Minutes
Minnetonka City Council
Monday, Feb. 5, 2018

1. **Call to Order**

Mayor Brad Wiersum called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

All joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **Roll Call**

Councilmembers Patty Acomb, Deb Calvert, Tim Bergstedt, Bob Ellingson, and Mayor Wiersum were present. Tony Wagner was excused.

4. **Approval of Agenda**

Bergstedt moved, Calvert seconded a motion to accept the agenda, with addenda to items 12A, 12B, 14A and 15A. Wiersum noted for item 15A he was nominating Charlie Yunker to chair the Economic Development Advisory Commission. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

5. **Approval of Minutes: Jan. 24, 2018 regular council meeting**

Acomb moved, Calvert seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Jan. 24, 2018 regular council meeting, as presented. Acomb, Calvert, Ellingson, and Wiersum voted “yes.” Bergstedt abstained. Motion carried.

6. **Special Matters:**

A. **Proclamation declaring Feb. 15, 2018 “Not for Sale Day” to Raise Awareness About Sexual Exploitation**

Acomb read the proclamation.

Jessica Melnick, from Girls United MN, presented information about the event.

Wiersum said the problem was a serious one and he appreciated the initiative of Melnick’s work.

7. **Reports from City Manager & Council Members**

City Manager Geralyn Barone reported on upcoming council meetings and city events.

8. **Citizens Wishing to Discuss Matters not on the Agenda**

Hennepin County Sheriff Rich Stanek provided an update on his office’s activities.
Wiersum said he appreciated Stanek coming to the meeting and the partnership between the county and the city. He noted the opioid crisis was a major issue and anything the city could do to help the sheriff’s office deal with the crisis was something he wanted to see happen.

Stanek said all the law enforcement agencies that helped with the Super Bowl did a great job. There were about 2,600 police officers countywide that helped police the event. He also praised Barone for her work on the transition of the dispatch services to the county.

9.  Bids and Purchases:

10. Consent Agenda – Items Requiring a Majority Vote:

11. Consent Agenda – Items requiring Five Votes:

12. Introduction of Ordinances:

A.  Items concerning iFly at 12415 Wayzata Boulevard:

   1) Amendment to the existing master development plan;
   2) Site and building plan review; and
   3) Sign plan review

City Planner Loren Gordon gave the staff report.

Acomb questioned if the signs as shown in the sketches complied with the city’s sign ordinance for the Ridgedale area. She said it appeared they did not. Gordon confirmed that was correct.

Acomb said she would like more information on the landscaping that would shield the mechanical area. Gordon said the design being proposed for the ground level wall would be a stone product, perhaps over brick, and would be very aesthetically pleasing. The trellises above the wall would add detail. He said for consistency, the same thing would occur on the backside of the restaurant pad. The mechanical equipment would be fully shielded.

Calvert said she shared the concern about the signage.

Bergstedt said at the concept plan review the council expressed concern about the noise that might impact the restaurants. Those concerns were addressed by the applicant. The council also expressed concern about the signage. He said the proposal was a first of its kind in Minnesota and could add energy and vibrancy to the Ridgedale Center.

Ellingson said he was very impressed by the presentation at the concept plan review.

Wiersum said it was an intriguing opportunity for the city. He said the discussion about the signage would be challenging. Clearly this was not an anchor tenant
building but it was a new use. The challenge would be determining what was allowed by the sign ordinance and what was appropriate without creating too much upheaval in the ordinance.

Bergstedt moved, Ellingson seconded a motion to refer the ordinance amending the existing master development plan to the planning commission. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

B. Introduction of ordinance regarding small wireless facilities in public right of way

City Attorney Corrine Heine gave the staff report.

Bergstedt said it seemed as if the city had little choice but adopt an ordinance.

Wiersum said the League of Minnesota Cities spent a lot of time on the issue. There was considerable concern the telephone companies would push through legislation that would remove all local control of any small scale wireless facility with no reimbursement. He said in talking with Barone earlier in the day, she indicated the ordinance didn’t have everything staff would like in it, but it still was far better than what was initially proposed at the legislature.

Acomb moved, Calvert seconded a motion to approve the introduction of the ordinance. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

C. Ordinance repealing and replacing City Code 300.34, Telecommunication Facilities

Gordon gave the staff report.

Wiersum said ordinance was much improved and flowed well.

Calvert moved, Acomb seconded a motion to approve the introduction of the ordinance and refer it to the planning commission. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

13. Public Hearings:

A. 2018 Community Development Block Grant funds

Community Development Director Julie Wischnack gave the staff report.

Acomb noted that Wischnack indicated 85% of the funds were for small projects and 15% for public services. She asked if this was what staff was proposing or if the percentages were set by the CDBG program. Wischnack said the 15% was the maximum that could be used for public services. A lesser amount could be used. Acomb said there were funds that needed to be spent or else the city would lose them. She asked if there had been enough applications in order to spend those funds effectively. Wischnack said occasionally the city will receive funds back like in a situation where the estimated award is higher than the actual
award. Currently the city had money to spend that would be awarded on a first come, first serve basis.

Wiersum said the staff report included a lot of information about the city administering the program internally versus transitioning to have Hennepin County do so. He asked if the administrative fees had increased or remained the same. Wischnack said the fees had increased. City staff had struggled with keeping up with all the compliance requirements. If the city had kept the administrative duties, it was likely more staff time would have been needed for that purpose.

Bergstedt said things had been streamlined by having the county administer the program rather than requiring individual cities do a request for proposal. Wiersum agreed.

Wiersum opened the public hearing at 7:32 p.m. No one spoke. He closed the public hearing at 7:32 p.m.

Acomb moved, Ellingson seconded a motion to adopt resolution 2018-010 approving the proposed allocation for 2018 Urban Hennepin County Community Development (CDBG) program funds; authorize the negotiation and execution of a sub-recipient agreement with Urban Hennepin County and any third party agreements; and approve funding for HOME line in the amount of $5,200 from the Development Account for 2018. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

14. Other Business:

A. Concept plan review for Ridgedale Active Adult Apartments at 12421 Wayzata Blvd.

Gordon gave the staff report.

Acomb asked for more information about the housing study and what it showed about housing in the city for people over the age of 55. Gordon said there were a couple of groups in the senior market. One group included housing without services for active adults. Acomb noted the study showed the city was about 200 units short for active adults. Wischnack said the study showed the city was short 659 units for all seniors.

Johnny Carlson with Trammell Crow showed photos of other projects the company had done. He presented details about the type of housing and how it differed from other types of senior housing. The project architect, Lukas Van Sistine, from ESG Architects, presented information about the design.

Bergstedt said one of the first questions asked at the planning commission meeting was how the six story building was arrived at. Carlson said the key thing was looking at how tall the other buildings in the area were. This was a Carlisle prototype being built in other parts of the country and was used to determine the right unit count. The site also was looked at to determine what was appropriate. Another factor was keeping the rents as low as possible.
Calvert said she watched the planning commission review and took to heart some of the questions that were asked. She asked if a rooftop amenity was being looked at. Carlson said if a market rate apartment building was being looked at rather than age restricted housing, a sky deck would be included. The goal in this case was to get all the amenities in one spot to create daily interaction between the residents. Creating a rooftop amenity with the others on the ground would bifurcate the space. He said a rooftop amenity would still be looked at as the plan moves forward.

Calvert said looking at where vehicles pull into the parking lot from the roundabout, there was an immediate turn into the parking area. She said she had some concern with this. Gordon said staff would like to study the intersection further. Calvert said she was really excited about the additional green space. She liked how Sistine had explained the inspiration for the exterior of the building. It was a lot of mass with a very smooth surface. It differed from a retail space. There was a visual breakup that broke up the mass.

Acomb asked if there was consideration for affordable units within the project. Carlson said affordable units had been incorporated in other Trammell Crow market rate buildings. He said this was a different rent check considering the different things residents would be paying for. Financially it would be difficult to include affordable units. Acomb said looking at other active adult projects like one in Edina, affordable units were included. Carlson said Edina had an ordinance requiring affordable units. He said while Minnetonka did not have a similar ordinance, the goal for this plan was to drive the rents as low as possible. Wischnack clarified Edina has a housing policy and not an ordinance requiring affordable units. Minnetonka has a housing resolution with similar language.

Calvert noted there was a demographic bubble throughout the country. The type of resident living in this building would be different in 10, 20 or 30 years. She asked if there had been any consideration given to the need for more parking and some of the other things that would change in 30 years when a younger demographic occupied the building. Carlson said this was being viewed as a building that could be converted to independent living in the future. The amenity space was more geared toward this than for a younger demographic.

Ellingson said it was an interesting concept. He noted currently this part of the parking lot often had few cars parked in it. He questioned if the mall needed the parking. Carlson said he was working with all the retailers, the anchors and General Growth. The current parking ratio was being looked at as well as where it was headed in the future. The least parking demand was in the southwest corner. He indicated the mall owners and the tenants supported the project.

Calvert asked Carlson if any of his projects had a sustainable building component including LEED certification. Carlson said Trammel Crow would consider incorporating sustainability for this project. The certification typically is part of the design process. The goal in this case would be to deliver a sustainable project. Sometimes a project is designed using the LEED certification requirements but the actual certification is not pursued.
Acomb asked if there was any flexibility to the location, design, shape and size of the park area. Carlson said the original plan presented to staff had the building shifted to the east. The building was shifted west when staff indicated a city goal would be to have a park and change the roundabout access. The goal was to get the largest park possible and maximize the walkability to the park and to the mall. He said the shape of the park would likely continue to evolve through the process. Wischnack noted General Growth owned the eastern portion so that piece would have to be negotiated with them. Acomb said the location and size of the park didn’t fully meet the city’s vision. She said she spoke with Wagner and he shared that concern.

Bergstedt said over the last year, as the council looked at various projects, they had discussed the huge need for some type of park or open space. He said this was an opportunity to reach a piece of that goal. He didn’t think the city should be too prescriptive without considering all the options and ensuring the overall area flowed better. He said the park idea was great but it was a starting point. He thought the concept met some of the vision for the Ridgedale area with higher density, higher height and a quality development.

Acomb agreed and said she was thrilled to see density built in the parking lot. She was fine with the architecture and the setbacks. Her concern was related to affordability and wanting that to be included in the project.

Calvert said agreed with Bergstedt and Acomb. She was glad to see the higher height which was restricted in other parts of the Ridgedale area. She liked many things about the project but agreed with Acomb’s comments about including some affordable units. She was excited to see there was a possibility to include some LEED building practices. The added green space, whatever it ended up being, would be great.

Dr. Mark Stesin, 2000 Norway Pine Circle, said he was speaking on behalf of a coalition of five neighborhoods: his street, Dwight Lane, Austrian Pines, Sherwood Place and Sherwood Forest. The consensus was strong support for the city’s effort to bring in high density housing. The assumption was all the new buildings would be compliant with the comprehensive guide plan and also be sensitive to those who had lived in the city for the last 20 to 30 years. The coalition of neighbors support this concept plan. The project was very appropriate for the space. The park space and size of the building were appropriate. The physical density was not an issue. The more important issue was the activity density. With 165 units there would be a lot of activity on a relatively small space. He said the property was far enough away from the neighborhoods that the activity density would not be much of an issue.

Annette Bertelsen, 13513 Larkin Drive, said she and her neighbors liked the apartment concept quite a bit. As far as the density they support this level of density. She said there were many neighborhoods that were engaged in the discussion about the Ridgedale area. Now that there was the first housing proposal for the inner circle, the neighbors were very excited about the land use and proposed density. She said when the city first presented the Ridgedale
vision study, residents saw vignettes of a park adjacent to the mall. This excited them. People began to brainstorm ideas about synergy between events at the mall and events at the park. As the discussion about the park continued, she would like to see pros and cons discussed about the location. She said it was easy to forget that Ridgedale wasn’t just a commercial hub. For many it was part of the fabric of their neighborhood. She suggested having neighborhood residents be part of the park committee along with councilmembers, planning commissioners and park board members. She volunteered to be the neighborhood representative.

Calvert said one of the things she really liked about the location of the building was that it was at the south end of the mall away from the freeway. She said it was a huge benefit to the building’s residents.

Wiersum said this was an intriguing project. He appreciated the information about what an active adult apartment was and thought it was a niche that made sense in the community. He truly valued the social aspect for those who lived in the city but were looking to downsize. He agreed with the comments about the location of the building. He thought along with the improvements to Ridgedale Drive, this would be a very beautiful area of the city. Architecturally, he particularly liked the large windows that were shown. He thought the contemporary look and design would play very well. He said a park in Ridgedale was an important amenity. He spoke with Wagner earlier in the day and Wagner said one thing he wanted the others to be mindful of was the Sears location at the mall would redevelop in the fairly near future. The city could delay decisions and end up with nothing because it was always hoping for what may be available tomorrow. On the other hand, the council shouldn’t be too afraid of that and not aim as high as it could for the park. It was important to keep an open mind to the possibilities for a park in the Ridgedale area. He recommended Wagner be the council representative on the committee because this was in his ward, but given Wagner’s travel schedule that Acomb be appointed as the alternate.

15. Appointments and Reappointments:

A. Appointments and reappointments to Minnetonka boards and commissions

In addition to the appointments and reappointments listed in the council packet, Wiersum noted he was nominating Yunker to chair the EDAC.

Wiersum moved, Bergstedt seconded a motion to approve the appointments and reappointments to various advisory boards, commissions and committees. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

16. Adjournment

Calvert moved, Ellingson seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m.. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
David E. Maeda
City Clerk