

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

OCTOBER 26, 2022

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a regular meeting of the City Council of Little Canada, Minnesota was convened on the 26th day of October, 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 7:30 p.m. and the following members of the City Council were present at roll call:

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

ALSO PRESENT: City Administrator Chris Heineman, Parks & Rec/Community Services Director Bryce Shearen, Community Development Director Corrin Wendell, City Clerk/HR Manager Heidi Heller and City Engineer Eric Seaburg.

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Miller introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-10-121 – APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 10, 2022 ASSESSMENT HEARING FOR YORKTON RIDGE, MAPLE LANE & JACKSON STREET, OCTOBER 10, 2022 ASSESSMENT HEARING FOR RYAN DRIVE & WOODLYNN AVENUE, OCTOBER 12, 2022 WORKSHOP MEETING AND THE OCTOBER 12, 2022 REGULAR MEETINGS AS SUBMITTED

The foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Fischer.
Ayes (5). Nays (0). Resolution adopted.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC HEARING – CONSIDER FOR PIONEER COMMONS TOWNHOME DEVELOPMENT (APPLICANT: LENNAR) – FINAL PLAT FOR PIONEER COMMONS FIRST ADDITION, ORDINANCE 868, REZONE 5 PARCELS FROM R-1 TO R-2, VARIANCES FOR REDUCED FRONT AND REAR SETBACKS FOR SOME UNITS AND EXECUTE A DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

The Community Development Director explained that the City has received a Final Plat 1st Addition, Rezoning, and Variance applications for Pioneer Commons from developer Lennar, to construct a townhome community with a total of 178 townhomes. She reported that Lennar plans to develop a mix of row townhomes and back-to-back townhomes to achieve an overall R-2 medium density zoning in accordance with future land use designations in the Comprehensive Plan. She stated that the site is 19.77 gross acres (861,180 sf) which includes 4.6 acres (200,376 sf) allocated to an overhead powerline easement (approximately 9 units/acre). She stated that the first phase build-out will consist of 48 units, grading, construction of Vanderbie Street, sidewalk, trail, and storm sewer and utilities, and landscaping. She explained that the Planning Commission reviewed the Preliminary Plat at their May 5, 2022 meeting and the City Council held a public hearing on May 11, 2022, and tabled the item

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after requesting site plan amendments. The Council gave final approval of the Pioneer Commons Preliminary Plat on May 25, 2022. She reported that based on Council discussion and public comment, Lennar had provided an updated site plan to show additional circulation to address concerns about traffic, city road connections, and internal connections within the private streets of the development.

The Community Development Director reviewed the entire project and explained the three phases of development. She stated the overall site grading has begun and the first phase will consist of constructing the extension of Vanderbie Street from Allen Avenue to County Road D and 48 townhome units, and noted they plan for some units to be completed by spring 2023. She reported that the project has met the requirements of the City Engineer and has received a permit from the Ramsey Washington Watershed District.

The Community Development Director explained that the applicant is seeking variances for front and rear yard setbacks of some of the units. She reported that the plat indicates which units. She noted the Council requested that the south end of the development be less dense, which Lennar complied with, but in order to do this, the plan requires smaller front and rear yard setbacks in certain areas in order to place the homes appropriately. She explained the front setback variance request is from the required 25 feet to 20 feet, and the rear yard setback request is from the required 30 feet to some units at 20 feet. She noted that many of the units along the eastern edge will have much larger than required setbacks.

Paul Tabone with Lennar, stated the engineering and construction plans are almost final, they have received their permit approvals from Ramsey County and the watershed district, and are working through a few final pieces. He reported they intend to do as much grading, street and utility construction as the weather will allow, with the intention to start a model over the winter for the spring selling season. He explained that the variance setback requests are minimums and stated that in many cases they will actually be more than that. He stated that especially along the eastern edge, there will be actually 50 to 60 foot separation. He noted they will have a minimum of 22 foot front setbacks in order to park full size vehicles in the driveways.

Fischer clarified that the plans show exactly which units will need the setback variances so there are no questions. Torkelson stated it appeared the reduced setbacks are on the units along Vanderbie Street, not along the exterior of the development. Mr. Tabone stated that most of the reduced setbacks are on the interior

Fischer stated that he wants the construction traffic to be required, not preferred, to go north instead of using Allen Avenue, since that is a new street. The Community Development Director stated that was discussed during the pre-construction meeting, and explained that once they can have access into the site from another location, the construction traffic will be signed to use other access.

McGraw asked when the Vanderbie Street extension would be completed. Mr. Tabone stated they will do as much as they can this year and finish in the spring if needed.

Torkelson stated that there had been discussion about putting bump-outs on the southern end of Vanderbie, but did not see them in the plans. He noted they are shown at the trail crossings. Eric

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Seaburg, City Engineer, stated that is one of the minor comments they are still working through with the developer. Torkelson asked how to make sure the bump-outs are built. The Community Development Director stated they can be added to the street drawings and explained that staff will review the final plans. She noted that Council can also review them.

Torkelson stated that one of the things that had a lot of discussion about the secondary access which was added, and noted it is not shown in the first phase. He wants to make sure that the next section of street that connects to County Road D is part of phase 2, if not phase 1. Mr. Tabone stated they are working on their final design of the second addition and will see how feasible it is to add this road to that phase. He stated it is tricky to add roadway before the units are built along it, but will look at if they can add it to the second addition. Torkelson stated he hopes that it can be added to phase 2 and wants to know how to require that. He stated that tonight is only considering phase 1, so he understands that this other access it is not part of what is being approved tonight, but wants to know how to guarantee it gets built.

The City Administrator explained that the City Council has authority to approve or deny the Second Addition if it does not include a secondary access to County Road D. Torkelson stated his concern is that circumstances could change and the whole development may not be completed. City Administrator Heineman reminded the City Council that the Development Agreement covers the entire project area and changes to the overall plan must be approved by the City Council. Torkelson stated his concern is that the timing is not certain, so it could be a long time before the second access is put in. Heineman stated that the Second Addition Final Plat will come back to the Planning Commission for review and the City Council for final approval.

Mr. Tabone stated that he hears this request loud and clear and will find out if there is anything that prevents the second County Road D access from being constructed during phase 2. The final plat for the phase 2 must be go before the Planning Commission and City Council for approval. Torkelson pointed out that Mr. Tabone is only promising to consider this and not making any promises, which concerns him. Fischer stated that he agrees with Torkelson but stated there are notes that show tonight's discussion that indicate the Council's wishes. He noted that when this project was first discussed, the housing market was very hot, but the economy has since changed, and he wants to hear what Lennar's thoughts are. Mr. Tabone stated that they have taken a good look at the market and the community needs, and Lennar feels there is still a strong market need for townhomes. He noted that he has already asked his engineer to start work on phase 2 of this development.

Keis opened the public hearing.

Andrew Sullivan, 469 Allen Avenue, stated his yard has about 300 feet that touches the development. He stated there is a water runoff issue that in some years is very bad, and he would like assurance that Lennar is aware of the extent of the problem, especially the seasonal problem. He stated every spring Allen Avenue and Desoto Street flood and asked what the setback will be behind their home. The Community Development Director replied the setback will be 20 feet from the property line behind the Sullivan's home. The townhomes are in a single row rather than front to back, and there will also be a landscaping buffer. Ms. Sullivan asked if construction would go from 7:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. The Community Development Director explained those are the construction hours allowed by City Code,

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but they are typically not the actual construction hours. Fischer noted that may not necessarily mean they would be working that entire time unless possibly they get behind. Mr. Sullivan asked if there a predetermined end date or could they be dealing with construction for a decade. The Community Development Director stated that the City does not have a required end date, but at this time, it is expected that all of the phases will be done in two to three years if everything goes smoothly.

Milan Moravetz, 476 Allen Avenue, asked Mr. Tabone why it would be tricky to build a road before houses. Mr. Tabone stated they do not want to get ahead of themselves by building a road that is not being used at that time. He noted that he hears the Council's concerns about wanting the secondary access built sooner than phase 3. Mr. Moravetz asked for further clarification on what the future land use map from the Comprehensive Plan shows. Torkelson explained that the future land use map is only shows what the land could be used for in the future, not how it is being used currently.

Mr. Moravetz asked how tall the retaining wall would be on the north end. Community Development Director Wendell stated the wall would be about eight feet tall. Torkelson asked if the Lennar project would be higher or lower than the existing properties. The Community Development Director stated the Lennar property would be higher at the north end in order to comply with the runoff requirements. Mr. Moravetz asked where the stop signs would be placed. The Community Development Director stated there would be some placed on the streets that enter Vanderbie Street, and then one on Vanderbie Street at Allen Avenue. The City Engineer stated that he does not see a need for a stop sign mid-block on Vanderbie Street. He noted if there does end up being a need for a stop sign, it can be added at the City's discretion. Mr. Moravetz stated that he feels traffic count of estimated 70 trips is inaccurate. The City Administrator explained the details of the traffic study.

Karin Plessel, 3001 Vanderbie Street, asked how much of a setback will be behind her house, and asked how tall the retaining wall behind her house will be. The Community Development Director stated the setback will be 15 feet next to her house. Ms. Plessel noted that she has gotten three cracks in her ceiling and walls from the ground work being done on this project. Torkelson stated he also has some cracks and has been able to feel the ground work being done. Ms. Plessel asked Mr. Tabone about how to change the end of her driveway so it is flared and can park two vehicles.

There were no further comments from the public. Upon motion by McGraw, seconded by Torkelson, the public hearing was closed.

Fischer introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-10-122 – APPROVE THE FINAL PLAT FOR PIONEER COMMONS FIRST ADDITION INCLUDING COMMENTS FROM

The foregoing amended resolution was duly seconded by McGraw.
Ayes (4). Nays (0). Torkelson abstained. Resolution declared adopted.

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Keis introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-10-123 – ADOPT ORDINANCE 867, REZONING THE FOLLOWING 5 PARCELS FROM R-1, LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL TO R-2, MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL, AMEND THE LITTLE CANADA ZONING MAP TO REFLECT THIS ZONING CHANGE, AND APPROVE PUBLICATION OF A SUMMARY ORDINANCE

**PID# 05-29-22-21-0024 (0.58 acres / 25,265 sf)
Vanderbie Street, Little Canada, Minnesota 55117
Lot 12, Block 2 of Gervais Heights, Ramsey County, Minnesota**

AND

**PID# 05-29-22-21-0032 (16.62 acres / 723,967 sf)
3036 Vanderbie Street, Little Canada, Minnesota 55117
Lots, 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 and 9, Block 1, Gervais Heights
Lots, 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,20,21,22,23,24,25 and 26, Block 2, Gervais Heights
AND All that part of the West 179 feet of the East 730 feet of the North 254.10 feet of the East ½ of the West ½ of Section 5, Township 29, Range 22, which lies between the East line of Vanderbie Street produced North to North line of said Section 5, and the West line of said Lot 1, Block 1, GERVAIS HEIGHTS, Ramsey County, Minn., produced North to North line of said Section 5, (& other property).
Subject to Highway.**

AND

**PID# 05-29-22-21-0031 (1.29 acres / 56,192 sf)
Desoto Street, Little Canada, Minnesota 55117
Lots 18 and 19, Block 2 of Gervais Heights, Ramsey County, Minnesota**

AND

**PID# 05-29-22-21-0030 (0.64 acres / 27,878 sf)
3034 Desoto Street, Little Canada, Minnesota 55117
Lot 17, Block 2 of Gervais Heights, Ramsey County, Minnesota**

AND

**PID# 05-29-22-21-0029 (0.64 acres / 27,878 sf)
Desoto Street, Little Canada, Minnesota 55117
Lot 16, Block 2 of Gervais Heights, Ramsey County, Minnesota**

The foregoing amended resolution was duly seconded by Fischer.
Ayes (4). Nays (0). Torkelson abstained. Resolution declared adopted.

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Fischer introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-10-124 – APPROVE VARIANCES FOR REDUCED FRONT AND REAR SETBACKS FOR THE UNITS SHOWN IN THE DRAWING

The foregoing amended resolution was duly seconded by McGraw.
Ayes (4). Nays (0). Torkelson abstained. Resolution declared adopted.

Fischer introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-10-125 – APPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT FOR PIONEER COMMONS AS PRESENTED

The foregoing amended resolution was duly seconded by .
Ayes (4). Nays (0). Torkelson abstained. Resolution declared adopted.

CONSENT AGENDA

McGraw introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-10-126 – APPROVING THE CONSENT AGENDA WHICH CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING:

- Approval of the Vouchers
- Authorize Submission of SCORE Grant Application to Ramsey County
- Certify Unpaid Utility Bills & False Alarm Fees to 2023 Property Taxes
- Approve a Temporary Liquor License for St. John’s Church on November 20, 2022
- Approve an Exempt Gambling Permit for St. John’s Church on November 20, 2022
- Receive 3rd Quarter Financial Report

The foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Miller.
Ayes (5). Nays (0). Resolution adopted.

PIONEER PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PLANS & SPECIFICATIONS AND AUTHORIZE ADVERTISING FOR BIDS

The Parks & Rec/Community Services Director announced that there is a community meeting tomorrow night for anyone to come in and review the various playground proposals that were submitted. He stated the meeting will be from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at the Montreal Court Apartments community room at 396 Labore Road. He stated that flyers about the meeting were distributed to residents at Montreal Court Apartments and to all of the units in the Pitrina Park neighborhood. There will also be an online survey available for anyone to comment. He also reported that trail lighting has been discussed, and announced that new solar lighting is currently being tested on the western portion of Pioneer Park by the soccer field near a bench.

The City Engineer stated that the 2023 Pioneer Park Project plans are finally ready and noted this project has been worked on for five years to get to this point. He stated the scope of improvements is new playground equipment and installation, a poured-in-place rubber surface, new shade structure/picnic

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shelter, picnic tables, benches, drinking fountain and entry kiosk, and noted the park amenities are being procured directly by the City in order to reduce markup and capitalize on any end-of-year sales. He stated the remaining items such as grading, sidewalks, fencing and landscaping have been bundled into a site improvements project that will be publicly bid late this fall.

The Parks & Rec/Community Services Director stated the funding for this project is coming from \$576,000 from City's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, \$196,000 from Fund 400, a \$300,000 Minnesota Department of Natural Resources grant, and a \$400,000 donation from the Little Canada Recreation Association. He noted he is still looking for additional donations and grants.

Torkelson introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-10-118 –APPROVE THE PIONEER PARK PLANS & SPECIFICATIONS AS PRESENTED AND AUTHORIZE ADVERTISING FOR BIDS

The foregoing amended resolution was duly seconded by Miller.
Ayes (5). Nays (0). Resolution declared adopted.

GATEWAY SIGNAGE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Community Development Director stated that "Enhancing Identity and Empowering Community" was one of the four strategic directions included in the City's 2019 Strategic Plan. She reported that one of the strategic initiatives related to this direction was to consider updating the gateway signs that are located in multiple entry points to the City to enhance the community's identity. She explained that a task force of representatives from various boards and commissions have been meeting over the last six months to consider options and discuss recommendations for improvements to the City's existing 'Welcome to Historic Little Canada' signs. She stated that the task force also discussed the current locations of signs and if additional locations should be considered. She reviewed the list of findings the committee recommended, and stated this could be a 10-year long project.

Fischer stated the staff report included information on what the signs should not say, but asked if there was some guidance from the committee on what the signs might say. The Community Development Director stated they want to keep it simple. Torkelson noted that the new trend for cities is now signs that simply say the city name, and maybe also a logo. Fischer suggested making monument signs be a style that is harder to vandalize, noting the missing letters from the Vadnais Heights sign. Torkelson stated there was an effort by the committee to mark areas where the signs could go.

Discussion ensued about the estimated costs and design styles. The City Administrator reminded the City Council that none of the funds for signs are included in the capital improvement fund, and these alone could drain that fund. Torkelson noted that the committee recognizes that these signs would be nice to have, and maybe funds can be determined at a later date. Keis asked if the trails are all marked. The Parks & Rec/Community Services Director noted that he is working on three different park related sign projects right now.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:29 p.m.

John T. Keis, Mayor

Attest:

Christopher Heineman, City Administrator