

**MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP MEETING
CITY COUNCIL
LITTLE CANADA, MINNESOTA**

MARCH 23, 2022

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a Workshop meeting of the City Council of Little Canada, Minnesota was convened on the 23rd day of March, 2022 in the Council Chambers of the City Center located at 515 Little Canada Road in said City.

Mayor John Keis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and the following members of the City Council were present at roll call:

CITY COUNCIL: Mayor Keis, Council Members Fischer, Torkelson, McGraw and Miller.
Absent: None.

ALSO PRESENT: City Administrator Chris Heineman, Public Works Director Bill Dircks, Parks & Rec/Community Services Director Bryce Shearen, Community Development Director Corrin Wendell, Melissa Duce with Lennar Corporation, and Bob Barth with WSB.

DISCUSSION A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL ON COUNTY ROAD D

The City Administrator explained that the property being considered for development has been used for truck farming, and the owner is ready to sell. He explained that the north end of this site had been considered for commercial and industrial development, but there is not a high demand for that use, so the new Comprehensive Plan re-guided the site for higher density residential use. He stated that Lennar Corporation entered into a purchase agreement with property owner Don Heinel, and they were later able to secure two more adjacent parcels on Desoto Street. He stated that city staff has been working with Lennar staff on a proposed townhome development.

The Community Development Director explained that the new 2040 Comprehensive Plan, this area is guided for medium and high density residential. She stated that the Zoning Code defines medium density as four to eight units per acre, and high density is more than eight units per acre. She noted there will be a neighborhood meeting held tomorrow night at Little Canada Elementary School from 5:00-6:00pm for anyone to attend and ask questions.

Melissa Duce, with Lennar Corporation, explained that the gross area for this site is 19.7 acres, which includes the powerline easement area which is 4.6 acres. She stated that current plan is for 184 townhome units which is at a density level of 9.3 units per acre. She noted that since they are on the cusp of medium and high density, she is asking the Council for direction on the density level they should be at. She reviewed the two styles of townhomes that are planned, a row-house style and a back-to-back style.

Keis noted that both types of homes shown are 2-story so seniors would be left out. Ms. Duce stated that this price point and styles are the popular type of products for first-time homebuyers and young families since they are three bedrooms. She noted that Lennar does build a villa one-level product, but it is a less dense product so they would not get to the density level that the Comprehensive Plan has this area guided for. She stated they took the direction for higher

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density. Keis stated there is a big range of people who would be looking for a one-level style. The City Administrator asked if they would consider adding some one-level townhomes.

Torkelson stated that many residents are concerned about traffic levels, asked if there were any plans for traffic calming and making it feel safe for pedestrians and deter speeding through the neighborhood.

Bob Barth, Director of Development with WSB, stated they could make the roadway narrower or make landing pads for pedestrians. He thinks traffic could move equally north and south. Torkelson stated the main concern for neighbors is traffic going to Allen Avenue. Ms. Duce stated that city staff had suggested adding a sidewalk along Vanderbie Street and asked if it should connect to Allen Avenue or just stay within this neighborhood. McGraw clarified that the sidewalk should continue south on Vanderbie Street to Allen Avenue, and a multi-use trail should run east-west through the powerline easement and connect with Allen Avenue.

Torkelson asked how the water on the site would be directed to the stormwater ponds. Mr. Barth explained this area is very flat and they have a couple options, and noted they have to meet the watershed district requirements.

Fischer asked if the roads within the development would be public or private. Ms. Duce stated they all would be private except for Vanderbie Street.

Torkelson stated that no one is going to get everything they want in this development. He stated he feels the side-by-side product is nicer than the back-to-back and would like the side-by-side to front Vanderbie Street so it looks better. He would like to see more variety in styles and models, and different colors. Ms. Duce stated their policy is not to have the same colors next to each other. McGraw asked where the visitor parking would be. Mr. Barth explained there are 62 visitor parking spaces throughout the site.

Fischer stated that he has no problem with less density if they can make the numbers work, and would prefer to have more variety of styles so all of the buildings do not look the same.

Ms. Duce asked what the Council prefers medium or high density here. Keis stated that there had been discussion at one time for apartments on the north side of the power line, so he feels this proposal is medium density.

The City Administrator stated the site is currently zoned R-1, Single Family Residential and will be rezoned to R-2, Medium Density Residential. Torkelson noted the plan currently shows some ten-unit buildings, but the Zoning Code does not allow that in the R-2 zoning district. Torkelson stated he would prefer to see low density at the south end of this site and graduate into higher density moving north. Fischer agreed. McGraw stated he does not want the site to look like the homes are crammed in.

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Jacqueline Durand, 3043 Edgerton Street, asked why Desoto Street is not also being extended through, but said she does need an answer tonight as she will be attending the neighborhood meeting tomorrow. She noted that density was a concern for her.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

John T. Keis, Mayor

Attest:

Christopher Heineman, City Administrator