1. **Call to Order**

Chair Kirk called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

Commissioners Calvert, Knight, Magney, O’Connell, Odland, Powers, and Kirk were present.

Staff members present: Community Development Director Julie Wischnack, Principal Planner Susan Thomas, Senior Planner Ashley Cauley, Natural Resource Manager Jo Colleran, and Planning Consultant Rita Trapp.

3. **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved as submitted with additional comments provided in the change memo dated November 5, 2015.

4. **Approval of Minutes:** October 15, 2015

   *Odland moved, second by Magney, to approve the October 15, 2015 meeting minutes as submitted.*

   *Calvert, Knight, Magney, O’Connell, Odland, Powers, and Kirk voted yes. Motion carried.*

5. **Report from Staff**

Wischnack briefed the commission on land use applications considered by the city council at its meeting of October 26, 2015:

   - Adopted a resolution approving a conditional use permit for an accessory apartment on Karen Lane.
   - Adopted a resolution approving items for the Cherry Pointe project on Plymouth Road.

6. **Report from Planning Commission Members:** None

7. **Public Hearings: Consent Agenda**

   No item was removed from the consent agenda for discussion or separate action.
Odland moved, second by O’Connell, to approve the item listed on the consent agenda as recommended in the respective staff report as follows:

A. A conditional use permit for an accessory apartment at 3514 Sunrise Drive West.

Recommend that the city council adopt the resolution on pages A12-A16 of the staff report. This resolution approves a conditional use permit for an accessory apartment at 3514 Sunrise Drive West.

Calvert, Knight, Magney, O’Connell, Odland, Powers, and Kirk voted yes. Motion carried and the item on the consent agenda was approved as submitted.

8. Public Hearings

A. Items concerning Dunn Brothers Coffee at 14525 State Highway 7.

Chair Kirk introduced the proposal and called for the staff report.

Thomas reported. She recommended approval of the application based on the findings and subject to the conditions listed in the staff report.

Curt Fretham, Lakewest Development, applicant, stated that he is excited to have Richard and Norma Gunderson operate a Dunn Brothers coffee shop in the building. It would provide an amenity and positive gathering place for the community.

Thomas explained that the commission will review the submitted sign plan for the site at its next meeting. By code requirements, Dunn Brothers would be allowed to have signage on the west and south sides of the building within the tenant space. A sign located closer to the front of the building would require a variance. The sign plan will be reviewed at the next planning commission meeting.

Richard Gunderson introduced himself and his wife, Norma, the Dunn Brothers franchise owners. He stated that he and his wife have done the research to have a successful business and meeting place which would be an amenity to the community. It would serve educational, civic, and religious organizations in the general population. Ms. Gunderson quit working as a human resources specialist to work at two Dunn Brothers’ franchises to learn the business. The business will provide jobs. He looked forward to discussing the signage at the next meeting.
Ms. Gunderson added that the business would provide jobs and opportunities.

The public hearing was opened. No testimony was submitted and the hearing was closed.

**Odland moved, second by Magney, to recommend that the city council adopt the resolution approving the conditional use permit and final site and building plans for a fast food restaurant with drive-up facility at 14525 State Highway 7 (see pages A14-A19 of the staff report).**

**Calvert, Knight, Magney, O'Connell, Odland, Powers, and Kirk voted yes. Motion carried.**

The city council is tentatively scheduled to review the item at its meeting on November 23, 2015.

**B. Conditional use permit and site and building plan review for the expansion of the Pagel Activity Center for a second hockey rink with ancillary training, locker, and storage rooms.**

Chair Kirk introduced the proposal and called for the staff report.

Trapp reported. She recommended approval of the application based on the findings and subject to the conditions listed in the staff report.

Magney asked if the parking and traffic circulation change the conditions of approval. Trapp answered affirmatively. The requirements are listed in the conditional use permit. Regulations related to the construction of the building are provided in the site and building plan section.

Magney asked if the conservation easement is included in the resolution. Trapp explained that it would be required as a condition of approval. The language will be revised to be more specific when it is reviewed by the city council.

Wischnack added that it is not unusual to have a conservation easement included in a resolution, but not have it executed until later. Chair Kirk asked if the location of the conservation easement is waiting to be determined until the location of the soccer fields is determined. Wischnack stated that there are storm water pipes in the area that have to have access addressed. The city attorney would write the conservation easement once those items have been resolved.
Trapp noted that the applicant was readily agreeable to including a conservation easement. There are certain issues that need to be included in the easement.

Chair Kirk was curious what the eventual final amount of tree cover would be on the east side and noise mitigation.

Trapp clarified that the notion of a soccer field expansion is a totally separate matter that would be dealt with if and when it would be wanted in the future.

Powers asked how much developable area would be left. Thomas estimated that the vast majority of usable space would have been utilized. Colleran pointed out areas of the property already included in conservation easements. There is a sloped area that could potentially be developed.

Odland asked if the traffic study was done during times when multiple events took place. Trapp explained that the traffic study primarily focused on parking demands during a school day. The weekend was not a huge focus. Wischnack added that parking requirements are not typically geared for sporadic event parking, but rather for consistent, in and out peak-time traffic.

Chair Kirk noted how juniors and seniors drive. The drive extending to the domed soccer field is busy in the winter. Students end up walking up the hill to meet their parents at the top of the hill which creates a relatively dangerous condition. Trapp stated that staff has been working with the applicant and the school district. There was a discussion regarding the dome and the challenge with that. There needs to be access to the maintenance facility. There are areas for a crane that puts the dome on the field. School district representatives could address that issue.

Chair Kirk guessed that the sheet of ice does not relate to the growth of the school. Wischnack acknowledged that is part of the equation. There is one entity proposing one thing. The site has had incremental changes. Staff treats it as a campus review.

Odland felt that the drive down the hill is a year-round problem. Students walk up the middle of the drive aisle. It would be beneficial to make it safer for pedestrians.

Calvert asked how the preservation would be governed. She asked if trees would be able to be removed. Colleran answered that the conservation easement would protect the remaining trees. No building, grading, or construction of any kind
would be allowed within the conservation easement area except to maintain existing infrastructure.

In response to O’Connell’s question, Trapp clarified that the facility would be for practice only. There would be no games or tournaments. There would be no audience seating. O’Connell asked why a condition prohibiting games or a tournament would not be included. Trapp explained that staff wanted to restrict use during a school day, but did not feel a restriction would be needed at other times. Commissioners are welcome to consider or recommend that condition.

Chair Kirk suggested changing the wording from “during the week” to “when school is in session.” Thanksgiving is a great example. Kids could be on the ice.

Jim Vanburgen, vice president of the Minnetonka Youth Hockey Board, stated that:

- The proposal would be a practice facility.
- The program has grown by over 30 percent over the last 10 years.
- There will be over 950 kids in the program this year which is a record.
- He works closely with the high school and its program. Practices are not scheduled during varsity football games, concerts, or theater events.
- The program is currently 1,200 hours short of practice time. A standard rink usually provides 1,100 hours. The association is buying ice anywhere it can within a 20 mile radius.
- U.S.A. Hockey is the governing body. The program is 30 percent short from a development standpoint.
- He was happy to answer questions.

Powers asked what the growth of the program is expected to be. Mr. Vanburgen stated that the proposal would not expand the program any more than it is currently. The rink would help catch up to where the program needs to be today. The association will continue to buy ice and rely on that heavily. Tournaments may be held at Rinks A and B. The proposal would be strictly a practice facility.

Calvert asked if U.S.A. Hockey is alright with a facility that would not offer game space with 30 percent growth in 10 years. Mr. Vanburgen answered affirmatively. Their recommendation is based on touches and hours on ice, not games versus practice. Practice is more valuable than games. The kids play enough games with the neighboring communities.
Calvert asked where parents would hang out during practice. Mr. Vanburgen stated that most parents drop off the kids. There is a lobby and mezzanine level around the glass. Parents typically stand at the glass anyway. The attendance is quite low.

Knight asked if early-morning practices may be wanted in the future and noted that the condition prohibiting use before 5:30 p.m. during the weekday would prevent that from happening. Mr. Vanburgen said that morning programs are held at the Pagel facility at 6:45 a.m. Trapp clarified that the condition applies only to non-Minnetonka High School students.

Odland asked what time school starts. It was determined that school starts at 8 a.m. and there are many programs that start at 7 a.m.

Chair Kirk asked staff how the limitations were determined. Wischnack stated that during the concept review, it was noted that this proposal is a partnership between two entities. The hockey rink works, but it has to be looked at as part of the whole campus design. The rink would impact parking, traffic, and access. Commissioners and councilmembers shared a list of concerns that led staff to include the conditions of approval. Commissioners are welcome to recommend changes to the conditions.

Knight feels that all of the conditions are appropriate.

Calvert noted that the applicant never included spectator seating in the proposal. She was concerned that the proposal would use up most of the campus’ limited buildable area.

Chair Kirk asked how it would be funded. Mr. Vanburgen explained that it would be entirely funded by the youth hockey program paid by memberships and fund raising. No tax dollars or money from the school district would be used.

Paul Bourgeois, Minnetonka Public Schools Director of Finance and Operations, stated that:

- The school board supports the proposal. It was approved unanimously.
- He has worked with city staff and agrees with the conditions of approval.
- Ways to fund improvements to parking have been identified without using tax dollars.
- He was glad to answer questions.
• Operating costs for the rink would be paid 100 percent by the youth hockey association. The youth hockey association would own the rink and receive bills for maintenance costs.

Calvert asked what the school board discussed in relation to the limited amount of buildable space being used for a hockey rink and what would be done if more space is needed for academic programs.

Mr. Bourgeois stated that 17 additional instruction spaces were recently added. The high school has capacity for 3,400 students. Teachers move to different rooms to allow the rooms to be used every hour. Classrooms could be built above the gap between the Pagel Center and the school. There are things that could be done, but, at this time, the projections show that the school population will top out at 3,400 students. The parking lot could be restriped and additional green space made into parking to increase the number of stalls by 15 percent.

Mr. Bourgeois explained how the hockey association would fund the project and maintain it long term.

The public hearing was opened.

Martin Vanderzanden, 5300 Michaele Lane, stated that:

• He has a view of the east parking lot from his home.
• He went to the meetings when Pagel I was built. There was a traffic study done back then. The school agreed to close off use of the east parking lot from 3:30 p.m. to the following morning and on weekends. Gates were installed to enforce that in the beginning, but then it stopped being enforced. Now the parking lot is open all of the time. He asked at the meeting what would happen if the school did not follow the agreement. There was no recourse for him as a neighbor. He would like the school to follow the agreement.
• He is concerned for the increase in noise.

Fred Hanus, 15801 West Oaks, stated that:

• Our community does very well raising funds when something has to be done. Fundraisers are held in the spring and fall.
• He visited the site twice at 5:30 p.m. There were 40 or 50 vehicles. The biggest parking problem is during the weekday or if there is a football game or big event. He did not see a problem if the rink would be just for practice. He knows the area very well.
• The proposal would benefit our children. His boys all played hockey. He drove all over Hennepin County to find ice time.

No additional testimony was submitted and the hearing was closed.

Powers asked why there is no enforcement mechanism. Wischnack stated that there is enforcement available. She suggested the school district address the gate issue.

Mr. Bourgeois stated that drivers kept driving through the gate and breaking it in pieces. A solid gate was recently installed on the drive on Dalton Avenue. The gate has been closed at the bus corral on the south end. The gate on the northeast end is not being closed. The agreement allows the gate to be open for evening activities and major events on weekends. Most of the year there is play practice. There are a lot of game events.

Odland asked when there is quiet time. Mr. Bourgeois said that there is quiet time occasionally. If a condition would require the gate to be shut down, then the gate would be locked.

Chair Kirk asked if the gate is to cut off drivers entirely or keep drivers from cutting through. Mr. Bourgeois said it looked like it was meant to keep anyone from parking in the area since gates at both ends were required to be closed. Teachers stay late, so a 3:30 p.m. shut time is not practical. He was not sure normal operations were taken into consideration at the time the agreement was created.

Wischnack explained that a school site management plan was issued in January of 2004. It refers to gates and said that if specific enforcement is warranted, the high school principal and supervisor of buildings and grounds should be contacted. Chair Kirk suggested she provide more details from the 10-page document to the city council. Wischnack agreed.

Powers was not sure for what purpose the trees would need to be saved by placing them in a conservation easement. There is expansion that is going to happen. The heart and soul of Minnetonka is the school system. Everyone is working very hard to make it the best it can be. It seems awkward to have a practice-only facility.

Odland said that this is an opportunity for the school district to come up with a concept of how to best use the land since it may need a soccer field at some
point. Building up may be the best use of the land and be able to maintain the trees.

O’Connell is in favor of the proposal. The gate restrictions need to be clarified before going ahead with approval. At this level, he is prepared to make a recommendation to move it on to the city council.

Chair Kirk also supports the proposal. Hockey is growing in all of the communities. The campus plan has site constraints. It will always be a limited and tight site. There are a lot of kids who want to play hockey. The hockey association is financing it well. Seeing the building with color helped break it up. He was concerned with setting limitations that cannot be enforced. “When school is in session” should be the qualifier instead of “Monday through Friday.” He was sympathetic to the neighbors’ concerns of traffic and noise.

Wischnack recommended the neighbor talk to school staff and said that city staff will follow up if enforcement is necessary. That will happen before the November 23, 2015 city council meeting.

Odland moved, second by Magney, to recommend that the city council adopt the resolutions approving a conditional use permit and the site and building plans for the expansion of the Pagel Activity Center at 18313 State Highway 7 with a modification to prohibit use of the facility by non-Minnetonka students and staff “when school is in session” instead of “Monday through Friday” (see pages A34-A52 of the staff report).

Calvert, Knight, Magney, O’Connell, Odland, Powers, and Kirk voted yes. Motion carried.

The city council is tentatively scheduled to review the item at its meeting on November 23, 2015.

Chair Kirk called for a short recess and reconvened the meeting.

9. Other Business

A. Concept plan for Highview Villas, a residential development of properties at 4301 Highview Place and an adjacent, unaddressed parcel.

Chair Kirk introduced the proposal and called for the staff report.
Cauley reported. She recommended commissioners provide their reaction and general comments related to the contemplated density and general site design of the previous 6-lot concept and the current 10-lot concept.

Tim Whitten of Whitten Associates introduced himself, Rob Eldridge of Ridge Creek Custom Homes, and Heather Whitten of Whitten Associates. Mr. Whitten stated that:

- The site is located in the northwest corner of Interstate 494 and Highway 7.
- The view is heavily wooded from the perimeter.
- The concept last year included 6 single-family, 22,000-square-foot lots with a private street. Staff informed the applicant that a private street would not be supported.
- The 10-lots would provide advantages for the site. He provided the site plan. The perimeter edges would be the same. All of the houses would be located on a newly created cul-de-sac.
- The target demographic is empty nesters. The lots would be 55 feet wide. It would be similar to the houses in Legacy Oaks. The price point would be around $450,000 to $600,000.
- He presented the potential benefits at the neighborhood meeting.
- The choice is between the previous 6-unit plan and the current 10-unit plan.
- The 6-unit plan would have more than one builder.
- The perimeter of the site would be unchanged since all of the driveways would be located on the existing cul de sac.
- The new proposal would have less traffic because the buyers would be older.
- The site would be maintained by an association.
- The homes of the new proposal would be smaller and have a lower profile of a one or one-and-a-half story house rather than a two-story house.
- The price points would be similar.
- Offering an alternative housing type in Minnetonka is an advantage.
- Staff brought up issues at the neighborhood meeting including existing and anticipated traffic issues. The discussion should be focused on the difference of 6 lots and 10 lots. The empty-nest type resident would generate less traffic than a typical single family.
- The area that could be divided into 10 lots would equal 15,000 square feet per lot. The house would be 100 feet from the frontage road or 80 feet from the property line.
• The setbacks would be the same as single-family houses except for the side setbacks which would be 5 feet and 10 feet.
• The price point would be similar to existing houses in the area.
• Visually, the proposed houses would be shorter than the existing houses.
• There would be more control managing one quality builder constructing 10 homes.
• He provided street-scape and parking exhibits.
• The bigger-lot homes at this location do not seem to be the right fit.

Calvert asked for the reasoning why the 6-lot plan would not be a good fit. Mr. Whitten stated that staff did not support a private street to service the 6 lots, so a cul de sac was added. The cul de sac added $50,000 to the cost of each of the 6 lots. That would generate the need for large lots, large houses, and a high price point. It does not feel like that would be a proper fit for this location. When the existing houses were constructed, Highway 7 and Interstate 494 had fewer lanes and less traffic. This would be a nice, self-contained location and an opportunity that does not present itself very often in Minnetonka.

Powers drove to the site and agreed that it is self-contained. He noted that there is no commerce close by. He asked what the owners would be doing. Mr. Whitten said that proves that the site is more suited for empty nesters. The site does not offer large yards or play areas for kids. The residents would be active adults and their activities happen all over. That is one reason why empty nesters want an association.

Calvert visited the site and heard significant traffic noise. She asked what measures would be taken to mitigate noise pollution. Mr. Whitten said that empty nesters stay inside their houses more than families with young children and each house can be constructed to be quieter inside. He wants to protect as many trees as possible. That would help provide a sound and visual barrier. He thinks the proposal has the right product for the right buyer.

Calvert confirmed with Mr. Whitten that sound mitigation would be included in the planning of the construction of each house. Mr. Whitten stated that landscaping and berming may also be looked at. The natural vegetation would have to be protected. He is sensitive to the fact that screening of the traffic would be needed. The site sits very high which is an advantage as opposed to being at the same level as the traffic. He is confident that 10 buyers would be ready to purchase the proposed houses. There is already interest.
Calvert said that the driveway could become a road. She wondered what kind of protections could be done for the neighbor to protect their privacy and buffer noise. Mr. Whitten explained that the road would be the same with 6 lots. It would be located as far away from the existing home on the north as possible. The setback would be 15 feet from the neighbor which would be the same as the 6-lot plan. Protecting the trees and screening could be done. The road would be kept at the same elevation to save as many trees as possible.

Calvert asked why the road could not be constructed at the existing cul de sac at the end of Highview Place. Mr. Whitten answered that it is not possible because of the elevations.

Odland asked if the houses in the Oakridge golf course area that back up to Highway 169 that cost from $500,000 to $1 million are worthless because of the noise. Mr. Whitten clarified that he previously noted that empty nesters spend more time indoors typically than families with children. Odland noted that empty nesters may want to have guests outside.

Odland felt that 6 houses respected the neighborhood and kept the neighborhood intact. She did not see how 10 houses would be better.

Mr. Eldridge reviewed that the 6-lot plan would have large lots with large houses that would demand a higher price point. That would be a challenge with its proximity to the freeway. The 10-lot plan would allow a price point at or below $600,000 which would be more appropriate with the site’s proximity to the freeway. The noise factor does drive the price for buyers anywhere within the metro loop. The costs associated with the 6-lot plan would not make it work. The current proposal would fit in with the current price points in the neighborhood.

In response to Odland’s questions, Mr. Whitten clarified that he would prefer to have one quality builder construct all of the houses rather than have multiple builders. Mr. Eldridge stated that the houses would not look the same. Having one builder would provide consistency with the homes. He was willing to have his builder curb the hours of construction and multiple builders may not agree to do that. With the 6-lot plan, the builder could clear cut trees to locate the house wherever. The 10-lot plan would give the community more control. A PUD would set restrictions to be followed by one entity.

Odland questioned where guests would park and snow would be stored. Mr. Eldridge stated that the street would be 26-feet wide, so parking could occur on both sides. There would be 2 to three 3 spaces for vehicles in the driveways as well. He calculated room for 85 vehicles.
Calvert noted that the street-scape view includes two-story houses. Mr. Whitten stated that the street scape houses represent one level, one-and-a-half level, and two-story houses.

Powers grew up in an area located under the flight path of airplanes. Property values in that area are very secure. The amount of white noise in an area is only one factor in determining its value. He asked how the neighborhood character would change. He felt it would be a dramatic change. Mr. Whitten said that the trees and perimeter would be protected by keeping the cul de sac internalized. That has been the concern of the neighbors. Protecting the trees is the priority.

Chair Kirk invited those present to provide comments.

Marquise Watts, 4233 Maple Lane, stated that:

- The houses on six lots would match the houses in the neighborhood.
- He loves the neighborhood.
- Maple Lane cannot handle the traffic generated by 10 houses. The incline is hard to navigate in the winter.
- There is a school bus stop and no sidewalks.
- Driving on Highview Place is extremely dangerous, especially in the winter.
- He was worried about the integrity of the neighborhood.

Stephanie Huss, 4209 Maple Lane, stated that:

- She feels strongly about preserving the integrity of the neighborhood.
- She loves the property owners who sold their property. She wants the best outcome.
- She had sent a letter detailing how the proposal would impact the community, street, traffic, safety, and snow removal. Her driveway tends to collect all of the snow removed from Maple Lane and Highview Place by the plow. She helps a lot of motorists who get stuck in front of her house.
- She provided a petition stating that the 10-lot plan would not blend with the community.
- She is building a single-level house.
Greg Carson, 4222 Maple Lane, stated that:

- Part of the 4.5 acres would not be built on.
- He asked for the required setbacks from a freeway.
- He asked if anyone could put a cul de sac and street on one’s property.
- The current owner advises against parking on both sides of the street.

Steve Huss, 4209 Maple Lane, asked if there would be an age limit for residents.

Michael Halley, 14801 Minnehaha Place, stated that:

- He is a former builder in Minnetonka. He has 2 clients watching on television who are 66 years of age and live in a 2-story house with 4,000 square feet. They are both tired of maintaining a half-acre lot. They spend 4 months a year in Arizona. He has been looking for over a year to build them a new house because she needs ADA facilities in the bath and kitchen for $600,000. They want an association to take care of the maintenance, 1,500 square feet, a finished lower level, and to stay close to their current residence and neighbors. They do not want to be confronted by neighbors in opposition to them moving to the neighborhood. They have lived in Minnetonka 32 years and want to stay here in a new, ADA-ready house that they do not have to remodel. He is hoping commissioners will consider them and others like them.
- The proposal would sell out in a year easy because there is nothing else similar available.
- Residents 60 to 70 years of age do not want to move into a senior rental or condominium.
- The land prices are too high. Because of the location to the freeway, the prices may stay more affordable.
- He hoped consideration would be given to the residents not in this room who want to live in the proposal.

Greg Lewis, 4230 Maple Lane, stated that:

- He lost 2 oak trees to a disease called oak blight. A lot of the trees would be removed and the noise would travel from the corridor. It would be 3 or 5 times worse than it is now.
- It is a beautiful area.
• He felt sorry for the couple, but hoped “people like that do not spoil our neighborhood because they are selfish and got to have new construction.”
• He preferred 4 or 5 houses. Separate builders would not “do a hack job.”
• He is selling his house. A buyer backed out when the buyer found out the property may be developed.

Bob Anderson, 4316 Highview Place, stated that:
• He hears the highway noise. He tunes it out. The proposed site would hear more of the highway noise.
• He is 69 years of age and is outside a lot.
• There would be objections to buying the proposed houses at that price point.
• Maple Lane has a slope that is dangerous in the winter until the sanding trucks get there. He has slid onto Lake Street Extension when driving down the slope and had trouble driving up the slope. Ten more vehicles would cause a pile up. That is crazy.

Mr. Halley noted that the resident who spoke and is 69 years of age wants to stay in the neighborhood.

Jenna Swenson, 4214 Maple Lane, stated that:
• She is not opposed to having 6 houses being constructed.
• She and her kids are outside a lot. There is a lot of traffic noise. Another young family moving in would not have a problem except for maybe the price point. There is a playground on Lake Street Extension.

Isaac Allen, 4244 Highview Place, stated that:
• He agreed with the other speakers.
• He preferred 5 or 6 houses.

Janet Davidson, 4217 Maple Lane, stated that:
• Seniors need housekeeping services and home-health aids that create traffic.
In response to Calvert’s question, Wischnack explained that the comprehensive plan guides the site for up to 4 units per acre. New housing is balanced with natural resources and existing neighborhood context.

O’Connell confirmed with Cauley that the site could be developed for 6 lots and meet all minimum lot standards. There would be no house-size restriction other than having to meet setback requirements. The mcmansion policy would not apply. During subdivision of the site, up to 35 percent of the high-priority trees on the site could be removed and after two years of occupancy, the homeowner could remove all trees on his or her lot.

Chair Kirk noted that the community sometimes sees a PUD as a bad thing, but the PUD allows more control to save trees and other features. He asked if there was a subdivision with similar density recently approved. Wischnack stated that the current proposal is less dense than Groveland Pond.

In response to Knight’s question, Wischnack stated that there are 5 houses on the cul de sac in Groveland Pond and a total of 14 houses.

Knight reviewed that the street would be public. He asked where the snow would be stored. Cauley said that snow removal would be part of the review of a formal application.

Knight asked how traffic studies of seniors and families with kids compare. Cauley stated that the formal application would address that information. Thomas provided that generally a single-family house produces 10 vehicles trips per day and senior housing slightly less than that.

Chair Kirk confirmed with Cauley that the cul de sac would be publically maintained, but the developer would pay the cost to construct it.

Cauley provided that there is a 50-foot front yard setback to arterial roads in an R-1 district. The properties along the east side of the proposed cul de sac would be considered having double frontage which would have a 50-foot setback from a collector and arterial road. The setback may be different with a PUD. The developer’s intent is to cluster the houses closer to the cul de sac to preserve a larger distance from the rear of the houses to Highway 7 and Interstate 494.

Chair Kirk noted that the city lacks new construction and it is a deficit in the housing stock. Wischnack said that building permits in the last year priced new houses at $700,000 not including the lot. The applicant’s figures were accurate.
Powers appreciated the articulation of the plan. The 10-house development would be too much. The developer needs to be more optimistic. The adverse pressure on the neighborhood for 10 houses is greater than 6 houses. He prefers the 6-house plan.

Magney agreed that 10 houses would be too dense for the area. Parking would be an issue and traffic would increase. He prefers the 6-house plan. It would fit better.

Knight agreed that 10 houses would be too many. He leaned between 6 and 8 houses. The street parking could be an issue.

Calvert agreed with the other commissioners. It seems dense. She appreciates the comments about the need for diversified housing stock for empty nesters at an affordable price point. There are many people who do not want to care for lawns or do general upkeep and there is not enough new construction. She shares the concerns regarding density, snow removal, access, and noise.

O’Connell does not think that 10 is appropriate, but the alternative would be $1 million, 5,000 to 6,000 square-foot houses. He was not certain there would be less traffic generated from 6 of those houses than 10 of the proposed houses. There would be more mass and more people in the 6 houses over time. There would be no control over the 6 houses and the yards that would be constructed. The proposed plan would provide control over street scape, massing, and upkeep of the property over time. Calvert shared that view. It is a very delicate balancing act to preserve homogeneous neighborhoods with the need for diversity of housing stock and the preservation of view shed. She is conflicted.

Odland thought there should be no more than 5 or 6 houses.

Chair Kirk thought PUD zoning would not be a good thing for this development. There would be too many houses around the cul de sac. He did not see 10 fitting on the site. He would like to see clearly identified expectations in the application to not let the house sizes get out of hand. He was not that concerned with the traffic. There are streets that have a lot more homes than this one would have all over the city. The integrity of the current neighborhood needs to be protected, but there are some limitations when there is property that can be developed. If the application requests a PUD, then he would like conditions that maintain the tree scape and deal with water and trees and the space between driveways.

Powers noted that the proposed houses’ residents would need to drive through another neighborhood to gain access.
The city council will review the concept plan at its November 23, 2015 meeting.

B. Concept plan for redevelopment of the TCF Bank property at 1801 Plymouth Road.

Chair Kirk introduced the proposal and called for the staff report.

Thomas reported. She recommended commissioners provide their reaction and general comments related to the scale and design of the proposed buildings and site.

Steve Johnson, of Solomon Real Estate, applicant, stated that:

- He is pleased to be a partner with TCF to redevelop the property.
- The plan would construct a new building on the site and demolish the old building. The 5,400 square-foot retail building would keep the existing drive through.
- A sidewalk connection would be created to wrap the property from Wells Fargo on Plymouth Road around Cartway Lane and then back down Ridgedale Road to the TCF property.
- Given the age of the current facility done in the 1970s, there were no design standards for ponding or infiltration. Underground vaulting would be added in the center parking lot area. Everything is draining onto Plymouth Road currently.
- The proposal would complement the landscaping that is being done by Highland Bank. There would be a continuous feel between the two.
- He has met with the neighbors on 3 occasions. Their concerns were that they want a sidewalk and pedestrian access to the sidewalk, but did not want additional drive throughs.
- It is a pretty straight forward redevelopment.
- He was available for questions.
- None of the existing access points would be changed. It is a shared access right now with Wells Fargo and U.S. Bank.
- The current footprint is 12,000 square feet between the 2 floors right now. The proposal would be 5,400 square feet and meet all setback and parking requirements.

Calvert asked if there is any latitude to modify the color scheme. Mike Kraft, architect for the concept plan, stated that he has heard comments regarding the
color scheme. What he loves about the look and feel is that it is energetic, bright, and an attention getter. The building would be a fraction of the size of the existing building. To have something small and weak on the corner would be a vulnerability that needs to be avoided. To create something engaging and energetic adds a lot to the corner. There is some latitude with the color. This is a prototype that is fairly well developed, but it has not been built, so there is some latitude.

Chair Kirk said that seeing samples of the red color may be helpful. It seems that there is a tremendous amount of hard surface and paving. Mr. Johnson said that the landscape plan may be modified. There would be vaulting under the parking lot. Decreasing the amount of parking would require a variance. Chair Kirk would not ask him to do that. Having the building on the edge of the lot and parking in the back is a benefit.

Chair Kirk invited the public to provide comments.

Bob Bertelsen, 13513 Larkin Drive, stated that:

- The plan received 100 percent favorable responses from neighbors.
- He liked the scale and that the developer came to the neighborhood meeting.
- The parking lot is small in comparison to Ridgedale’s.
- He supports the proposal.

Wischnack suggested commissioners discuss the proposed additional use on the site, flexibility in the parking, scale and mass, and landscaping.

Calvert was not sure a single-story building would be the best use of the site.

Powers likes the project. He is color blind, so he cannot comment on the color red. TCF goes for a more youthful, smaller-footprint client. He would like to see leading-edge landscaping. Having a small building is smart business.

Chair Kirk would not object to the proposal, but felt it should be pointed out that more density would be appropriate for the site. Higher density in retail areas may save more density located closer to residential areas. The area has mixed uses that could have the proposal on the corner. Calvert would be comfortable with two stories for the transition area from lower buildings to the shopping center. The new Highland Bank building would be 6 stories tall. She liked the design of the proposed building and its layout.
Odland liked the proposed one-story building because it would be youthful and attractive and fit with the updates being done to Ridgedale Center. It would be a good use of the space to add the additional retail area.

O’Connell noted that the proposal is a two-story building. He suggested making it a two-story building above ground.

Chair Kirk heard that commissioners are relatively happy with the design and density.

Calvert noted that a pretty large apartment complex was approved across the street closer to residential housing. Highland Bank will be quite tall. The proposal is in an already built area. Having a more vertical density makes more sense, but she understood the parking issue.

Chair Kirk thought if underground parking would be done, then 5 or 6 stories would be needed to make it cost effective. He supports the proposal. Buildings at different heights keeps the area interesting. Buffering the neighborhood with townhomes may be a consideration someday. More landscaping to hide the parking and provide green space would be beneficial.

10. Adjournment

Odland moved, second by Knight, to adjourn the meeting at 10:11 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

By: __________________________
    Lois T. Mason
    Planning Secretary