ITEM 14A – Walser Nissan, 15906 Wayzata Blvd.

The applicant has requested the item be tabled. The attached letter was provided today. Additionally, the following emails were received from neighbors after the packet was distributed.
Addenda
Minnetonka City Council
Meeting of June 24, 2019

14A  Items concerning Walser Nissan at 15906 Wayzata Blvd:

1)  Ordinance approving a master development plan and final site and building plans, with a parking setback variance; and

2)  Resolution approving a conditional use permit, with a building-to-parking variance, and a sign plan.

The applicant has requested the item be tabled. The attached letter was provided today. Additionally, the following emails were received from neighbors after the packet was distributed.
Drew & Loren,

Walser Automotive has at this time elected to table their request for approval from the city council meeting on June 24th, 2019 for the redevelopment and construction of their existing Nissan dealership at 15906 Wayzata Blvd. At this time they are not electing to withdraw their request, but to table as they consider other possible options.

We will be back in touch with you and city staff with further details when they become more clear and I have further instruction.

Thank you for your assistance thus far. If you have questions or would like to discuss.

Please feel free to call. Thank you, Jack

Jack Grotkin | President  
R.J. Ryan Construction, Inc | Commercial Design and Construction  
1100 Mendota Heights Road | Mendota Heights, MN 55120  
Mr. Ingvalson.

Please see my final comments of the proposed ordinance for Walser Nissan. I will not be present tonight and will serve as my final comments.

1) Unanswered questions.

It remains unclear whether or not an "opaque" wall of trees is proposed. Page 58 with the proposed landscaping plan has no elevations for the new coniferous trees. Therefore, the city council does not have sufficient data to understand whether or not activity will be appropriately buffered. This request of a better north visual has been asked multiple times. In the applicant's own computer generated image, there is not full buffering. Therefore, the City must insist on more stringent language to confirm the outcome of the plan.

2) Proposed Ordinance:

2.02.(8) misstates the actual language of 300.31 subd 7(b) and should me amended. The word "wall" is not a word used in the entire cited existing landscape ordinance. In other words, "wall, berm, or other feature" reads that a "wall" alone is permissible. This re-writing of the ordinance language and interpretation is false and misleading.

4.01 4(c) 3) c) states, "50% of the parking will be screened."

This language should add, "In addition, 100% of parking will be screened from the north via a continuous row of new, opaque coniferous trees planted that rise at date of planting to no less than 4 feet above the bottom of the existing berm"

4.01 4 c (15)

modify 1 full growing season to two full growing seasons and confirm as Planning confirmed at the Planning Commission that existing berm trees are included.

"required landscaping or vegetation, including existing trees on or adjacent to the earthen berm that are not removed as a part of the landscaping plan, have survived two full growing seasons."

4.01 12

"no loudspeaker paging or outdoor audible electronic buzzers." (this addresses conflict that exists with BMW when the garage door opens with buzz heard 1000' away at residential houses)

Thank you.
Bradley Schaeppi
Please include in tonight’s addendum. Thanks!

Geralyn

From: Linda Koblick
Sent: Sunday, June 23, 2019 4:15 PM
To: Brad Wiersum <bwiersum@eminnetonka.com>; Geralyn Barone <gbarone@eminnetonka.com>
Subject: Walser Nissan agenda item

Mayor,
Please copy the council and staff on this. I apologize for brevity but Jeff and I are unable to attend Monday’s meeting to address our concerns with the Walser Nissan proposal. An emergency is keeping us from attending.

We did attend/note the Planning Commission meeting on this, and in short, are disappointed that the recommendation is to proceed with the grading on this site at zero berm on the west side of the property and no fencing.

More can be done to keep the effective land berms in place - especially since this is a wholesale redo of the property with a large investment by the Walser Group to build a huge commercial building on this smaller parcel, with height added to the land and building and more commercial activity.

It is understandable that this is desirable from Walser’s point of view, and perhaps the city’s in additional tax revenue. From the existing residential neighborhood point of view, we are accepting of this redevelopment in concept, yet are again before the city council requesting steps be taken to shield us from the beehive of lights/sounds and movements.

We have been here before. We existed before car dealerships in this corridor did. We were here before 394 was built.
We have continued to put efforts into ensuring our residential existence is thoughtfully considered.

It is in the city’s comprehensive guide plan, it has been in the city’s approvals of projects before before… berms work.

Trees that are fully mature and provide screening are desirable. Six foot replacement trees 10 feet apart are sticks six months of the year and do little to provide any screening whatsoever, they just look nice when the leaves are in. Decorative. We need more.
There is little merit in requiring the developer to put in six foot trees on this parcel. The building will be huge, the landforms disrupted and our land barrier screening gone, especially on a good portion of the parcel that Whitegate and Gleason Acres especially will feel the impact 8 months out of the year visually and the full year audibly. Wayzata municipality, but all residential property owners interests matter, and should.
Please, consider the scale of this redevelopment project, the comprehensive guide plan elements required especially in this corridor, the history of past approval conditions (that should still be met!) for screening with berm formations, and the needs of our neighbors in protecting our peace and quiet and ability to enjoy our residential properties.

There are specific elements the city can require of this project that will provide adequate screening for us—berm formations, current tree protections with some additional plantings, AND fencing — a solid fence does not allow lights from vehicles that go around on car dealership properties continuously (they are NOT all parked with their lights away from us!)

Requiring plantings and fencing is NOT an unreasonable request. It is normal and has been done in many locations throughout the city. There is a car wash at the rear of the property! I can think of many times in city applications when screening from sound and movement at car wash locations was a priority for buffering residential properties from this intrusion. This is much more than a car wash property, of course.

-Trees do not grow quickly. Fences, even those that ‘only last 15 years’ ...are far more preferable to an effective physical barrier than something that looks like a stick thin projection. And if the fence degrades, this is a dealership that can afford to maintain it, and well. A fence, 8’ in height, can be desirable from an aesthetic point of view, is effective from a functional point of view, and is not an expense out of line with the investment in this project —it is quite affordable as a design element that serves a particular protective function to buffering.

-It was noted that Walser offers customers repeat car washes with sales of vehicles. Even though the representative for Walser said they wouldn’t be here, I am sure you can anticipate this changing.

Just washing the vehicles for sale on the lot is not a realistic expectation we can count on. It will be a busy car wash, just as BMW and Lexus have. Relying on representations now without having specific requirements in the conditional use permit is not a reasonable course to consider. Experience tells us to work this proposal with more vigor. Our request is that you do so.

It is not our expectation that council design this and request it of the developer at Monday’s meeting. This requires a solid effort between staff and the developer before coming before you.

Respectfully, we request that you lay this item over Monday evening...with direction that staff work with the applicant to build a vigorous screening plan (including retaining existing mature trees, replacing any trees removed and adding more to screen across the entire parcel with more than 6’ saplings please, requiring fencing optimally placed at an 8’ height, and retaining land berm formations throughout at a decent enough elevation) that will be effective in giving residential properties in view of this parcel screening, will last, and will be in the condition of approval/conditional use permit so it can be returned to in one year, two or more for relief if it is failing (i.e trees die, fences need maintenance, etc).

Please help our neighborhoods to ensure all screening of commercial activities on the Nissan parcel is effective and not lessened with this proposal, and continues to function effectively in the future.
We thank you for considering our requests and addressing our concerns in advance.

Regards,

Linda & Jeffrey Koblick
351 Townes Road