

CITY OF WILLMAR  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
6:30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023.  
CONFERENCE ROOM #1  
WILLMAR CITY HALL

Chair: Jonathan Marchand

Vice Chair: Kelsey Vosika

Members: Steve Dresler, Stacy Holwerda, Yvon Fils-Aime, John Christianson and Christopher Buzzeo.

## AGENDA

1. Meeting Called to Order
2. Minutes from May 17<sup>th</sup> meeting
3. Kuepers - CUP and Subdivision (Final) / Public Hearing
4. Justin Paffrath Tiny Homes CUP (PUD) / Public Hearing
5. Text and Map Zoning Amendment - I-3 District / Public Hearing
6. Rail Park Subdivision - Final Plat
7. Rail Park Plan Review Final - 1<sup>st</sup> Phase
8. WMU Purchase Agreement - Final
9. Venosdel Plan Review - Final
10. Bethesda - Rezoning (Introduction)
11. Miscellany
12. Adjourn

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### **1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

### **2. MINUTES FROM MAY 17<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

### **3. KUEPERS / CUP (PUBLIC HEARING) / SUBDIVISION (FINAL)**

#### **Overview:**

- Kuepers Inc is proposing a second phase of the Preserve on 24<sup>th</sup>. It is located on lots 95-841-0110, 0120, 0130, and 0140 on 24th Street SE.
- Zoning is General Business and multi-family developments are permitted with a Conditional Use Permit.
- The conditional use permit and preliminary minor subdivision were introduced to the Planning Commission on 03/01/2023 meeting.
- The two buildings will each have 1 studio apartment, 12 one-bedroom units and 23 two-bedroom units.
- Staff has instructed the applicant to provide the parking they think they need and disregard the minimums.

- This project will need minor subdivision and final subdivision will have two lots where it will be built a building per lot.

**Comments:**

**WPD:** No concerns from the WPD aspect.

**Fire Department:**

- Additional Fire hydrant on the Northside of Building five.
- PIV must be monitored by Fire Alarm company.
- Road between apartments and garages must be at least 20' in width.
- Fire Hydrant must meet City of Willmar specifications.

**WMU Electric:** They are good to go with the proper easements for the electric.

**WMU Water:** No comments at this time.

**Engineering:**

**Staff CUP Recommendation: Staff recommends approval for the Conditional Use Permit.**

**Staff Minor Subdivision Recommendation: Staff recommends approval for the Minor Subdivision.**

- **Data for the Preliminary & Final Plat meet City standards.**
- **Comments and Recommendations from staff have been followed.**

**4. JUSTIN PAFFRATH TINY HOUSES (CUP-PUD) / PUBLIC HEARING**

**Overview:** Justin Paffrath is in the process of subdividing three parcels on Pleasant View Dr SE. Mr. Paffrath is seeking to divide them into 20 separate lots for his tiny home subdivision. The lot sizes and setbacks of Mr. Paffrath's subdivision does not meet City standards. However, Mr. Paffrath is requesting a PUD under the guidelines of a conditional use permit CUP. A PUD exempts the subdivision from City standards, so the Planning Commission has full authority to set the standards for the subdivision, such as lot minimums and other site design features.

- The subdivision will result in 16 residential homes and four outlots.
- The lots will be tiny homes

**Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends holding the public hearing to get public feedback, but staff recommends tabling a decision until there is more information provided to staff regarding utilities.**

## **5. TEXT AND MAP ZONING AMENDMENT – I-3 DISTRICT / PUBLIC HEARING**

**Overview:** This is a city-initiated Map and Text Zoning Amendment that creates a new Zoning designation called Industrial 3 District. This district will be exclusively for for the Rail Park, already in the approval process. Industrial uses related to the rail facilities will be permitted under Plan Review in the I-3 District. Map and Text to amend Ordinance 1060, Section 05 is attached to this Agenda as Visual.

**Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval for the new I-3 District**

## **6. RAIL PARK SUBDIVISION, SUBDIVISION – PRELIMINARY AND FINAL PLAT**

**Overview:**

- This is a major subdivision to reorganize all the existing lots into one lot that is 145 acres.
- There will be a new zoning district for the area (I-3, Industrial 3).
- This would be a rail related industry district.
- MB rail will need to provide grading plans for rail construction to be approved.
- At this moment their approach is just to build the rail and allow other interested companies to build the buildings that they need. This means there will be more subdivisions associated with this property, and that as buildings come in they will be subject to the full scrutiny of plan review.
- The preliminary plat was presented to Planning Commission on 05/17/2023, with no comments.

**Comments:**

**Fire Department:** At this point they have no comments. As the project progresses they will have to add several fire hydrants and accessible roads.

**WPD:** No concerns from the WPD side of things at this point.

**WMU Electric:** They have no further comments at this time. We will work on future easements as it gets closer to developing

**WMU Water:** They have no additional comments at this time.

**MnDOT District:** The control access should be shown on the adjacent highway plat.

**Engineering:**

**Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approving the major subdivision. The plats provided meet all the requirements for the preliminary and final plat approval.**

## **7. RAIL PARK PLAN REVIEW FINAL – 1<sup>ST</sup> STAGE**

**Overview:**

- This Plan Review is to build the rails considering the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the Rail Park Development.

**Comments:**

**Fire Department:** They have no concerns with phase one as it is shown in yellow on the plans provided.

**WMU Water:** They have no additional comments on this project at this time. They support serving water to this property.

**WMU Electric:** They don't have any comments or concerns at this point, they will need lot's of easements as they move forward.

**WPD:** No concerns from the WPD of things. They have already addressed potential turn lanes, which would have been their suggestion also on Hwy 40.

**Engineering:** They have reviewed the Existing Conditions Sheet C1.1 and Concept Plan Sheet C2.1 for Phase I of the project which were submitted via e-mail 5/19/2022 and dated 5.15.2023. In addition, we have reviewed the revised Preliminary Plat - Willmar Rail Park Addition - Prelim Plat 2023-05-22. They have the following comments:

1. The applicant shall obtain all necessary regulatory agency permits/approvals and provide verification to the City of Willmar for our files prior to construction.
2. Any sub-surface tile lines encountered during construction shall be repaired and or re-routed to maintain drainage.
3. The applicant shall submit a grading plan for the review of the City of Willmar.
4. The applicant shall submit rail plans to the City of Willmar.
5. The applicant shall submit a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan for the review of the City of Willmar.
6. The applicant shall submit a Stormwater Management Plan for the review of the City of Willmar.
7. The Preliminary Plat shall be signed by a Land Surveyor licensed in the State of Minnesota.
8. A minimum of 75 feet of Right-of-Way north of the centerline of State Highway 40 shall be dedicated on the plat.
9. Current title commitments for the property identified in the Preliminary Plat shall be obtained for verification of the legal description.
10. All construction shall be in accordance with the City of Willmar Standards.
11. A pre-construction meeting shall be held prior to any construction at the site.

**Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the approval of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the rail park plan review.**

- A grading plan of the entire site will be needed to install any rail for the project
- An Environmental Assessment Worksheet will need to be completed by the developer and reviewed & approved by City staff.

- The first stage of the Rail Park is the case of the requirements under Minn. R. 4400.4300, to approve Phase I. After that the city would need to rely on the provision in Minn. R. 4400.4100.

## **8. WMU PURCHASE AGREEMENT - FINAL**

### **Overview:**

In 2010, WMU completed a facilities study to address future building needs. As a result, WMU purchased the former Taco John's property in 2010, and the former Gerry's Liquor property in 2013 for future building space needs.

WMU updated the facilities study in 2016. The 2016 study outlined the value of a new "green field" site consisting of 8-10 acres or more in size to accommodate a singular new facility, rather than operating from multiple locations.

With the updated 2016 Study the Municipal Utilities Commission (MUC) is focused on finding a new, larger space, the adjacent properties, commonly known as the 810 Litchfield Ave property became expendable.

In 2022, the main floor tenant reached out to WMU and expressed interest in purchasing the property. WMU had the property appraised and conferred with City Attorney Robert Scott regarding selling the property to the main floor tenant, and in April of 2023, the MUC directed staff to sell the property.

A verbal price agreement was established with the tenant and a purchase agreement has been drafted with the City Attorney's Office. The agreement is currently under review by the tenant.

In summary, WMU is requesting the approval of the Planning Commission to sell the property at 810 Litchfield Avenue SW, and the adjacent parking property consisting of (4) total parcels to the main floor tenant, subject to approval by the MUC and City Council.

- The preliminary draft was presented to Planning Commission on 05/17/2023, with no comments.

**Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the WMU purchase agreement.**

## **9. VENOSDEL, PLAN REVIEW - FINAL**

### **Overview:**

- Clay Bridgette is requesting a Plan Review to build an apartment on the second floor of an existing building.
- The lot is zoned as GB (General Business)
- It is located at 1020 Hwy 71 NE, Willmar.
- They will add a two-bedroom apartment to the second floor on existing 600 square feet space.
- The site plan was presented to Planning Commission on 05/17/2023, with no comments.

**Comments:**

**WPD:** No areas of concern from WPD aspect.

**Fire Department:** At this point FD has no issues.

**WMU Water:** The apartment will need to be metered separately from the existing account and per our policy at WMU, access to both the meter and the shut off for both accounts is necessary as needed.

**WMU Electric:** They are good to go. If they want to change any of the services for this apartment, they should look at upgrading their services to underground at this time.

**Engineering:** If no construction is being proposed on the exterior of the building, they do not have any comments.

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends approval of the plan review.

- **This is a conversion of existing space to a residential unit.**
- **City Code requires a plan review.**
- **City staff have visited the property to outline further requirements.**
- **This project is a commercial remodel with no exterior construction needed to complete the project.**

**10. BETHESDA – REZONING INTRODUCTION**

**Overview:**

- Bethesda is looking to expand their campus on a parcel of land they currently own (parcel ID 95-914-2610).
- It is located on northeast corner of 12<sup>th</sup> St SE and Willmar Ave SE.
- This parcel is currently zoned as the Agriculture District and the intention is to change it to LB.
- They intend to build Senior Independent Living apartments, it will be built in 2 phases, the first is 120 apartments building and the second 90 apartments building.
- A CUP / PUD will be requested for building approval.

**11. Miscellaneous**

- Short Term Rentals.

**12. Adjourn**