

CITY OF WACONIA PLANNING COMMISSION
Thursday, August 8, 2024

1) [Call meeting to order and roll call](#)

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof the regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Waconia was called to order by Commissioner Chair Genz at 6:30 PM.

Members Present: Genz, Polunc, Kamerud, Paulsen, Peterson

Members Absent: None

City Liaison: Grengs

Staff Present: Braaten, Nelson, Stein, Havlik

2) [Adopt Agenda](#)

No changes to the agenda.

Motion by Paulsen, seconded by Peterson to adopt the agenda. All in favor voted aye. MOTION CARRIED

3) [Minutes Approval](#)

3.1 [July 11th, 2024, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes](#)

[Cover Page](#)

[July 11 2024 PC Meeting Minutes.pdf](#)

Motion by Polunc, second by Kamerud to approve the minutes. All in favor voted aye. MOTION CARRIED.

4) [New Business](#)

4.1 [PUBLIC HEARING - SITE PLAN, DESIGN REVIEW, VARIANCE and PLAT
- Olive & Second Street Apartments](#)

[Cover Page](#)

[CONCLUSION RECOMMENDATION.pdf](#)

[Location Map_Olive and Second.pdf](#)

[Olive & Second Narrative.pdf](#)

[Olive and Second Plan Set.pdf](#)

[OLIVE AND SECOND Final Plat.pdf](#)

[Impervious Exhibit.pdf](#)

Braaten introduced the Olive and Second Street mixed use project. He gave a summary of the proposed location and properties in close proximity of the project. The property is zoned B-3, Central Business District and is located within the Downtown Design Standards District. Braaten went on to show and explain the proposed Site Plan. He explained the Site Plan, floor plan and landscape plan. He went on to discuss the off-street parking noting what the City Ordinance requires explaining different scenarios. Applicant is proposing 175 parking stalls, 142 would be below ground. They are meeting minimum parking requirements along with identifying 20 + spaces for public parking. Any future signage would be reviewed by staff. Lighting plan meets City Code. Braaten talked about pedestrian access, noting that the applicant is showing a sidewalk and boulevard along 2nd Street and staff has indicated the sidewalk should be at the back of curb. This would cause the landscape plan to be adjusted. Trash and screening meet requirements.

Braaten went on to explain the design review element of the application. The proposed application includes a requested height of 65' versus the maximum of 45' allowed in the B-3, Central Business District. He displayed the proposed exterior building materials.

Commissioner Paulsen asked about the transformer and screening and what was the issue. Discussion continued about possible options.

Braaten informed the Commission that there could be some revisions to the parking and access plan as the city continues to work with the applicant regarding a possible stormwater partnership. Braaten summarized the variance review criteria for the Commissioners.

Paulsen asked if the city done a comprehensive parking study to which Braaten indicated that he was not aware of one. Paulsen asked if the city looked at a study to see what they wanted the Downtown to look like going forward. Braaten explained the city has its Architectural Design Standards that we rely on and use these standards as the applicable resource. The discussion circled back to the height element. Paulsen asked where the current building height (45') originated from. Braaten stated that if he were to guess the 45' height maximum probably stemmed from an emergency response standpoint and/or requiring new buildings to be consistent with the existing heights found in downtown. Discussion continued regarding the height issue.

Polunc asked about traffic flow in and out of the alley. There was discussion about various possibilities regarding the issue. Genz asked about other apartment applications, if they asked for variances with the application. Nelson stated the Otto asked for a height variance.

Genz opened the public hearing.

Genz asked for the design team/owners to come up.

Steve Yetzer, Waconia came up and explained his history and his former request to build a smaller apartment building on a portion of this site. He included his thoughts on what Waconia should look like, and also how he became involved with the current apartment project. He went on to explain some of the aspects with the current project.

Craig Hartman with Momentum Design Group, St. Paul explained the thoughts and the thinking in the design of the apartment project. The design tries to compliment instead of copying other buildings. He went on to explain the height of the building and how it is captured within the building design.

Genz asked how the grade is determined. Craig went on to explain the process. More discussion followed regarding the grade.

Cathy Stahlke, business owner on Olive Street. Her concern is with the tenant parking. If the tenant chooses not to pay for the underground parking, where would they park. She explained that her and Steve Yetzer had this concern 10 years ago and now it comes back to the forefront.

Stacy Nelson, 40 Maple Street North. Came up to talk about the quaintness that Waconia has to offer. She mentioned the skyline and she mentioned the size of the new apartment how it would be changed. Also, the traffic becoming very busy. She also wanted to know how the height compares to the other apartment buildings.

Nate Albee, 134 Stacy Circle. His concern is the green space. He mentioned that it would be nice to break up the hard surface in the back of the building with some green space. Also planting mature trees to help screen the large parking area. He brought up maybe there is a possibility to have a partnership with the city for more parking. He talked more about his concern for the green space regarding the “heat island” effect.

Motion by Paulsen, second by Kamerud to close the Public Hearing. All in favor voted aye. MOTION CARRIED.

Genz at this point addressed the saved questions. He asked about the paid parking if the tenant does not pay.

Carl Runck, 441 2nd Street Excelsior. He explained that many of the tenants that sign will opt for the indoor parking. With limited parking outside.

Polunc asked about the 10 stalls for the residents if they will be assigned or will they be on a first come basis. Mr. Runck explained that the garage stalls and outside stalls will be assigned. Peterson asked if parking is included with the rent or if it was an additional cost. Mr. Runck mentioned that it is still to be determined.

Genz asked the question Ms. Nelson brought up about the height compared to other apartment buildings.

Craig Hartman, Momentum Design came up to make the comparison in height between the Uptown Apartment and the proposed apartment.

Mr. Runck mentioned that they are considering allowing public use for some of the setback outdoor space, so the community could enjoy the view and space.

Braaten asked about traffic with the number of new units proposed in the area. Mr. Runck asked if the city required a traffic study for the project. Braaten stated that it wasn't required as the property was zoned correctly for the proposed project. Mr. Runck went on to talk about what this project brings to the city and county. In terms of quality and price points with the different bedroom options. They feel there is a need for this higher quality. With the location being the gateway to the city they are talking with restaurant operators now about the retail space they have identified along Olive Street.

Braaten asked about the green space, which Mr. Albee identified as a concern. Mr. Runck explained the green space and the dog run area. He mentioned they wanted people to walk downtown and not necessarily stay onsite. He went on to say that this isn't park space.

Paulsen brought up the parking lot and using different materials that reduce the heat effect from a large area. Discussion followed.

Commissioner discussion followed.

Motion by Polunc to approve the Site Plan, Design Review Variance along with the 14 conditions included in the staff report, which includes the storm water solution that is yet to be vetted. Second by Paulsen. MOTION CARRIED.

Paulsen asked Braaten about the height ordinance and wondering if it should be looked at and possibly changed. Braaten stated he would ask Council what their thoughts are and proceed from there. Paulsen asked if a parking study is warranted, discussion followed. Also, Paulsen asked about a possible study to what the city should look/feel like study.

Braaten had a wrap-up on the Site Plan, Design Review, Variance stating that it will go to City Council on August 19th, with a recommendation from the Planning Commission to approve the project.

5) Old Business

No old business.

6) Other - Staff Update

85 new homes so far which includes single family and townhomes. We estimated for the year to be around 65. Staff anticipates, based on past experience, that we should land somewhere around 100 new home permits for the year.

The Williams variance for the property located at 343 Lakeview Terrace Boulevard was approved by the City Council.

The Site Plan application for 219 East Frontage Road also got Council approval.

Braaten informed the Commission of the feasibility study being completed for the eastern half of the community, which was in response to the sketch plan submittals for both the Kirsch and Falk properties earlier this year.

September meeting anticipating we will have an ordinance amendment from a possible business.

We are also working on a possible ordinance amendment on the Shoreland Overlay District and continue to work on the digital signage ordinance.

Adjourn

Motion by Kamurud and seconded by Paulsen to adjourn. All in favor voted aye.
MOTIONED CARRIED

Work Session - Discuss Shoreland Flexibility Regulations

Respectfully submitted,

David Havlik
Office Assistant