

**Motion by Commissioner Bergstrom to recommend denial of Planning Case 15-0051A a Comprehensive land use amendment from LI (Light Industrial) to HI (Heavy Industrial) based on the following rationale:**

Case 15-0051A:

1. Naples Street has been used as a zoning and land use division for over 20 years by allowing the heavier industrial uses on those lots to the west that back onto other heavy industrial uses and large wetland buffers while retaining light industrial uses on those parcels east of Naples that back onto and are visible from 35W.

2. Changing the land use to HI on this parcel will result in an increase of heavy trucking use along Naples Street with an estimated 126 truck trips per day (63 in and 63 out). The site access (Naples Street) is the primary access point for commuters using the METC Park n Ride.
3. This site would be developed with a building coverage that is much lower than typical light industrial uses that have building coverage rates near or greater than 20%. Higher building coverage rates result in higher employment numbers. The CSM business park along 35W has five buildings on sites covering 36 developed acres. While employment numbers vary from month to month between the five buildings, generally over 500 employees are located on the 36 acres for an employment base of 14 employees per acre.
4. Lastly and most important, the rezoning and re-guiding of this parcel would be precedent setting and would likely lead to the rezoning of other parcels further south on Naples. There are other truck related companies that are actively looking for sites with freeway access and more space. The other sites remaining along 35W (from the Crown site to the METC Park n Ride) would, with this action, be opened up to the trucking industry and there would be little rationale available for the City to defend a denial on other requests.

The domino effect of rezoning and re-guiding this area to allow heavy truck uses will have a cumulative negative impact on the issues outlined above that are related to increased truck traffic, negative site views from 35W, lower employment numbers, lower build out and tax values, etc. Changes to the City's Comprehensive Plan, both in terms of land use as well as Economic Development, should be made carefully and as part of an effort to better the conditions of the City and its residents. This proposal would be detrimental to the stated goals of the City.

**Motion by Commissioner Bergstrom to recommend denial of Planning Case 15-0051B a rezoning from I-1 (Light Industrial) to I-2A (Heavy Industrial) based on the following conditions:**

Case 15-0051B:

1. Naples Street has been used as a zoning and land use division for over 20 years by allowing the heavier industrial uses on those lots to the west that back onto other heavy industrial uses and large wetland buffers while retaining light industrial uses on those parcels east of Naples that back onto and are visible from 35W.
2. Changing the zoning on this parcel will result in an increase of heavy trucking use along Naples Street with an estimated 126 truck trips per day (63 in and 63 out). The site access (Naples Street) is the primary access point for commuters using the METC Park n Ride.
3. This site would be developed with a building coverage that is much lower than typical light industrial uses that have building coverage rates near or greater than 20%. Higher building coverage rates result in higher employment numbers. The CSM business park along 35W has five buildings on sites covering 36 developed acres. While employment

- numbers vary from month to month between the five buildings, generally over 500 employees are located on the 36 acres for an employment base of 14 employees per acre.
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The domino effect of rezoning and re-guiding this area to allow heavy truck uses will have a cumulative negative impact on the issues outlined above related to increased truck traffic, negative site views from 35W, lower employment numbers, lower tax values, etc. Changes to the City's Comprehensive Plan, both in terms of land use as well as Economic Development, should be made carefully and as part of an effort to better the conditions of the City and its residents. This proposal would be detrimental to the stated goals of the City.

**Motion by Commissioner Bergstrom to recommend denial of Planning Case 15-0051C a Conditional Use Permit to allow for development of a 112 door truck transfer facility with freestanding vehicle maintenance building. If, however, the Planning Commission wishes to recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit the recommendation should be based on the following conditions:**

Case 15-0051C:

1. The applicant shall submit and meet the requirements of formal Site Plan Approval prior to commencing any site work.
2. Any expansion of the site or facility shall require a Conditional Use Permit amendment.
3. Applicant to provide a financial guarantee to cover completion all site improvements as part of the execution of a SIPA (Site Improvement Performance Agreement) prior to any site work.
4. Since this will be a 24-hour operation all site and exterior building lighting to be downlit and screened as necessary to eliminate glare and light spill.
5. Permits are required from the Rice Creek Watershed District and US Army Corp of Engineers prior to issuance of Site Plan Approval.
6. Site plan review by Minnesota Department of Transportation required prior to issuance of Site Plan Approval.
7. WAC (Water Access Charge) is due and payable based on the 10.5 acres at the acreage rate in effect at time of Building Permit.

8. SAC (Sewer Access Charge) is due and payable with the Building Permit as determined by Metro Waste.
9. Park dedication payment is required as neither site has paid. Payment to be calculated at the rate in effect at time of Building Permit and based on the proposed 10.5 acre site.
10. Applicant to dedicate 33 feet of Right-of-Way for Naples Street and combine parcels required prior to issuance of Site Plan Approval.
11. Additional landscaping may be required to adequately screen site activity from Naples Street as well as 35W.

**Motion seconded by Commissioner Ponds. The motion passed 3-1 (York opposed).**

Vice Chair York noted this would be on the agenda of the November 5, 2015 City Council meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Commissioner Ponds to adjourn the Regular Planning Commission meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Olson. The motion passed 4-0. Adjournment time was 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Guenther  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*