

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Approval Agenda

Planning Commission Chairman Lucking called the meeting to order at 7:59 pm.

Council members present: Deb Kind, Tom Fletcher, Kelsey Page, Bob Quam and William Rose  
Planning Commission members present: John Beal, Kristi Conrad, Bill Cook, Pat Lucking, David Paeper and Douglas Reeder  
Council members absent: None  
Planning Commission members absent: None  
Others present: City Attorney Kelly, City Clerk/Zoning Administrator Karpas and Planning Commission Applicant Lisa Christian

2. Introductions

Each person introduced themselves to the group.

3. Open Discussion

The group discussed a number of issues of interest.

A. Discussion on impervious surface and the development of small lots

Chairman Lucking discussed concerns brought up by a resident which have been brought up a number of times over the years. He said he has tried to make residents understand that decisions aren't necessarily consistent through the years because the Planning Commission and City Council are dynamic rather than static organizations and there's nothing he can do to change it. He agrees that exchanging landscaping hardcover for a structural hardcover is not necessarily a good thing and suggested that the Planning Commission could look into ideas for how to address the problem of "hardcover creep." Zoning Administrator Karpas noted the visual impact of the hardcover changes if you go from at-grade hardcover to a structure.

Commissioner Beal commented that's when the massing ordinance should come into play on smaller lots.

Chairman Lucking discussed a previous request for a conditional use permit for increased hardcover for a swimming pool on Lodge Lane. In that case, the structure was newer, but had a hardcover of 35% and no indication that any previous approval had been granted for that percentage. He said he was uncomfortable granting an approval for that increase. Councilmember Quam asked how the city could realistically set a baseline when it came to hardcover.

City Attorney Kelly said the city could regulate hardcover on the property by using a standard of a change in the quality and character, noting there cannot be a change in the quality or character of the hardcover on a property without a variance. He discussed the request before the Commission tonight, noting if the access to the garage was altered, which could've reasonably been done, a large percentage of hardcover could have been removed from the property.

Commissioner Beal said he has also had a number of visits with the resident in question with his list of all the bad things the city has approved and he tends to get worn before the resident actually gets to what he really wants done.

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Zoning Coordinator Karpas said he has been tabulating lot areas based on their zoning district to get an idea on how many non-conforming lots are located in the R-1A District. Commissioner Cook said it doesn't matter how many small lots the city has, there must be a procedure for reviewing requests, and he believes the city is currently using a procedure that is not in the code. He described the challenges the lot next door to him is going to face as it is redeveloped. Cook said he wouldn't necessarily like to see different setbacks for smaller lots, he likes the variance process.

Councilmember Page said he believes residents know what they can build on a lot when they buy it. They can build what they have, and if they can't meet the ordinance requirements, anything beyond that requires a variance.

Chairman Lucking described the zoning when he built his house stating his property was four parcels with two different zoning designations, he said this can be seen in the varying setbacks of his home's footprint.

Mayor Kind asked why the lakeward lots of Greenwood Circle were R-1A while those to the north were R-2, even though they are similar in size. Councilmember Quam asked if there should be different setbacks for smaller lots. City Attorney Kelly said the city has never embraced the idea that there are small lots in the city.

Councilmember Fletcher noted there would also be concerns about the current height regulations if setbacks were reduced. There would have to be some step-back provision.

Commissioner Cook noted a ten-foot setback probably would not do any good since most small lots don't have a ten-foot setback now. Commissioner Beal said a number even have a house right on the line.

Councilmember Page said he's leary about opening a can of worms after redoing the ordinance. He feels all the properties already do and will need a variance and the degree of variance needed is not a selling point to him for changing the ordinance.

Commissioner Paeper said he does have sympathy for off lake small lots which have all the building constraints but none of the value.

It was agreed that staff would continue to tabulate lot areas to get an idea of the deviation from the required lot area and that the Planning Commission will work on language addressing the quality and character of impervious surface as a means of controlling hardcover creep.

**B. Canoe Racks**

Raised by Conrad, the group discussed the concept of placing canoe racks at the Meadville fire lane and St. Alban's Bay city docks and issuing permits for their use. There was discussion that the idea had come up before but there had been some question whether permanent structures should be put up by the city docks. The group agreed that the council should go forward with the idea and to research the cost of construction of the racks and what an acceptable fee would be.

**C. League of Minnesota Training**

Raised by Kind, Mayor Kind discussed some online training offered by the League of Minnesota Cities which would reduce the city's deductible if a claim were filed. The requirement is that a minimum of three council members, the Planning Commission Chair, a

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Planning Commissioner and one staff member must complete the training in order to qualify for the insurance savings.

D. Dock Lighting

Raised by Lucking, Lucking asked if the city was interested in placing some lighting in the transitional area of the docks which tends to get very dark. He said he has some solar lights he could put in the posts. The group agreed that lighting would be good. Mr. Lucking will purchase two lights and submit his receipt to the city.

E. Approval Standards

Raised by Page, Page asked that the Planning Commission follow the criteria outlined in the ordinance when acting on variance requests. He said this would be helpful for the Council. Zoning Coordinator Karpas said the criteria will now be included on all staff reports.

4. Adjournment

Lucking moved to adjourn. Second by Beal. The meeting was adjourned at 9:12.

Respectfully submitted  
Gus Karpas  
City Clerk