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**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 2019  
6:30 P.M. - ARDEN HILLS CITY HALL**

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**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Chair Nick Gehrig called to order the regular Planning Commission meeting at 6:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present were: Chair Nick Gehrig, Commissioners James Lambeth, Subbaya Subramnian, Paul Vijums, and Jonathan Wicklund.

Absent: Commissioners Steven Jones and Clayton Zimmerman.

Also present were: City Planner Matthew Mroska, Planning Consultant Sarah Strain, and Councilmember Dave McClung.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA – JUNE 5, 2019**

Chair Gehrig stated the agenda will stand as published.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*May 8, 2019 – Planning Commission Regular Meeting*

Commissioner Lambeth requested a change to the minutes on Page 7, noting the planting islands comment was made by him and not Commissioner Zimmerman.

**Commissioner Lambeth moved, seconded by Commissioner Wicklund, to approve the May 8, 2019, Planning Commission Regular Meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

**PLANNING CASES**

- A. **Planning Case 19-007; 4101 Gale Circle Site Plan Review – *No Public Hearing Required***

**Planning Consultant Strain** stated the applicant has requested a Site Plan Review in order add approximately 703 square feet onto an existing detached garage. The Zoning Code requires a site plan review for all detached structures exceeding 728 square feet, up to 1,458 square feet. The current garage is 753 square feet. The proposed garage addition would create a total area of 1,456 square feet.

#### Site Data

Land Use Plan:	Low Density Residential
Existing Land Use:	Single Family Detached Residential
Zoning:	R-1: Single Family Residential
Current Lot Sizes:	.6 Acres
Topography:	The lot slopes 16 feet downward from the high point in the southwest corner of the lot to the northeast corner.

**Planning Consultant Strain** reviewed the surrounding area and the Plan Evaluation. Staff provided the following Findings of Fact for review:

#### *General Findings:*

1. The property at 4101 Gale Circle is located in the R-1 Single Family Residential District.
2. Detached accessory garages are permitted in the R-1 Single Family Residential District.
3. The proposed addition to the existing garage would be in compliance with the setback and lot coverage requirements of the R-1 Single Family Residential District.
4. The proposed addition is generally in conformance with the design standard requirements included in Section 1325.05 of the Zoning Code.
5. The total square footage of the proposed garage structure is permissible by City Code subject to site plan approvals.
6. The proposed addition is not expected to adversely affect the surrounding area of the community as a whole.

**Planning Consultant Strain** stated approval of Planning Case 19-007 for a Site Plan Review at 4101 Gale Circle would be based on the findings of fact and the submitted plans, as amended by the three (3) conditions in the June 5, 2019, Report to the Planning Commission.

1. The project shall be completed in accordance with the plans submitted as amended by the conditions of approval. Any significant changes to the plans, as determined by the City Planner, shall require review and approval by the Planning Commission and City Council.
2. The Applicant shall be responsible for obtaining a land disturbance permit from the City's Engineering Division prior to the commencement of any site activities.
3. The Applicant shall be responsible for obtaining any other permits necessary from other agencies, MPCA, Rice Creek Watershed District, etc. prior to the start of any site activities.

**Planning Consultant Strain** reviewed the options available to the Planning Commission on this matter:

1. Recommend Approval with Conditions
2. Recommend Approval as Submitted.

3. Recommend Denial
4. Table

**Chair Gehrig** opened the floor to Commissioner comments.

**Commissioner Vijums** asked if the additional driveway would tie into the existing driveway.

**Planning Consultant Strain** reported the new driveway would tie into the existing driveway and would be the same material type.

**Commissioner Lambeth** commented on the required land disturbance permit and asked if the structure proposed would encroach on any wetlands.

**Planning Consultant Strain** explained this site did not have any wetlands.

**City Planner Mrosła** reported the City Engineer had reviewed this application and once formal plans were submitted staff would review the information again to make sure nothing was impacted outside the area.

**Commissioner Lambeth** asked if the exterior finish on the accessory structure would match the home.

**Planning Consultant Strain** stated the applicant would be siding the accessory structure to make it look similar to the principle structure.

**City Planner Mrosła** suggested a condition for approval be added to read: The proposed accessory structure shall compliment the principle structure in color, if materials are unable to match.

**Commissioner Vijums** asked if water would be run to the accessory structure.

**City Planner Mrosła** stated water would not be run to the garage.

**Commissioner Lambeth moved and Commissioner Vijums seconded a motion to recommend approval of Planning Case 19-007 for a Site Plan Review at 4101 Gale Circle, based on the findings of fact and the submitted plans, as amended by the four (4) conditions in the June 5, 2019, Report to the Planning Commission. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

**B. Planning Case 19-001; Brausen Automotive Repair – Site Plan Review and Final Planned Unit Development – *Public Hearing***

**City Planner Mrosła** stated Brausen Automotive Repair has been serving the community for over 20 years. The existing motorized vehicle service center consists of six (6) repair bays in their garage. Also onsite is approximately a 3,000 square foot service station, with five (5) fuel islands and an associated carwash. The Applicant is requesting to remove the existing service station and carwash.

**City Planner Mrosła** reported the Applicant is requesting to construct a new 7,978 square foot convenience store and a 1,600 square foot carwash. The proposed car wash will include a unique conveyor belt system to pull cars efficiently through the car wash and reduce wait times. A typical car wash only allows one vehicle to enter the wash bay and thus requires significant vehicle stacking. The proposed conveyor belt system, which runs non-stop, will reduce wait times and vehicle stacking as vehicles can enter the car wash five (5) to ten (10) feet apart. The Kwik Trip Gas Station Located at 1756 Bunker Lake Blvd in Andover has a similar conveyor belt car wash. Staff visited the site and observed the car wash. On average vehicles took about two (2) minutes to go through the wash and had limited vehicle queuing to enter the wash.

**City Planner Mrosła** stated in addition, the applicant is proposing a 4,505 square feet garage and repair bay addition. The proposed addition is highlighted on the image above. The proposed addition will add six (6) additional repair bays. The existing garage, which is about 4,540 square feet, will remain, as will the existing fuel islands and canopy. However, the façade of the existing garage will be updated as part of this application. The Applicant is not proposing any modification to the existing accesses on County Road E.

**City Planner Mrosła** explained proposals for new construction, redevelopment of a site, and significant modifications to existing sites shall use the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process in the B-2, General Business District. The PUD proposal shall identify any requested modifications from the applicable zoning requirements and from the "Guiding Plan for the B2 District" as well as the reasons why the modifications would be in the public interest and would be consistent with the purpose of the B-2 District. Modifications to these requirements may be granted by the City without a variance through the PUD process.

**City Planner Mrosła** indicated the PUD process is a tool that provides additional flexibility for development that an underlying zoning district would not otherwise allow. For example, a PUD may make exceptions to setbacks, lot coverage, parking requirements, signage, building materials, or landscaping requirements. It is intended to overcome the limitations of zoning regulations and improve the overall design of a project. While the PUD process allows the City to negotiate certain aspects of the development, any conditions imposed on the PUD must have a rational basis related to the expected impact of the development.

#### Site Data

Land Use Plan:	CMU – Community Mixed Use
Existing Land Use:	CMU – Community Mixed Use
Zoning:	B-2: General Business
Current Lot Sizes:	1.89 Acres
Topography:	Approx. 10 feet height difference between edge of buildable lot area (low point) and center of lot (high point) – the west edge of the lot slopes down to a stormwater basin and road right-of-way

**City Planner Mrosła** reviewed the surrounding area and the Plan Evaluation. Staff offered the following Findings of Fact for review:

1. The property located at 1310 W County Road E is located in the B-2 General Business District.

2. The applicant has proposed a Final/Master Planned Unit Development in order to add work bays for automotive repairs and retail space for sales.
3. The applicant has submitted a Master and Final Planned Unit Development.
4. The Master PUD substantially conforms with the requirements of the City Code.
5. Where the plan is not in conformance with the City Code, flexibility has been requested by the applicant and/or conditions have been placed on an approval that would mitigate the nonconformity.
6. Flexibility through the PUD process has been requested in the following areas: minimum caliper inches, building materials.
7. The proposed development plan meets or exceeds the minimum requirements of the City Code in the following areas: lot size, building coverage, landscape coverage, setbacks, street trees, perennials and shrubs, planting islands, drainage wetlands and flood plain tree selection, lighting, screening.
8. The Master PUD is in conformance with the Arden Hills 2030 Comprehensive Plan. The property at 1310 W County Road E is guided for Community Mixed Use. Community Mixed Use areas are intended to offer a broad range of retail, services, and office space to meet community needs.
9. The application is not anticipated to create a negative impact on the immediate area or the community as a whole.

**City Planner Mroska** stated approval of Planning Case 19001 for a Site Plan Review and Final PUD at 1310 W County Road E would be based on the findings of fact and submitted plans, subject to the following conditions:

1. The project shall be completed in accordance with the plans submitted as amended by the conditions of approval. Any significant changes to the plans, as determined by the City Planner, shall require review and approval by the Planning Commission and City Council.
2. This approval does not include signs. A separate sign permit is required for all proposed signage. All signage shall meet the requirements of Sign District 4.
3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a landscape financial security of \$5,000.00 dollars shall be submitted. Landscape financial security is held for two full growing seasons.
4. Before construction, grading, or land clearing begins, trees or tree areas that are to be preserved shall be visibly marked and city-approved tree protection fencing or other method shall be installed and maintained at the critical root zones of the trees to be protected. The location of the fencing shall be in conformance with the approved tree preservation plan and approved by staff in writing.
5. All rooftop or ground mounted mechanical equipment shall be hidden from view with the same materials used on the building in accordance with City Code requirements.
6. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the Applicant shall submit a materials board to be approved in writing by staff.
7. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the Applicant shall provide a snow removal and storage plan detailing how snowfalls will be accommodated on site.
8. The Applicant shall be responsible for obtaining a land disturbance permit from the City's Engineering Division prior to the commencement of any site activities as well as any necessary right-of-way permits from the city and Ramsey County.

9. The Applicant shall be responsible for obtaining any other permits necessary from other agencies, including but not limited to, MPCA, Rice Creek Watershed District, and Ramsey County prior to the start of any site activities.
10. All disturbed boulevards shall be restored with sod.
11. The Applicant shall be responsible for protecting the proposed on-site storm sewer infrastructure and components and any existing storm sewer from exposure to any and all stormwater runoff, sediments and debris during all construction activities. Temporary stormwater facilities shall be installed to protect the quality aspect of the proposed and existing stormwater facilities prior to and during construction activities. Maintenance of any and all temporary stormwater facilities shall be the responsibility of the Applicant.
12. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the Engineering Division shall review and approve the utility plan in writing.
13. The Applicant shall provide a minimum stacking of four (4) vehicles for the car wash.
14. Bollards or a similar material shall be placed between the carwash queue and the convenience store parking lot and gas pumps to clearly delineate the carwash queuing area.
15. After three (3) months of car wash operation, the Applicant and staff shall review traffic operations. The Applicant shall implement any improvements recommended by the City Engineer at that time.
16. Bike racks shall be provided.
17. If the need is identified by the City, the proof of parking spaces shall be installed.
18. All light poles shall be a maximum of 25 feet in height, including base, and shall be shoebox style, downward directed, with high-pressure sodium or LED lamps and flush lens. Other than wash or architectural lighting, attached security lighting shall be shoebox style, downward directed with flush lens. In addition, any entry lighting under canopies shall be recessed and use a flush lens. Shields shall also be added as directed by the City.
19. No neon banding shall be permitted on the fuel canopy.
20. No exterior storage shall be permitted onsite.
21. Overnight vehicle storage is prohibited. All overnight vehicle storage shall be stored indoors.

**City Planner Mroska** reviewed the options available to the Planning Commission on this matter:

1. Recommend Approval with Conditions
2. Recommend Approval as Submitted.
3. Recommend Denial
4. Table

**Chair Gehrig** opened the public hearing at 6:59 p.m.

**Chair Gehrig** invited anyone for or against the application to come forward and make comment.

There being no comment Chair Gehrig closed the public hearing at 7:00 p.m.

**Ted Brausen**, Brausen Automotive Repair, stated his business has been in operation for the past 50 years. He explained he would be handing his family business over to his son and several changes were being planned for the site.

**Commissioner Subramanian** requested further information on the proposed number of parking stalls.

**Mr. Brausen** discussed the number of parking stalls that were being proposed for the site.

**Commissioner Subramanian** requested the applicant consider planting different tree species besides just Juniper trees.

**Mr. Brausen** stated he had spoken with an arborist and noted several different tree species were being planned for the site.

**City Planner Mroska** explained staff would be reviewing an approved tree list with the applicant to ensure all trees are approved tree species.

**Commissioner Subramanian** requested further information on how the building façade would be improved.

**Mr. Brausen** discussed how the building exterior would be improved both on the new and older portions of the building.

**Chair Gehrig** questioned how cars would stack for the car wash.

**Mr. Brausen** reviewed how cars would stack on the site for the car wash.

**City Planner Mroska** commented on the City Code with respect to the stacking of vehicles.

**Commissioner Lambeth** asked if the gas pumps would remain in place.

**Mr. Brausen** reported the pumps were updated last year and would remain in their current location.

**Commissioner Lambeth** expressed concern with the maneuverability from the far western pump.

**City Planner Mroska** stated staff has reviewed the turning radius for this plan and noted one parking stalls could be removed to allow for additional turning radius space.

**Mr. Brausen** reported his business would remain open throughout the reconstruction process.

**Commissioner Lambeth** stated overall, he was very impressed by the proposed improvements for this site.

**Commissioner Subramanian** encouraged the applicant to have new signage on the site for the car wash in order to properly direct traffic.

**Commissioner Vijums** asked if there was a maximum number of cars that could be stacked outside of the car wash.

**Mr. Brausen** stated 60 to 80 vehicles could run through the car wash in an hour. He anticipated he would not have 80 vehicles at the site at any one time for a car wash.

**Commissioner Lambeth** questioned if the car wash had a grade or slope at the exit point.

**Mr. Brausen** reported the car wash would have the same grade as the convenience store. He explained the entire car wash area would be heated.

**Commissioner Lambeth** thanked the applicant for providing heated pavement for the handicap parking stalls. He stated this was a fantastic feature.

**Mr. Brausen** stated he was also looking at heating the sidewalks.

**Commissioner Wicklund** commented on the stacking for the car wash and requested staff use the right size and scale of vehicles when this item goes before the City Council.

**Chair Gehrig** recommended Condition 1 be amended to read: shall require review and approval by the City Council.

**Chair Gehrig** recommended Condition 22 be added to read: The applicant shall have a final design for the car wash with stacking prior to the City Council meeting.

**Commissioner Lambeth** requested staff address the juniper tree situation with the applicant.

**Commissioner Vijums moved and Commissioner Lambeth seconded a motion to recommend approval of Planning Case 19-001 for a Site Plan Review and Final PUD at 1310 West County Road E based on the findings of fact and the submitted plans, as amended by the twenty-two (22) conditions in the June 5, 2019, report to the Planning Commission. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

### **C. Zoning Code Amendment – Public Hearing Required**

**City Planner Mrosła** stated the City has initiated proposed amendments to Chapter 13 – Zoning Code to revise the existing “Floor Area” definition of the City Code. The amendment would address the following:

1. The existing language below is not consistent with Minnesota State Building Code requirements.

Floor area. The sum of the gross horizontal area of all floors of a building as measured in square feet from the exterior sides of the exterior walls, or from the centerline of party walls separating attached buildings, but not including covered porches that meet the requirements in Section 1325.03 Subd. 2.D; decks; any space where the average floor-to-ceiling height is less than six feet; attached or detached garages; and other detached accessory structures.



**City Planner Mrosła** reported the definition for Floor Area was amended in 2007 to include an average height limit of less than six feet. The intent of adding a height limit was to clarify what is a non-habitable basement. However, in 2015 the Minnesota Building Code updated the section of the code regarding ceiling heights and habitable space. The updated code states various ceiling height requirements depending on what is constructed in the basement. For example, the minimum height for finished ceilings in basements of new buildings containing laundry rooms, bathrooms, hallways shall be seven (7) feet and basements in existing buildings have a minimum finished ceiling height of six (6) feet four (4) inches. However, new building basements not containing any habitable spaces as identified above shall have a minimum finished ceiling height of six (6) feet (8) eight inches or six (6) feet four (4) inches when beams, ducts or other mechanical item project.

**City Planner Mrosła** explained after speaking with city staff and the city attorney, it was determined to remove the height requirement and reference the Minnesota Building Code instead. This way, if minimum ceiling height is modified again in the future, staff doesn't need to revise the zoning code. The definition was also reworded for clarification and consistency with the building code and other municipalities. The definition for floor area is utilized when calculating floor area ratio (FAR). The floor area ratio (FAR) is one of the primary tools used to limit the bulk of a principle building on a property. The other tools include minimum landscaping requirements, impervious coverage limits, setback requirements, and building height limits. It was noted the City Attorney has reviewed and approved of the proposed changes.

**Commissioner Lambeth** asked how this amendment would affect the remodeling industry.

**City Planner Mrosła** discussed the old Minnesota State Building Code requirements versus the new Building Code. He noted the new Building Code was amended to allow older homes to be updated or renovated.

**Chair Gehrig** opened the public hearing at 7:39 p.m.

**Chair Gehrig** invited anyone for or against the application to come forward and make comment.

There being no comment Chair Gehrig closed the public hearing at 7:39 p.m.

**Commissioner Lambeth moved and Commissioner Wicklund seconded a motion to recommend approval of Planning Case 19-006 for proposed amendments to Chapter 13 – Zoning Code, floor area definition of the City Code, as presented in the June 5, 2019 Report to the Planning Commission. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

## **UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS**

None.

## **REPORTS**

### **A. Report from the City Council**

**Councilmember McClung** updated the Planning Commission on City Council activities noting the Council discussed a Site Plan review in the Gateway District. He explained the Council approved the Mounds View High School Planning Case with additional conditions. He congratulated City Planner Mrosła on being promoted to Community Development Manager/City Planner. He noted the City had posted for an Associate Planner position to assist the City in the Community Development Department.

**B. Planning Commission Comments and Requests**

None.

**C. Staff Comments**

**City Planner Mrosła** reported the July Planning Commission meeting has been moved from July 3<sup>rd</sup> to July 10<sup>th</sup>.

**ADJOURN**

**Commissioner Lambeth moved, seconded by Commissioner Wicklund, to adjourn the June 5, 2019, Planning Commission Meeting at 7:46 p.m. The motion carried unanimously (5-0).**