

**MINUTES  
CITY OF ELKO NEW MARKET  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
JULY 26, 2022  
7:00 PM**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Kruckman called the meeting of the Elko New Market Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commission members present: Kruckman, Hanson, Pipo, and Schroeder. Smith entered the meeting at approximately 7:10 p.m.

Members absent and excused: Ex-Officio member Anderson

Staff Present: Senior Planner Renee Christianson, Planner Jacob Skluzacek, and Chloe Weber of Bolton & Menk

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Kruckman led the Planning Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by Hanson and seconded by Schroeder to approve the agenda as submitted. Motion carried: (4-0).

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**5. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Senior Planner Christianson notified the Commission that Commissioner Smith would be approximately 15 minutes late to the meeting. No other announcements were made.

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. A motion was made by Hanson and seconded by Schroeder to approve the minutes of the June 28, 2022, meeting as submitted. Motion carried: (4-0).

**7. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**A. Request for Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Rezoning, Duane Geiger & Ryan Geiger, Applicants**

Senior Planner Christianson introduced the applicants and their request for a Comprehensive Plan amendment as well as a request to rezone property located on the northwest corner of Dakota Avenue and Old Town Road which they have an option to purchase. The applicants are planning to construct multi-family housing on the 4.175-acre parcel. Formal application to amend the City's Comprehensive Plan and rezone the property have been submitted and are necessary to use the property as intended. The amendment would change the land use designation of the subject property from commercial to high-density residential. The property is currently zoned PUD, but the applicants have requested to re-zone the property to R4 high-density residential. Christianson explained the relevant land uses and densities associated with commercial and high-density residential zones. Christianson reviewed the history of the property. In 2006 there was a 32-unit townhome development approved for the site but was never completed due to the recession. The property was later bank owned for over a decade. Christianson displayed maps of the area and reviewed the surrounding land uses and zoning. The subject property would need to be re-platted into a lot and block to accommodate development. Christianson noted that during the platting process the City will be seeking additional right-of-way along Dakota Avenue of approximately .1-acres. Upon platting, the lot would meet the minimum lot size for commercial or high-density residential development.

Chair Kruckman began the Public Hearing at 7:25 p.m.

Duane Geiger approached the podium to thank Christianson for the introduction and discuss some of his past projects in other cities with the Commission. Geiger stated that he wanted to build something that the community is happy with. Geiger also mentioned that the project was not seeking any subsidies and that he manages all of his own properties.

Scott Mohs was also present to add that the concept plan submitted to the City fits all City requirements. Mohs mentioned that he has experience with similar projects in greater Minnesota.

James Minor, 25955 Oriole Street, approached the podium for the public hearing. Minor mentioned that he moved to Elko New Market in March, but he would put his house for sale if the proposed project was approved. He was worried about his home value and did not want to look out the window and see the apartment complex as it was right in his backyard. Minor also had concerns about traffic issues already taking place on Dakota Avenue and people ignoring stop signs.

Jeremy Brown, 55 Dakota Avenue, approached the podium for the public hearing. Brown had questions about the radius for notification for the public hearing. Christianson informed him that the radius is set by State Statute and that it is 350 feet. Brown questioned the need for the project and mentioned the planned 88-unit multi-family housing project. Christianson informed Brown that the referenced project has been vacated. Brown reiterated the traffic issues on Dakota Avenue and his frustrations with the City's Police Department related to unsuccessful speed signage requests. Brown also brought up concerns he had about questions asked at a previous City Council meeting during an

unrelated public hearing for a TIF multi-family project including school capacity and the need for additional park facilities in the community.

Rita Brown, 55 Dakota Avenue, approached the podium for the public hearing. Brown mentioned that if the request to amend the Comprehensive Plan was successful, then two separate apartments could be constructed in the City. Christianson informed her that she was correct. Brown also repeated concerns made by her husband including questions about school capacity, traffic on Dakota Avenue and issues related to speeding construction vehicles on her street.

Jeremy Brown approached the podium for a second time to ask who the current owner/investor for the site was. Christianson informed him that owner information is publicly available on the Scott County website.

Duane Geiger approached the podium again to address the Commission following the questions and concerns raised during the public hearing, specifically concerns regarding school capacity and traffic congestion on Dakota Avenue. Geiger stated that he rents to a lot of divorced people and a lot of people who work from home. He also stated that a lot of elderly people are looking for affordable housing similar to what would be offered by his project. These types of residents would help alleviate concerns with school and traffic capacity.

James Minor approached the podium for a second time. Minor directed his question towards the developer and asked if the developer could guarantee that a significant portion of the project's residents would be working from home. Chair Kruckman asked Minor to please address the Commission directly. Minor apologized. Minor restated his belief that there are current issues with traffic on Dakota Avenue and his concerns about having high-density housing located in his neighborhood.

Jeremy Brown approached the podium for a third time. Brown stated that the developers had no information on traffic studies so claims should not be made about the traffic or who will be renting units on the site. Commissioner Hanson thanked Brown for his input but that he was over the time limit allotted for the public hearing.

Hearing no more public comment, Chair Kruckman closed the Public Hearing at 7:49 p.m.

Christianson addressed concerns raised during the public hearing. Christianson discussed the previously proposed multi-family project and stated they have formally withdrawn their applications for development. Christianson shared with those in attendance that the previous concerns expressed regarding school capacity were shared with the New Prague School District Superintendent following the previous public hearing at a City Council meeting relating to the project. The Superintendent submitted a formal response that the District did not have any concerns regarding their ability to serve the previously proposed multi-family housing project. Christianson reiterated that the District has formally responded to the current application to reguide the property to high-density residential, that they do not have any comment regarding the current application and have waived their right to further notifications or comments on the matter. Christianson reminded the

Commissioner that the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan contains a chapter regarding the development of parks and trails. She reviewed how developers contribute to the park system through either cash or land contributions. She also stated that the Parks Commission and City Council are currently working on a Parks 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan.

Christianson discussed the City's efforts to collect traffic data on Dakota Avenue. The most recent traffic count had 1,100 AADT with an average reported speed of 32 miles per hour in the area located between James Parkway and Old Town Road. Christianson also stated that all roads within the City have a 30 mile per hour speed limit unless marked otherwise. Chair Kruckman asked Christianson when the last study was done. Christianson answered that they are done typically every two years. Commissioner Smith asked if Public Works does any striping on Dakota. Commissioner Schroeder noted that striping has been added on other collector streets in the City as a traffic calming method. Smith asked if it is something that the City Council could consider, to stripe Dakota Avenue and also stripe turn lanes approaching CSAH 2.

Commissioner Schroeder questioned how long the property will remain vacant if not developed now as multi-family, and referenced how long it has been vacant due to lack of commercial interest.

Commissioner Hanson stated that the roads in the area were built to support the densities that a high-density residential development would bring in. Hanson said she would be in support of re-guiding the property for high-density residential.

Chair Kruckman asked if the City will be required to replace the commercial land if the property is re-guided. Christianson answered no, it would not be required but the City could still consider it.

Commissioner Smith stated that multi-family leads and more housing units overall will ultimately lead to more amenities, and decreased water bills for the rest of the City.

Commissioner Schroeder stated her support for the Comprehensive Plan amendment and rezoning.

Commissioner Pipo did not express support for the Comprehensive Plan amendment or rezoning.

Commissioner Smith had an additional question on height limits in relation to the Fire Departments current capabilities. Christianson stated that the proposed height of this project would not be an issue for the City's Fire Department, and stated that no comments were received from the Fire Department regarding the application.

After discussion, a motion was made by Smith and seconded by Hanson to recommend to the City Council approval of the request from Duane & Ryan Geiger to amend the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan to re-guide the property from commercial to high-density residential. Motion carried: (4-1). Opposed, Pipo.

A motion was made by Hanson and seconded by Smith to recommend to the City Council approval of the request rezone the property from PUD to R4 high-density residential. Motion carried: (4-1). Opposed, Pipo.

Chair Kruckman thanked those in attendance for their input during the public hearing portion of the meeting and mentioned that final approval would go before the City Council and is expected at their meeting on August 11<sup>th</sup>.

## **8. GENERAL BUSINESS**

A. None

## **9. MISCELLANEOUS**

### **A. Metropolitan Council Population Estimates**

Christianson presented the updated population estimates from the Metropolitan Council. Elko New Market jumped up to 4,920 with 1,574 housing units. Once the City reaches a population of 5,000, the City will be eligible to become a State Aid City, which means the City could become a recipient of State gas tax funding for streets and transportation.

### **B. Vacant Lot Inventory – July 2022**

Christianson mentioned that Skluzacek was working on reporting and that the vacant lot inventory had been updated. There are 150 total vacant residential lots in the City. Of the 150, 99 are single-family detached homes (29 in Ridgeview Heights plat) and 51 are platted for attached townhomes. She noted that a healthy vacant lot inventory is approximately a 2-3 year supply of lots and that the City would like to see more lots available.

### **C. Cities and Regulation of Edible Cannabinoid Products**

Christianson included a release from the League of Minnesota Cities regarding the regulation of edible cannabinoid products. Skluzacek mentioned that New Prague is considering a moratorium on the sale, manufacture, and distribution of the products. Discussion followed. Staff will bring back more information for the next meeting.

### **D. Community Development Updates**

Smith asked Christianson if she could relay his request for possible striping on Dakota to the City Council for future consideration. Christianson stated that the request will be relayed. Smith also asked if there were any updates on the I-35 development. Christianson informed the Commission that the City has received official written notice of the intention of a business considering locating at the site. Design work is beginning on site design. Schroeder asked if the company was public information at this point. Christianson wants

to respect the company's privacy until they can prepare a press release. Discussion took place on the infrastructure projects to bring utilities to the site.

Christianson reviewed the updated Community Development Updates report. She mentioned that the proposed Dakota Acres 2<sup>nd</sup> Addition 88-unit apartment building project has officially withdrawn their request. No updates on Kwik Trip. The August Ventures Concept Plan will be considered by the City Council on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Smith asked about the progress being made about potential development of the land surrounding City Hall. Christianson updated the Commission. Meetings have been held with City Staff and the property owners to review a recent wetland delineation for the property. Discussion took place on issues with depth, partial lots, and road stubs and how that will impact possible future development. Skluzacek mentioned that Staff is roughly halfway done with the annual City-Wide Code Enforcement Sweep. Christianson asked Weber if she had any thoughts on the traffic discussions regarding Dakota Avenue. Weber believes that it is an existing problem and not a land-use problem. Discussion took place on the traffic issues regarding the Dakota Avenue and County Road 2 intersection.

#### **E. Planning commission Questions & Comments**

None.

#### **10. ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Hanson and seconded by Schroeder to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m.  
Motion carried: (4-0).

Submitted by:



Jake Skluzacek  
Planner 1