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

4. **Approval of Agenda**

Wagner moved, Acomb seconded a motion to accept the agenda with an addendum containing corrections to the February 26, 2018 minutes. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

5. **Approval of Minutes: Feb. 26 and March 5, 2018 regular council meetings**

Bergstedt moved, Calvert seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the Feb. 26, 2018 and March 5, 2018 regular council meetings, with the corrections noted in the addendum. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

6. **Special Matters: None**

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

City Manager Geralyn Barone reported on upcoming meeting and events.

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

Hennepin County Commissioner Jan Callison gave an update on the county’s activities.

Wagner noted he participated in a meeting related to the county’s organics initiative. One of the focuses is getting habits built. Organics collections is now occurring in some of the large commercial buildings. He said he actively supports the county’s initiative. Callison said the initiative truly is about making it easy for people to do. Wagner said the county has a number of grants available to assist with the initiative.

Wiersum thanked Callison and said the city truly appreciates the level of collaboration between the county and the city.

9. **Bids and Purchases:**
A. Bids for the Woodhill Road project

Barone gave the staff report.

Bergstedt said it would be a very intensive project. The city received a very favorable bid compared to the engineer’s estimate.

Acomb moved, Bergstedt seconded a motion to award the contract for the Woodhill Road Project No. 18401 to Park Construction Co. in the amount of $5,043,599.03. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

B. Bids for pickleball courts

Barone gave the staff report.

Wagner moved, Acomb seconded a motion to amend the 2018 CIP to $410,000 for construction of pickleball courts and award the contract to New Look Contracting, Inc. in the amount of $372,431. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

10. Consent Agenda – Items Requiring a Majority Vote:

A. Resolution approving a conditional use permit and site and building plan review for a concession stand and bathroom facilities at Hopkins High School, 10901 Hillside Lane West

Wagner asked that the item be pulled from the consent agenda. He said he had a few neighbors reach out to him about the project. Those that lived on Hillside Lane had questions about access and availability and use of the restroom facilities. They also had questions about how the portable potties would be managed given there were new facilities being constructed. The concern was the portable potties would remain because the restroom facilities would not be open when non Hopkins school activities were taking place.

Patrick Poquette from the Hopkins School District said the portable potties would only be used for the large events. They would only be kept open during school or community education events. Wagner said some of the concern was at times there were scheduled events that were not school or community education events and the assumption was it would be great not to have three or four portable potties there all year round. Poquette said for rented events the restroom facilities would be open.

Ellingson moved, Wagner seconded a motion to adopt resolution 2018-036 approving a conditional use permit and final site and buildings for a concession stand and bathroom facilities at Hopkins High School, 10901 Hillside Lane West. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

11. Consent Agenda – Items requiring Five Votes:
A. Resolution approving a conditional use permit, with a parking variance, for CREO Arts and Dance Academy at 15100 Minnetonka Industrial Road

Ellingson moved, Calvert seconded a motion to adopt resolution 2018-037 approving a conditional use permit, with a parking variance, for CREO Dance and Arts Academy at 15100 Minnetonka Industrial Road. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

12. Introduction of Ordinances: None

13. Public Hearings:

A. Temporary on-sale liquor license for ResourceWest, for use at 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard

Barone gave the staff report.

Wiersum opened the public hearing at 6:56 p.m.

Tarrah Palm, executive director of ResourceWest, provided information about the event celebrating the organization’s 25th anniversary.

Wiersum closed the public hearing at 6:58 p.m.

Acomb complimented ResourceWest for all the work it has done.

Acomb moved, Bergstedt seconded a motion to grant the license. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

B. Items related to the Cloud 9 Condominium’s Housing Improvement Area

1) Adopt a resolution approving an amended housing improvement fee for the Cloud 9 Sky Flats Housing Improvement Area

2) Adopt a resolution approving the first amendment to the development agreement with respect to the Cloud 9 Sky Flats Housing Improvement Area

Community Development Director Julie Wischnack gave the staff report.

Wiersum opened the public hearing at 7:01 p.m. No one spoke. He closed the public hearing at 7:01 p.m.

Calvert moved, Wagner seconded a motion to adopt resolution 2018-038 approving an amended housing improvement fee for the Cloud 9 Sky Flats Housing Improvement Area and resolution 2018-039 approving the first amendment to the development agreement with respect to the Cloud 9 Sky Flats Housing Improvement Area. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.
C. On-sale brewer’s taproom and Sunday liquor license, and off-sale liquor license (for growlers) for Brass Foundry Brewing Co., 5959 Baker Road

Barone noted staff needed more time to complete the background check.

Acomb moved, Calvert seconded a motion to continue the public hearing to April 16, 2018. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

14. Other Business:

A. Concept plan review for Morrie’s Ford at 13400 Wayzata Blvd. and 13205 Southridge Road

City Planner Loren Gordon gave the staff report.

Wagner said the ordinance associated with auto dealerships along the 394 corridor was revised around 10 years ago. New dealerships were required to do structured parking. He asked what would trigger the ordinance if there was a more major plan. Gordon said if a new dealership was involved, the requirement would be that half of the vehicles on the property needed to be screened or were in structured parking. He said he would research what the trigger was for an existing dealership.

Wiersum asked if there were height restrictions for the buildings and if so, what the restrictions were. Gordon said the height was a function of the building setbacks.

Lynn Robson, facilities director for Morrie’s Automotive Group, said Morrie’s went through a buy/sell in March 2016. As part of the manufacturer approvals, they conditioned consent based on some facility improvements. Ford required the relocation of the Lincoln franchise. Ford and Lincoln are now standalone franchises. Lincoln was relocated in January 2018. The goal of this project was to improve the site circulation, traffic flow and to create a better experience for customers and employees. She said 12,000 square feet had been added to accommodate additional service capacity including a three lane service drive to accommodate peak hour traffic, and a two bay carwash.

Brannin Gries, the project architect, said he was working with Ford’s architects out of Detroit to bring the facility up to their standards. He said around 45 stalls would be lost in the parking area on an already tight site so they were looking at another area to expand the parking. After hearing the concerns of the planning commission and neighbors, images were developed to better represent the corner and maintain a residential feel. A solid brick fence would not only keep the residential feel but would also block the cars.

Wagner asked for more information about the inventory that left the site when Lincoln relocated. Robson said there were around 100 new vehicles in inventory at the Lincoln store. Some of those had been in offsite storage. She said this time of the year the inventory increases while other times of the year it decreases.
Rob Haas, 13224 Southridge Road, said he lived in the neighborhood for 39 years. He said this plan was one of the most disturbing things he had seen as far as encroaching on the neighborhood. The lot had been vacant for around 10 years. Before that, it was a home. There was agreement that the changes to the dealership itself was OK. The existing carwash was extremely noisy. Using the vacant lot as a parking lot would mean cars coming and going all the time. Motion sensor lighting would probably make it even worse. He said his biggest concern was this would set a very bad precedent. Sears Imported Auto owned three houses in the neighborhood. If Morrie’s was allowed to use the vacant lot for parking, nothing could prevent Sears from doing the same thing.

Steve Anderson, 13208 Southridge Road, said he lived in the neighborhood off and on for 63 years. He said when the upper lot was done, the vehicles were supposed to face toward the highway. A biological barricade was supposed to be installed. This was not done, instead most of the trees that were there were removed. Residents were opposed to the strip mall that went in across the street. He said his bedroom window is lit up by vehicles from both Whole Foods and Morrie’s. He agreed a bad precedent would be set by allowing parking on the vacant lot. He suggested Morrie’s sell the property to the city for a Pickleball court or a playground. He said every spring Canadian geese land on the property. The plan would take away a feeding source for a federally protected animal.

Acomb asked if the applicant had any plans to address the lighting issues. Gries said he was unaware of any lighting issue from the upper lot.

Gordon referred back to Wagner’s question about the trigger for screening for existing dealerships and dealerships operating under a conditional use permit. He said there were a number of standards for a conditional use permit. There were not any standards for an existing dealership making changes.

Wagner said he passes by the site often. He thought the service improvements and building expansion were both merited and would likely lead to better functionality. He said the 394 ordinance was created because auto dealerships can cause a challenging neighborhood relationship with the amount of unloading, cars and traffic. From a parking expansion standpoint if there was a desire to store more cars, the expectation in the ordinance was for structured parking. Although 40 spaces were lost, there was a gain of 100 from the vehicles that were no longer at this facility. He agreed with the neighbors about an expansion of parking into the residential neighborhood. This was not the desired intent of the council. He said he would not support that expansion but would support the building renovation.

Acomb agreed the improvements to the building would be welcomed. She had concerns about the creep into the neighborhood. She said there had been questions raised at the planning commission hearing about the use of the residential properties owned by Sears. Gordon said he was unaware of any current violations on those properties although there had been some complaints
over the years. Acomb said shared the concern about the impact the creep from the car dealership into the neighborhood would have on the character of the neighborhood. She supported the improvements to the building and encouraged improvements to address the lighting from the upper lot. She did not favor expanding the parking onto the residential lot.

Calvert said she agreed with Wagner and Acomb. The property was zoned residential. To put parking and add hard surface next to someone’s home seemed intrusive and counter to the city’s zoning. She thought the changes to the building would be very attractive and were a huge improvement. She agreed with Acomb’s concern about the lighting. She encouraged replacing any vegetative buffer that had been removed.

Bergstedt said he too agreed with the other councilmembers comments. The building improvements were much needed. He said the parking expansion went beyond creep with the proposed parking right in the neighborhood. He agreed with Calvert’s comments about adding hard surface directly in the neighborhood.

Ellingson said he agreed with the comments. He liked the building improvements but did not support the parking expansion into the neighborhood.

Wiersum said it was clear the council did not support the parking expansion into the neighborhood. He said the building expansion made a lot of sense in terms of the way the automotive business had evolved over time. He remembered when he bought his first car there was not a celebration room at the dealership. This was now a common part of the business. As he looked at the improvements he was supportive of what they were attempting to do but it was an increasing intensification of use in the location. There was no more land available to further increase the intensity. If the plan was to continue to grow, creativity will be necessary. He said his expectation was this property would not get larger. When he was out campaigning last year, he heard the number one thing people care about in Minnetonka was the preservation of neighborhoods. For the council to allow commercial areas into R1 neighborhoods and the loss of affordable housing when this occurs was contrary to the council’s objectives.

B. Ridgedale area public realm guidelines

Wischnack gave the staff presentation.

Joan McLeod, project consultant, presented the guidelines. She said the guidelines looked at the existing conditions and began to outline how public realm improvements would be treated when they occur. Public realm was really an area that began to transform a district in a controlled way. The city however, did not have a lot of control over a lot of the area in the Ridgedale area. The guidelines would help guide developers and those that wanted to refresh their properties in a way that contributed to the whole. It’s a way to allow for buy in and communication to happen to benefit the district as a whole.
Wagner said as he thought back to the discussions for the Ridgedale and Opus areas, there was the idea that there was this element that the city would try to develop around a sense of place. He said the document did a good job in articulating expectations of what the city was looking for. He wasn’t quite sure it gave the theme of the sense of place. It might be beneficial to be more purposeful about things like a larger public park and opening up Crane Lake. Being more specific about what theme the city wanted might be helpful. He questioned if there was more that could be done in the document to give guidance to developers.

McLeod said there was plenty of room to add additional information. If there was a need to strengthen some of the overall vision upfront, that could be done. She said things continue to evolve so the town square was not included but could be. The guidelines were really a living and breathing document. Wischnack said the guidelines were trying to portray an experience that would be very different from the experience seen today. This was phase one and the vision would continually be improved upon as well as the strategy to get there.

Wagner said what was being looked at was very different than what currently exists and that was what the council was looking for. The question becomes if it would be beneficial to paint more of a picture of what was really expected for the area. He noted every project that has come in since the vision statement was all about density. This had been expected. The expectations set in the guidelines would be what would get proposed. Given this was a living document, he thought it should be refreshed periodically. The vision for the Ridgedale area was for it to be a gathering place and not just a shopping mall. Weaving this into the narrative may be something to include in the next version of the document.

Acomb said she understood the public realm were vignettes and not necessarily what would actually happen. She appreciated it was a living and evolving document. She agreed with Wagner’s comments that what the document describes would impact the kind of development that gets proposed. Throughout the area she would like to see the city work on pedestrian access to the mall. If this was shown to the developers, they would be more likely to work toward that. McLeod said there had been quite a bit of work done on pedestrian access but it was not included in the guidelines. Wischnack said the inspiration for the guidelines was in the vision document with all the internal connections with the identified green corridors. She said both Wagner and Acomb’s comments suggested a private development guideline portion of the document. This had not been the original direction but this didn’t mean the direction could not change or that type of information could not be included in next phase. She noted that kind of discussion about connection to the mall and the public space already occurred in the visioning process. Acomb said she would like to see it included in the guidelines as well. McLeod noted the name of the document was “Ridgedale Area Public Realm Guidelines” so the focus had been on the public areas. Acomb said she understood that but the document was intended for developers so including the expectations might be important.
Wagner said the public realm was the theme of what the city wanted to do. The idea was that the parks would be the gathering places and the private development would touch all those areas so the document had to bridge the gap.

Wischnack suggested adding a chapter about private development that would include information about private development throughout the area and not just the mall itself. Acomb said this would be helpful.

Calvert said all the greenscape was very welcome and gets to one of the city’s core values. She said the vision document included images of tree-lined pedestrian walkways through the parking lot up to the mall to give some protection from the sun. The guidelines referenced lighter pavement. She liked the idea of reducing the urban heat island. She also liked the idea of impervious pavers. In terms of landscaping she was encouraged to see reference to native species especially in the rain gardens. She would promote a pollinator corridor if possible. As far as trying to create a theme or character, she thought including artwork would be helpful. She is a huge fan of public sculptures. She said she thought many of the design elements in the document were exciting.

Wiersum said the document was well done and really got the imagination going. He said clearly the document was about the public realm because that was the part the city had some control over. This did lead to the question about what would happen in the middle which would really drive what things would ultimately look like. Having themes and setting expectations so when developers come forward was important. He noted with all the plantings, there would be a significant maintenance cost. He hoped those costs could be shared because of the benefits to all. He said one of the design elements important to him was the signs. He wanted to make sure the signs were easy to read given the importance of wayfinding. He thought the work on the perimeter did a great job of bringing the natural environment so valued in the city to the area in a better way than had been done in the past. There still was the big unknown about what would happen on the big island in the middle. What happens there would ultimately determine how much “place” would be created.

Wagner said there were references to “complete streets.” For him this meant including dedicated bike lanes. He suggested if this was what was meant, it be clarified in the language. McLeod said it really was about pedestrian and bike connectivity. She agreed backing off from using that term would be helpful.

Wagner said he received a suggestion from a neighborhood resident that he thought was a great idea. The resident suggested extending the zone further down Plymouth Road because of the trail enhancements. There’s a great trail to the wetlands by Meadow Park and it was kind of unnoticed. This was about a block away from the area being included. He said one last comment was about setting the right expectation about getting across Plymouth Road given the existing and proposed senior housing in the area. He would love to be able to say that a person could cross at every intersection on Plymouth Road, but this was not realistic. He would like this to be looked at to come up with options on
what could be done. City Engineer Will Manchester said this could be included during the Ridgedale Drive design process.

Annette Bertelsen, 13513 Larkin Drive, said the neighbors were excited about all the things happening including the pedestrian friendly aspect, design standards and increasing the entertainment in the area. She said she and her husband and a few of the neighbors talked with a landscape architect about the guidelines. They let him know there were two big goals. One was to create a consistent, cohesive look to unify the area. There was agreement this was achieved in the guidelines. The second goal was to create a unique, distinctive identity and sense of place. She said there was room for improvement in that area. There was not a unique sense of character or place coming through in the document. She said the landscape architect said he didn’t know Minnetonka but reading the document should have given him the feeling of the city and this did not happen. He didn’t get a sense of what made Minnetonka unique. He suggested including a statement of character that defined the style and character that was trying to be achieved. The statement would be developed through a public engagement process. She asked the council to consider this.

Patty Aossey, 13501 Larkin Drive, said she really liked the idea of connectivity and understood the difficulty that some of the area was privately owned. She was concerned about safety. She noted during the Highland Bank discussion part of the agreement was about snow removal. She drove by the building many times during the winter and the sidewalks were not cleared. When the sidewalks were finally cleared they couldn’t be used because they were covered in ice. She said one of the things that needed to be considered was how the city would enforce what had been agreed to in the areas not owned by the city and making sure property owners kept the connections useful all year round. Wischnack agreed there was an issue this winter with the snow removal on that property. There was a new contractor that did not understand the parameters of the agreement. The city has provided the contractor detailed information.

Wagner said it might be useful to include some information in the guidelines about the expectations for winter maintenance. The expectation was to be able to walk the area all year round. Wiersum said it was important setting clear expectations about what the winter maintenance should be given the city’s responsibilities in all areas of the city and the need to prioritize those responsibilities. The expectations should be reasonable. Barone said given the high density in the area, staff could look at what the practice has been and look at being more aggressive in the area.

15. Appointments and Reappointments: None

16. Adjournment

Bergstedt moved, Calvert seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.
Respectfully submitted,

David E. Maeda
City Clerk