

**MINUTES  
CITY OF ELKO NEW MARKET  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
MAY 31, 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, Smith, Pipo, Schroeder, Ex-Officio member Anderson

Members absent and excused: Senior Planner Renee Christianson

Staff Present: City Administrator Tom Terry, Planner Jacob Skluzacek, and City Engineer Rich Revering

**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: (5-0).

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**5. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. A motion was made by Hanson and seconded by Smith to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2022, meeting as submitted. Motion carried: (5-0).

**7. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**A. Consider Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Landscaping Requirements for Single Family Detached Homes in R1, R2 and R3 Zoning Districts**

Skluzacek gave a recap on the discussions previously held regarding Ordinance amendments to the landscaping requirements for single family detached homes in R1, R2 and R3 zoning districts. Staff was able to compile an amendment to the Ordinance based off examples from Lonsdale and New Prague. Section 1 of the Ordinance was amended to also include R3 medium-density single-family districts. Section 2 was amended to reflect the change to the tree planting requirements allowing residents to plant one tree in the backyard if two cannot fit in the front yard. Corner lots would be required to plant one tree in each front yard. Section 5 was amended to include R3 medium density attached residential.

Jonathon Nelsen, a Landscape Architect with Bolton and Menk, reviewed the City's current allowed and prohibited tree lists. Nelsen took into consideration which trees would be successful in soils common in Elko New Market. Skyline Honey Locust and Princeton American Elm were added under the allowed deciduous tree list. Three Spruce species replaced the Colorado Green Spruce on the allowed coniferous tree list. The Eastern Canada Hemlock was removed from the allowed list. A whole section of ornamental trees were added to the allowed list. No changes took place on the prohibited list; however, Nelsen was able to provide Staff with reasoning for why each tree listed is considered prohibited in case questions are raised by residents or builders.

Skluzacek shared Staff's recommendation to accept the Ordinance amendment as presented. City Engineer Rich Revering added that Nelsen also looked at which trees were available in our area to make sure the average consumer is able to obtain any tree listed.

Commissioner Kruckman opened the meeting to public hearing at 7:05 PM. Hearing no public comment, Commissioner Kruckman closed the public hearing at 7:06 PM.

It was moved by Smith, seconded by Hanson to recommend to the City Council the Ordinance amendment as presented. Motion carried: (5-0).

## **8. GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **A. Consider Grading Permit Renewal – R & F Properties, Applicant**

City Administrator Tom Terry presented on a grading permit renewal request for R&F Properties. The request is for placement of fill on the Elko Speedway site. The area where the fill will be placed is the overflow parking area by the movie theater screen. The current permit expires in July of 2022 and R&F Properties wishes to extend the permit for another year. Beth Tatge of R&F Properties was present for questioning by the Commission. Commissioner Smith had a question on some exterior storage issues from the past. Tatge mentioned that the issue has since been resolved.

It was moved by Hanson and seconded by Smith to recommend approval of the grading permit for R&F Properties as written. Motion carried: (5-0).

### **B. Comprehensive Plan Amendment Discussion, Old Town Outlot – Geiger & Mohs, Applicants**

City Administrator Terry presented a concept plan from Geiger & Mohs for a 118-unit multi-family housing project. Ryan Geiger and Scott Mohs were present for questioning by the Commission. Terry provided a recap of a past project for the site and how the site was zoned for PUD to allow for a medium density residential townhouse project. The property is currently guided for commercial under the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan and is located North of the strip mall. Geiger & Mohs currently have an option to purchase the property.

A Comprehensive Plan amendment would be needed to re-guide the property to high density residential to allow the project to happen. The project area borders commercial, low-density residential, medium-density residential and high-density residential. Terry mentioned that high-density residential can act as a buffer in between commercial and lower-density residential areas. Utilities and roads are already stubbed into the site.

The concept plan submitted contains two mirrored buildings each containing 59 units. The developer provided photos of past projects that represent what the proposed project may end up looking like. Scott Mohs described his past projects and explained how the proposed project would conform to City Code. Terry explained Staff comments and recommendations on the proposed concept plan. Terry opened discussion to input from the Commission.

Commissioner Kruckman had a question on replacing other areas with commercial if we re-guided this area to residential. Terry mentioned that it would be a good idea to always take into consideration; however, the two could be handled separately. Commissioner Pipo inquired about another high-density apartment project in the area. Terry gave an update on the Blackstone project and that the City Council has approved the land use approvals for the site. It is dependent upon assistance from the City in the form of Tax Increment Financing and they are not moving forward yet at this moment. Discussion took place on the traffic capabilities of that section of town. City Engineer Rich Revering was more concerned with Dakota Avenue as it grows in the future, but he did not see either of these two projects presenting a problem for traffic in the area.

Commissioner Kruckman asked the rest of the Commission if they were comfortable with recommending approving a Comprehensive Plan amendment to the City Council for re-guiding this property from commercial to high-density residential. Commissioner Schroeder had a question on how the PUD for the site originally worked. Terry gave a brief history on how the PUD worked and why it was zoned that way.

Commissioner Pipo mentioned that he would not be supportive of a Comprehensive Plan amendment to re-guide the site for high-density but did mention he would consider an amendment to re-guide the site for medium density. Commissioner Hanson had a question for the developers on who the project will be marketed towards. Ryan Geiger was present and mentioned that there would be a mix of many different types of people, but it would be market rate rentals. Scott Mohs added that he sees a lot of single young people, newlyweds and retirees moving into units like these. Commissioner Schroeder asked if the units would be rented or owned, Mohs informed her that they would be rented. Mohs described the management company he works with and how many units they manage. Commissioner Hanson asked Mohs if he would be looking at any tax assistance and he replied that he is not looking for any assistance at this time.

Discussion took place on the proposed height of the project. Terry wanted Mohs to be familiar with the City set-back requirements and how that will impact the site. Mohs was confident that the project would still be capable of meeting the additional setbacks that come with the additional height. City Administrator Terry reminded the Commission that the discussion they were having will have an impact in the future, but tonight the Commission just had to give direction on if they would entertain a potential Comprehensive Plan amendment to re-guide the site to high-density residential.

Hanson, Kruckman, Smith and Schroeder expressed receptivity to re-guidance of the property to high-density residential; however, Pipo expressed that he had reservations about high-density but would be receptive to medium-density residential. The Commission was supportive of the Staff recommendations as presented in the report and height was identified as an issue related to surrounding properties.

## **9. MISCELLANEOUS**

### **A. Community Development Updates**

City Administrator Terry went over and gave a brief update of all active projects in the City. Terry discussed Project Horseshoe, a large beverage bottling company, and wanted to know what the Commissioner's availability would be to meet with Project Horseshoe representatives. Terry gave an update of the project timeline so far and mentioned that Elko New Market and an unnamed Wisconsin City have been named the two finalists for the project location. Terry also went over Minnesota Open Meeting Law and the needs to schedule these meetings accordingly as to not violate the Open Meeting Law. The Commission was able to let Skluzacek know their availabilities on June 13<sup>th</sup>.

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

None.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Smith and seconded by Schroeder to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m. Motion carried: (5-0).

Submitted by:



Jacob Skluzacek  
Planner