

**UNAPPROVED
CITY OF BLAINE
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
July 13, 2021**

The Blaine planning commission met in the City Hall Chambers on Tuesday, July 13, 2021. Vice Chair Goracke called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

Members Present: Commission Members: Goracke, Halpern, Homan, Olson, Villella. Also present was Adjunct Member Drew Brown.

Members Absent: Commission Member Deonauth and Chair Ouellette.

Staff Present: Eric Thorvig, Community Development Director
Shawn Kaye, Associate Planner
Elizabeth Showalter, Community Development Specialist
Teresa Barnes, Project Engineer

NEW BUSINESS

Item 4.2 – Case File No. 21-0049 – Public Hearing – The applicant is requesting the following:

- a.) Comprehensive land use plan amendment from MDR (Medium Density Residential) to HDR (High Density Residential).
- b.) Rezoning from FR (Farm Residential) to DF (Development Flex).
- c.) Preliminary plat to subdivide 8.41 acres into one (1) lot and platted right-of-way to be known as Applewood of Blaine.
- d.) Conditional use permit to allow for the construction of a 100 unit, four story senior (age 62+) Cooperative building in a DF (Development Flex) zoning district.

APPLEWOOD POINTE OF BLAINE (UNITED PROPERTIES), 11967 AND 11985 RADISSON ROAD NE.

The report to the planning commission was presented by Shawn Kaye, Associate Planner. The public hearing for Case File 21-0049 was opened at 7:20PM.

Dave Young, United Properties representative, thanked the commission for their consideration. He explained United Properties has developed a number of Applewood Pointe complexes in the metro area. He stated he was excited to be bringing this concept to the city of Blaine. He reported the senior cooperative would be “for-sale” housing units and would be for people age 62+. He stated all Applewood Pointe communities are owner controlled and professionally managed. He commented further on how this development would provide life cycle housing in the community. He spoke to the demand for senior housing noting the baby boomers were retiring which was creating a need for senior housing. He described the thoughtful design of the building and reported the four-stories would allow for more greenspace to be preserved. The interior and exterior amenities were further discussed.

Jill Perlinger, 12030 Vermillion Street, Unit D, explained she lived adjacent to this development in a condo and expressed concern with the fact the lakes would be ruined. She reported the lakes and the wildlife would be impacted. She noted she was opposed to the proposed development.

Mark Perlinger, 12030 Vermillion Street, Unit D, commented he is opposed the project as well. He indicated he would like to see this property used for housing, but not high-density four-story housing. He stated he lives within The Lakes which was a beautiful and peaceful area. He explained he was concerned about how traffic would increase and recommended the commission deny this request.

Joann Baker, 12046 Vermillion Street, Unit B, stated she would be affected by this development. She questioned why the site would be accessed off of 121st Avenue versus Radisson Road. She indicated she is opposed this development.

Bob Hawley, 12002 Vermillion Street, Unit D, explained he served on the board at Gardens of Water Stone Bay. He commented he has talked to many of his residents and all were against this development. He questioned why the proposed development was not gaining access from Radisson Road.

Project Engineer, Teresa Barnes explained the applicant was working with Anoka County on this matter noting the development would have a right-in, right-out onto Radisson Road and would also have access to 121st Avenue.

Mr. Hawley commented that he was concerned about crime occurring in the underground parking and that he felt it was not fair for the residents of Applewood Pointe to not pay the association dues.

Associate Planner, Shawn Kaye commented further on how the site would be accessed. She noted it was always the intent to serve this property from 121st Avenue.

Mr. Hawley feared that people in his neighborhood would sell if this development were approved.

Mary Schmidt, 12001 Vermillion Street, Unit D, expressed concern with the height of the proposed building. She noted this would be a very high building. She discussed how her townhome association was a community and noted all of the condo owners would be impacted by the proposed development. She feared how the increased traffic would impact the condo owners with children. She recommended that additional condos or single family homes be considered for this property versus the Applewood Pointe complex.

Howard Heldt, 12010 Vermillion Street, Unit D, stated his main concern was with the traffic that would be running along 121st Avenue. He reported this was a private roadway that was maintained by the association. He did not believe it was fair to those who pay dues to the association to have non-contributors using this roadway. He commented further on the concerns he has regarding the speed of traffic and with the height of the proposed building. He recommended this project not move forward and that 121st Avenue remain closed.

Shirley Tresler, 12046 Vermillion Street, Unit C, discussed how she would be impacted by this development because she lived directly adjacent to 121st Avenue. She stated she was opposed to this project moving forward.

Carissa Fettig, 2521 123rd Court NE, asked if there was discussion regarding the proposed facility being part of The Lakes master association. She questioned if any alternative plans were considered for this property.

Associate Planner, Shawn Kaye explained no alternative plans were considered, rather the city was responding to an application that was proposed.

Ms. Fettig asked if there was a building of comparable height already in Blaine.

Associate Planner, Shawn Kaye reported the Cedar Green building behind Wal-Mart was four and five stories.

Ms. Fettig inquired if there was a concrete plan for tree preservation on this property.

Associate Planner, Shawn Kaye encouraged Ms. Fettig to review the staff report noting trees along the north and west property lines would be preserved.

Ms. Fettig questioned what the price point would be for the Applewood Pointe units. She stated she wanted the integrity of the value in the neighborhood to be preserved.

Ms. Perlinger questioned if the berm along the property line would remain in place.

Project Engineer, Teresa Barnes explained the berm would remain in place. She reported staff could not require the applicant to increase the elevation of the berm because it was not on his property.

Nicole Voit, 2423 121st Circle NE, Unit B, explained she lived adjacent to the project area and noted she would be facing the back side of the building. She expressed concern with the rain water that would be coming off the four-story building. She discussed the ice build up she had on her road this past winter and stated she did not want additional water running down her street. She commented on how the four-story building would be an eyesore along with blocking sunlight. She requested the new complex not be allowed to use 121st Avenue.

Project Engineer, Teresa Barnes reported staff was working with the developer to address drainage from the property. She reported the developer was also working with the watershed district on this matter. She explained the wetland would be preserved and all of the water from the property would have to be managed on the site.

Janice Thompson, 12046 Vermillion Street, Unit A, reported she did not support this development.

Manyda Phengdouangdeth 2429 121st Circle NE, Unit D, explained her unit would face the line of trees that would be preserved between the two properties. She

asked if there was any historical data on how the proposed development would impact her property value. She anticipated her property value would decrease.

Associate Planner, Shawn Kaye encouraged Ms. Phengdouangdeth to contact Anoka County Assessor's office as the County sets the values of properties. She stated she has been told in the past that these types of developments do not adversely impact property values.

Ms. Phengdouangdeth indicated she did not believe it was right for a private HOA roadway to be used publicly by the proposed complex unless they pay for the maintenance of the road. She asked if there would be sidewalks from 121st Avenue to Urbank.

Project Engineer, Teresa Barnes noted the current site plan does include sidewalks that connects to 121st Avenue to allow the residents to walk around The Lakes. She clarified for the record that the fees paid by the condo owners was for landscaping and noted the city plows the streets.

Associate Planner, Shawn Kaye stated this was correct noting Vermillion Street and 121st Avenue were public roadways that were maintained by the city.

Ms. Phengdouangdeth inquired if the Applewood Pointe condos could be converted to rental units in the future.

Vice Chair Goracke reported the intent was to have these units for-sale and not rented.

Ms. Phengdouangdeth inquired if the property would have 24/7 security.

Vice Chair Goracke deferred this question to the applicant.

Allen Willie, 11967 Radisson Road, thanked the commission for allowing him to speak. He indicated he supported the project. He discussed the city's 2040 comprehensive plan and noted it was unreasonable to think this property would remain Farm Residential. He indicated the proposed development synchs nicely with the city's proposed plan. He was of the opinion the proposed development worked better on the site than townhomes because it preserved more greenspace. He appreciated the fact the trees would be preserved along the west and north property lines. He explained the development would have little to no impact on the

school district. He commented the proposed development would have less traffic impacts than a townhouse development. He discussed the positive financial impacts this project would have on the city. While he understood change was difficult, he encouraged the commission to offer their support.

Ms. Voit feared the building would be shadowing her property and asked if the building height could be reduced.

Gary Rettke, 11945 Radisson Road, stated he lived right next door to this property. He indicated he was the first resident in this area of Blaine noting his home was built in 1984. He explained he was excited to have a pickleball court next door, but believed the four stories was too high. He encouraged the commission to consider how this four-story building would impact the adjacent properties. He asked that the city also take a closer look at the tree loss, noting Blaine was focused on tree preservation. He believed that Applewood Pointe was a fine organization, but he recommended another site be considered. He stated he did not believe it was fair to make the existing homes forever live in the shade.

As no one else wished to appear, the public hearing was closed at 8:14PM.

Mr. Young stated he conducted a shadow study for this project and explained the setback was increased to preserve trees and to not cast shadows onto the adjacent properties. He reported the building would be 50 feet from the property line, when only 30 feet was required. He indicated the property in question was not encumbered by the master association. He noted construction costs were on the rise and it cost more to build this year than it did in 2020. He stated from a tax point, each of these units would be homesteaded. He indicated there was no rental options within the bylaws. He did not anticipate the proposed units would adversely impact adjacent property values. He stated the building would have three staff members but would not have onsite security.

Commissioner Olson asked if nothing would be touched on the property until 60% of the units were sold.

Mr. Young reported this was the case.

Commissioner Olson questioned if the price points for the units were similar throughout the metro area.

Mr. Young stated the price points can fluctuate as time goes on, materials continue to improve and more amenities are added.

Commissioner Olson inquired what the setback was for the adjacent townhomes.

Associate Planner, Shawn Kaye explained the setback appeared to be approximately 50 feet which meant there would be approximately 100 feet between the two structures.

Commissioner Olson asked if the project were to stall out, if the project would have to come back to the city for reconsideration.

Associate Planner, Shawn Kaye indicated if any changes were to occur, the project would have to be reviewed again by the commission and city council.

Commissioner Vilella questioned why the county granted access to Radisson Road, given how high the traffic level was already along this roadway.

Project Engineer, Teresa Barnes discussed the traffic memo from December 2020 noting the original plan was to direct all traffic through the neighborhood onto 121st Avenue and Urbank. However, after speaking with Anoka County, the applicant was able to gain a right-in, right-out access point to the development.

Commissioner Halpern understood this complex would not be a part of The Lakes development. He asked if the right-in, right-out could be the only access point for this development, in order to create separation from this development and The Lakes.

Project Engineer, Teresa Barnes reported it was always the city's intention to connect or extend this property to 121st Avenue.

Commissioner Halpern stated there has been a continuity of comments from the neighbors that this appears to be a great complex, but that this may be a bad fit for the neighborhood.

Motion by Commissioner Halpern to recommend denial of Planning Case 21-0049A the comprehensive plan amendment from MDR (Medium Density Residential) to HDR (High Density Residential).

Motion by Commissioner Halpern to recommend denial of Planning Case 21-0049B a rezoning from FR (Farm Residential) to DF (Development Flex).

Motion by Commissioner Halpern to recommend denial of Planning Case 21-0049C a preliminary plat to subdivide 8.41 acres into 1 (one) lot to be known as Applewood of Blaine.

Motion by Commissioner Halpern to recommend denial of Planning Case 21-0049D the conditional use permit to allow for the construction of a 100 unit, 4-story senior cooperative building in a DF (Development Flex) zoning district.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Olson. The motion failed 2-3 (Commissioner Homan, Commissioner Villella and Chair Goracke opposed).

Commissioner Olson discussed how much more traffic would be generated if this development were townhomes. She stated she could support this project but suggested the developer build a three story building versus a four story building. She explained this could be added to the CUP approval as Condition 9.

Commissioner Villella commented on how much Blaine was developing and building out. He explained higher density housing was being constructed all over the community. He stated that it was difficult for the city to tell people what to do with their land, if the proposed development met city code requirements. He believed the applicant has done everything that has been asked of them. He commented his only concern with this development was traffic, but he was pleased the site would have a right-in, right-out onto Radisson Road. He reiterated that the city council would be making the final decision on this planning case, noting the planning commission was a recommending body.

Motion by Commissioner Villella to recommend approval of Planning Case 21-0049A the comprehensive plan amendment from MDR (Medium Density Residential) to HDR (High Density Residential) based on the following conditions:

Case 21-0049A:

1. The proposed land use is consistent with the apartment type use proposed for the site.

2. The proposed land use and associated development is in an appropriate location for a high density project as it is close to major intersections and roadway systems.
3. The proposed density of the apartment style building is approximately 12.75 units per acre. This density is very close to what is permitted if it were developed as MDR (6-12 units per acre) and the adjacent parcels land use. The amendment is also being requested because apartments are not listed in the description of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for MDR but are for HDR.

Motion by Commissioner Vilella to recommend approval of Planning Case 21-0049B a rezoning from FR (Farm Residential) to DF (Development Flex) based on the following conditions:

Case 21-0049B:

1. The DF zoning has been used in the majority of residential development over the past several years within the City of Blaine as it provides the City with the greatest flexibility and control over the aesthetic and livability elements within the development.
2. The DF zoning allows the city the opportunity to apply standards consistent with other recent master planned developments. The standards will create an attractive benchmark for a quality project.

Motion by Commissioner Vilella to recommend approval of Planning Case 21-0049C a preliminary plat to subdivide 8.41 acres into 1 (one) lot to be known as Applewood of Blaine based on the following conditions:

Case 21-0049C:

1. Park dedication will be required for the lot as it is final platted. The park dedication fee will be based on the rate in effect at the time of final platting. The current residential park dedication rate (2021) is \$4,449 per unit, for a total park dedication fee (100 units) of \$444,900 is required for the entire plat.
2. Coon Creek Watershed District review and approval is required prior to any site work.

3. There are several structures on the two lots that need to be removed prior to construction. Demolition permits for these structures must be obtained from the City's Building Inspection Department prior to removal.
4. An Anoka County Highway Department permit will be required for the access and work along Radisson Road.
5. The applicant will need to remove the proposed second access on the north end of the site from Radisson Road. The county has only authorized one access connection to Radisson Road.
6. The Mayor, City Clerk and City Manager are hereby authorized to execute any and all necessary documents, agreement and releases related to the approval, recording or administration of Applewood of Blaine.

Motion by Commissioner Vilella to recommend approval of Planning Case 21-0049D the conditional use permit to allow for the construction of a 100 unit, 4-story senior cooperative building in a DF (Development Flex) zoning district based on the following conditions:

Case 21-0049D:

1. This site needs to meet the Highway 65 Overlay District requirements for exterior materials, and the plans that have been submitted for this proposal meet this requirement.
2. The landscaping on site meets the Highway 65 Overlay District requirements for the number of trees provided. However, 25% of the trees need to be oversized to meet the Highway 65 Overlay District standards. Oversized trees must be 3-inch caliper overstory trees and 8-foot conifer trees. It is not recommended that ornamental trees be oversized.
3. A lighting plan will need to be provided that illustrates that the lighting provided meets ordinance requirements. All lighting needs to be downlit and shielded to prevent glare or spill. Pole mounted lighting is limited to 20-feet in height.
4. SAC and WAC payments will also become due prior to the issuance of building permits.

5. The applicant will need to obtain a Coon Creek Watershed District permit prior to city approval of construction plans and specifications.
6. Separate site plan approval and review for issuance of building permits is required.
7. All building and fire Code requirements will need to be met including providing a fire access road if necessary.
8. If construction has not commenced within three years of the issuance of the conditional use permit, the applicant will need to obtain a conditional use permit extension through the City Council.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Homan. The motion passed 3-2 (Commissioner Halpern and Commissioner Olson opposed).

Vice Chair Goracke noted this would be on the agenda of the August 2, 2021 city council meeting.