

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES
November 23, 2021**

A regular meeting of the Hopkins Planning & Zoning Commission was held on November 23, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 1010 1st Street South, Hopkins. Present were Commission Members Nathan White, Douglas Dyrland, Whitney Terrill, Andrew Wright, Gerard Balan and Maggie Sedoff. Also present was City Planner Jason Lindahl.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Stiele called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ADOPT AGENDA

Staff recommended moving Planning Application 2021-14 325 Blake Road EAW on the Agenda under New Business to the second item under Public Hearings.

Motion by Sedoff **Second** by Balan

Motion to Adopt the Agenda as amended.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

COMMUNITY COMMENT – None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Dyrland **Second** by Wright

Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda

1. Minutes of the October 26, 2021 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Planning Application 2021-25 Conditional Use Permit for the Blake School Campus Improvements

City Planner Jason Lindahl gave an overview presentation of this item. The applicant, Dan Kelly of the Blake School, is requesting a conditional use permit to construct a 38,000 square foot Early Learning Center, a 2,572 square foot Transportation and Grounds Maintenance Facility and to make

improvements to Campus Drive. Staff has reviewed this application and found that it is generally consistent with the conditional use permit standards.

Commissioner Sedoff questioned if there was consideration given to incorporating the existing Hopkins Early Learning Center, which had recently closed its doors instead of building a new facility. Dan Kelly Chief Financial Officer with the Blake School responded that the Blake School wanted all the buildings on campus to be within a close distance to each other and there were specific design goals for the Early Learning Center that would be achieved by building a new facility.

Further discussion included building standards and parking study requirements.

Chairperson Stiele opened the public hearing.

Bill Gleason, resident at 33 Blake Road South, voiced concern over potential noise from refuse removal and vehicle maintenance work that might disturb immediate neighbors to the proposed facility. Mr. Kelly responded that he has spoken to Mr. Gleason about these concerns.

Motion by White **Second** by Terrill

Motion to close the Public Hearing.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Commissioner Wright questioned the proposed hours of operation of the maintenance facility. Lisa Uhler, Director of Buildings and Grounds for Blake School, provided additional information on the hours of operation for grounds maintenance and snow clearing.

Motion by Wright **Second** by Balan

Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-22 recommending the City Council approve a conditional use permit for The Blake School, subject to conditions.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Mr. Lindahl stated that this item will be presented at the December 14 meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation for approval.

2. Planning Application 2021-14 325 Blake Road Environmental Assessment Worksheet

City Planner Lindahl introduced Bob Lux, CEO of Alatus and Walter Hughes of Humphries and Partners, who gave an overall presentation of the 325 Blake Road North Redevelopment Project.

Alison Harwood, Director of Natural Resources with WSB & Associates provided an overview of the Environmental Assessment Worksheet. Based on Minnesota Rule 4410.1700, the 325 Blake Road redevelopment project does not have potential for significant environmental effects and therefore, it is recommended that an Environmental Impact Statement is not needed. A public hearing is not required for an EAW and no comments were received during the public review period.

Motion by White **Second** by Dyrland

Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-23 recommending the City Council make a negative declaration of need regarding an Environmental Impact Statement for the 325 Blake Road Development.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Mr. Lindahl stated this application will be presented to the City Council at their December 7 meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation for approval.

3. Planning Application 2021-19 325 Blake Road PUD & Rezoning

City Planner Lindahl gave an overview presentation of this item. Alatus, LLC on behalf of the property owner the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD), requests rezoning and planned unit development (PUD) approvals for the property located at 325 Blake Road. The rezoning and PUD requests are necessary to facilitate the applicant's plans to subdivide and redevelop the property into a mixed use, commercial and residential transit-oriented development across Blake Road from the future Blake Road light rail transit station. The PUD approval is necessary to allow for several deviations from the development standards of the Mixed Uses district, which includes building height, floor to area ratio, setbacks, parking and exterior materials.

The developer hosted a neighborhood meeting on November 15, 2021 at 43 Hoops located at 1002 2nd Street Northeast. Staff also received one written comment from Dale Johnson whose questions focused comparisons between the Trilogy Blake Road Station and 325 Blake Road projects, snow removal and concerns over long-term developer accountability.

Commissioner Sedoff shared concern with allowing the 14-story building. Further discussion from the commission was generally supportive of the proposed height and of the overall project.

Chairperson Stiele opened the public hearing.

Pat Beddor, resident at 220 Ashley Road, shared concern over the PUD allowing deviation for a 14-story building stating that it was inconsistent with the 2009 Blake Road Corridor Small Area Plan he worked on as a Planning & Zoning Commissioner. City Planner Lindahl explained that the 14-story

building requires a deviation from the current Mixed Use standards but is consistent with the goals of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan regarding transit supportive density.

Motion by Wright **Second** by Balan

Motion to close the Public Hearing.

Ayes: All

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by White **Second** by Dyrland

Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-24 recommending the City Council approve an Ordinance rezoning the property at 325 Blake Road North from I-2, General Industrial to Mixed Use with a Planned Unit Development, subject to conditions.

Ayes: 5

Nays: Sedoff. Abstain: Terrill. Motion carried.

Mr. Lindahl stated this application will be presented to the City Council at their December 7 meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation for approval.

4. **Planning Application 2021-20 325 Blake Road Subdivision**

City Planner Lindahl gave an overview presentation of this item. Alatus, LLC on behalf of property owner the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) requests approval of the Mile 14 on Minnehaha Creek preliminary and final plats. The applicant proposes to plat the property into multiple parcels to facilitate the 325 Blake Road redevelopment project.

Chairperson Stiele opened the public hearing.

Bill Gleason, resident at 33 Blake Road South, requested clarification that the subdivision application only grants approval to split up the site and not what will be built on those parcels. City Planner Lindahl confirmed that the development approvals for the individual parcels are separate site plan review applications.

Motion by Sedoff **Second** by Balan

Motion to close the Public Hearing.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Balan **Second** by Wright

Motion to adopt Resolutions 2021-25 recommending the City Council approve the Mile 14 on Minnehaha Creek preliminary plat.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Sedoff **Second** by Terrill

Motion to adopt Resolutions 2021-26 recommending the City Council approve the Mile 14 on Minnehaha Creek final plat.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Mr. Lindahl stated this application will be presented to the City Council at their December 7 meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation for approval.

5. Planning Application 2021-21 325 Blake Road Site Plan Review – Site A

City Planner Lindahl gave an overview presentation of this item. The applicant, Alatus, LLC on behalf of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) is requesting site plan approval for Site A of the 325 Blake Road redevelopment. Site A includes a 6-story, 112-unit affordable housing building. The building will be affordable to those earning 50% to 60% of area median income (AMI). Staff finds the site plan is consistent with the Mixed Use District standards except for building height, setbacks, parking and exterior building materials.

Commission discussion included accommodating families with larger three and four bedroom units and the cost for shared amenities such as the exercise facility and parking. Bob Lux, CEO of Alatus, stated that the exercise facilities and most other shared amenities would be free of charge to residents of any of the buildings within the development; there will be a fee for parking with different rates for reserved and unreserved parking. Building A will also feature a clubhouse within the building that will serve as a community space with a kid-focused area. Additional discussion revolved around equity in regards to parking and transportation and the potential needs of the future residents within the building. Mr. Lux described the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) financing process that requires developments to meet a number of strict criteria in order to receive funds including affordability of units and parking.

Chairperson Stiele opened the public hearing.

Pat Beddor, resident at 220 Ashley Road, referenced the 2009 Blake Road Corridor Small Area Plan and questioned why affordable units were concentrated to one building instead of mixed with market rate. Mr. Lux responded that the LIHTC program requires development proposals to

maximize the number of affordable units in each project in order to receive financing, which results in the concentration of affordable units within one building. Additional discussion included the sense of community within affordable unit buildings and access to the shared amenities throughout the development.

Motion by Balan **Second** by White

Motion to close the Public Hearing.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Balan **Second** by Wright

Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-27 recommending the City Council approve the site plan for 325 Blake Site A, subject to conditions.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Mr. Lindahl stated this application will be presented to the City Council at their December 7 meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation for approval.

6. **Planning Application 2021-22 325 Blake Road Site Plan Review – Site B**

City Planner Lindahl gave an overview presentation of this item. The applicant, Alatus, LLC on behalf of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) requests site plan approval for Site B within the 325 Blake Road development. Site B includes a 5-story, 112-unit senior cooperative building.

Chairperson Stiele opened the public hearing. No one from the public came forward to speak.

Motion by Sedoff **Second** by Terrill

Motion to close the Public Hearing.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

General discussion included appreciation for the electric vehicle charging stations and the environmental and sustainability considerations in the development.

Motion by Sedoff **Second** by Terrill

Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-28 recommending the City Council approve the site plan for 325 Blake Site B, subject to conditions.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Mr. Lindahl stated this application will be presented to the City Council at their December 7 meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation for approval.

7. Planning Application 2021-23 325 Blake Road Site Plan Review – Site C

City Planner Lindahl gave an overview presentation of this item. The applicant, Alatus, LLC on behalf of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) requests site plan approval for Site C of the 325 Blake Road development. Site C includes a 14-story, 342-unit market rate apartment building. The building will include 9,000 square feet of commercial space, 520 shared parking stalls and 15% of the building would allow for hotel units.

Commissioner Balan asked where in the building would the hotel uses be located. Mr. Lux responded that the hotel units would be on the lower floors of the building but there is a chance that the hotel units could be scattered throughout the building in the future. Commissioner Sedoff shared concern with the height of the building deviating from the current zoning standards.

Motion by Terrill **Second** by Wright

Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-29 recommending the City Council approve the site plan for 325 Blake Site C, subject to conditions.

Ayes: 6.

Nays: Sedoff. Motion carried.

Mr. Lindahl stated this application will be presented to the City Council at their December 7 meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation for approval.

8. Planning Application 2021-24 325 Blake Road Site Plan Review – Site D

City Planner Lindahl gave an overview presentation of this item. The applicant, Alatus, LLC on behalf of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD), requests site plan approval for Site D of the 325 Blake Road development. Site D includes a 5-story, 162-unit mixed income multiple unit building. As a mixed income building, 80 percent of the units would be market rate and 20 percent would be designated for those at 60 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). The building would also include 254 shared parking stalls.

Chairperson Stiele opened the public hearing. No one from the public came forward to speak.

Motion by Balan **Second** by Terrill

Motion to close the Public Hearing.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Commissioner Wright asked about the size of the balconies on each of the buildings. Mr. Lux responded that they will all be full balconies.

Motion by White **Second** by Terrill

Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-30 recommending the City Council approve the site plan for 325 Blake Road Site D, subject to conditions.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

Mr. Lindahl stated this application will be presented to the City Council at their December 7 meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation for approval.

OLD BUSINESS – None.

NEW BUSINESS – None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

City Planner Lindahl shared the following updates:

- The December Planning & Zoning Commission will be canceled due to lack of an agenda.
- Thank you to Commissioner Balan for his service on the Planning & Zoning Commission.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Balan moved, Commissioner Sedoff seconded, to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: All.

Nays: None. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Courtney Pearsall
Administrative Assistant