



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota

Blaine City Hall
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Legislation Text

File #: RES 21-024, Version: 1

DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS - *Lori Johnson, City Planner*

GRANTING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF 106 TOWNHOMES IN A DF (DEVELOPMENT FLEX) ZONING DISTRICT TO BE KNOWN AS GROVELAND VILLAGE LOCATED AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF 93RD LANE AND 85TH AVENUE. GRACHEK BLAINE LLC (M/I HOMES) (CASE FILE NO. 20-0031/EES)

Planning Commission (Public Hearing)	01/12/21
City Council (Conditional Use Permit)	02/17/21
Action Deadline	04/03/21

Staff report prepared by Elizabeth Showalter

The Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve the conditional use permit. Three residents spoke at the public hearing. Comments included concern about the residential uses in close proximity to the airport, increased traffic on 85th Avenue and on Groveland Road into Mounds View, and concerns about the removal of trees and change to the natural environment.

As required by the recently adopted neighborhood meeting policy, the developer held a virtual neighborhood meeting on January 8, 2021. A summary of the meeting was provided by the applicant and is attached to this report. Concerns identified in the neighborhood meeting process included the height of the townhomes adjacent to the existing homes on the west side of the property, the impact of the residential uses on the neighborhood, particularly if the residents were low income, and traffic.

The public notice boundary for the project was extended beyond the statutorily required 350-foot radius to include all properties east of Hastings Street.

A 27-acre vacant property previously owned by the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) is located at the northwest corner of 93rd Lane (Airport Road) and County Road J, adjacent to Highway 10. The property was rezoned in 2015 to PBD-A, a new zoning district that applies to two properties owned at the time by MAC, and allows for a limited assortment of industrial and commercial uses. The property was purchased by Spring Lake Park Schools for the construction of a new elementary school, which was ultimately constructed at the NSC campus.

The property has changed hands and is now under contract with a developer who proposes to utilize the site for townhomes and apartments.

The proposed project requires an amendment to the comprehensive plan, a rezoning from PBD-A to DF for residential uses, a plat to establish the new lot lines, and a conditional use permit to establish the standards for the development within the DF zoning. The applicant is applying for all of the necessary approvals for the townhome portion of the project, but will need to separately apply for the conditional use permit for the apartment portion of the project once the design is finalized for that portion.

The City Council discussed the concept plan at workshop on May 18, 2020 and was supportive of the developer moving forward with the proposal. They indicated a need to obtain feedback from the neighboring property owners and indicated traffic was a concern on this site.

Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Rezoning

The site currently has a land use designation of Planned Industrial/Planned Commercial (PI/PC) in the recently adopted 2040 Comprehensive Plan. In order to have a residential use on this site the land use designation on the property must be changed to Medium Density Residential (MDR) for the portion to be developed as townhomes and High Density Residential (HDR) for the portion to be developed as apartments. In addition, a rezoning will be required to match the residential development. The City has long used the DF (Development Flex) zoning designation for townhome and apartment projects and that is what is proposed for this parcel.

The Comprehensive Plan amendment will need to be reviewed by the Metropolitan Council. Any action by the City Council would be contingent upon METC's review and approval.

Preliminary Plat

The 27-acre parcel will be subdivided into a total of 106 townhome lots, 2 apartment lots, 1 common lot, and 2 outlots, both for stormwater/drainage uses.

Park dedication will be required for each unit being constructed. The 2021 park dedication rate is \$4,449 per unit. If the fee is paid in 2021, the total amount due for the townhomes is \$471,594. Park dedication will also be due for the apartment projects upon final plat approval for that portion at \$4,449 per unit in 2021. If lots are final platted after 2021, park dedication may be higher.

A traffic study was generated based on comments from the jurisdictional roadway agencies, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Anoka and Ramsey County. The study includes existing and proposed conditions of land use and several options for roadway connection to 85th

Avenue. The developer will need to incorporate any comments the agencies have into their final designs. This will include any intersection design requirements, turn movement restrictions, signal modifications to existing signals, etc. Attached to this item is a copy of the executive summary containing the findings, results, and recommendations of the traffic study.

Conditional Use Permit

The townhomes are proposed to be constructed by M/I Homes and would consist of two different products.

The Summit Series is a three-story rowhome with rear loaded garages accessed from an alley. The front doors of these homes are connected and accessed by a sidewalk system. The front elevations feature a mixture of lap and board and batten vinyl siding with stone accents. The homes range from 1,750-2,085 square feet and have an expected sale price in the high \$200,000 to mid \$300,000 range

The Park Series is a three story rowhome as well, but has front loaded garages and has slightly larger square footage at 1,889-2,210. This product also features a mixture of lap and board and batten vinyl siding. In exchange for the flexibility granted by the DF zoning, the elevations must be modified to include a masonry component on the front elevations and to provide additional visual interest on the rear elevations through variation in materials or colors, additional articulation through the use of bump outs or bay windows, varied rooflines, and/or enhanced window treatments. The applicant has agreed to these modifications. Final elevations are subject to staff approval. The expected sale price is the low to mid \$300,000 range.

The parking standard for townhomes has been formalized in the recently adopted zoning code amendment as 1 stall per 3 townhome units in addition to the 2 garage stalls provided in each home. The applicant has provided 60 stalls, which is in excess of the required 43 stalls. However, there will be some minor modifications to the proposed site plan, as part of the site plan approval process, however any changes made will not bring the site out of compliance with the parking requirement.

Through the development flex zoning, the City has long required one overstory, one conifer, and one ornamental tree per townhome unit. The landscape plan as proposed includes three trees per unit as required, but does not have the required distribution of trees. To meet the tree preservation requirement, which requires the replacement of 8 trees per acre disturbed, a total of 216 overstory or conifer trees must be planted. Therefore the required landscaping quantities are:

- 106 ornamental trees
- 108 conifer trees
- 108 overstory trees

The applicant is showing a 6 foot privacy fence and a mixture of conifer and overstory trees at the western property boundary, adjacent to the two existing homes at the end of the 86th Lane cul-de-sac and adjacent to the existing homes on Jenkins Circle NE. This was added at the request of staff to provide a buffer for the property owners from the new townhomes. The fence must be constructed from maintenance free materials, such as vinyl or composite.

Site Plan approval will be required for this development before any work is performed on site. This will include the submittal of a Development Agreement and the associated financial guarantee.

The approval of the rezoning, conditional use permit, and preliminary plat is contingent upon Metropolitan Council approval of the land use amendment being requested for this development.

Please note that since the February 1 City Council meeting, staff has asked the developer to provide a sight line study to depict what the townhomes will look like from the adjacent existing single family homes to the west of the development. These visuals will be presented to the City Council at the meeting as they will not be available until after this report and the attachments have been sent to the Council.

It should also be noted that the developer has been working with one of the adjacent homeowners to save trees along the shared property line. The developer has indicated that due to grading constraints and requirements, it will be difficult to save trees in this area, but every effort will be made to save what can be preserved; however, one of the property owners has planted trees on the development parcel. Unfortunately, since the trees were planted on property that the resident did not own, it is not guaranteed that these trees can be saved.

By motion, approve the Resolution.

Attachments

See Rezoning report

WHEREAS, an application has been filed by Grachek Blaine LLC (M/I Homes) as Conditional Use Permit Case File No. 20-0031; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing has been held by the Blaine Planning Commission on January 12, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Blaine Planning Commission recommends said Conditional Use Permit

be approved; and

WHEREAS, the Blaine City Council has reviewed said case on February 17, 2021.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Blaine that a Conditional Use Permit is hereby approved per Sections 27.03, 27.04, and 29.110 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of 106 townhomes in a DF (Development Flex) zoning district based on the following conditions:

1. The construction of all townhomes to be generally guided by the approved conditional use permit resolution and consistent with all the depictions, drawings and information on the plans attached to the staff report including a masonry element on all front elevations. Modification to the rear elevation of the Park series townhome is required to provide additional visual interest, subject to staff approval.
2. All site plan and unit plans require approval from the Planning Department prior to any work being performed on site. All site work to meet all requirements of Section 33.00 (Performance Standards) of the Zoning Ordinance.
3. Developer to install grouped mailboxes with design and location approved by the City and the US Postal Service.
4. Minimum floor area above ground for each unit shall be 1,750 sq. feet.
5. The following trees are required on site: 108 overstory trees, 108 conifer trees, and 106 ornamental trees.
6. Underground irrigation must be used for all landscaped areas.
7. Sod shall be required on all disturbed areas and placed over 4 inches of black dirt that contains no more than 35% sand.
8. No detached accessory structures allowed except if needed to house underground irrigation controls.
9. Any entrance signage for the development requires a separate permit.
10. All units must contain an automated fire suppression system.
11. WAC (Water Access Charge) and SAC (Sewer Access Charge) will be due on each permit.
12. All driveways and on site utilities are considered private and are the maintenance responsibility of the homeowners association for the 106 units.
13. A landscaped buffer shall be provided at the western property edge (entire length) including a 6-foot tall privacy fence, constructed of maintenance free materials, and conifer trees. The applicant shall work with the adjacent property owners to preserve significant trees near the property line.
14. All homes in the plat must meet the noise abatement standards as required and outlined in Section 33.21 of the Zoning Code.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Blaine this 17th day of February, 2021.