

CITY OF WACONIA
February 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 6:00 PM.

Members Present:	Chad Genz, Joe Polunc, Kevin Kamerud, Daryl Peterson
Member Absent:	Bruce Paulsen
Alternate Absent:	Jacob Weckman
City Liaison Present:	Steve Yetzer
Staff Present:	Braaten, Nelson, Havlik

Oath of Office:

Welcoming our new Commissioner.
Oath of Office: Daryl Peterson

2) Adopt Agenda

Commissioner Genz asked for a motion to adapt the agenda.

Motion made by Polunc, seconded by Peterson.

MOTION CARRIED

3) Minutes Approval

3.1 January 4th, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Genz asked for a motion to approve the January 4, 2024 minutes.

Motion made by Kamerud, seconded by Polunc. MOTION CARRIED

Cover Page

January 4th, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.pdf

4) New Business

4.1 PUBLIC HEARING - Variance - 32 Vine Street North

Cover Page

Application & Narrative (6 Pages)

Public Hearing Notice - 32 Vine Street North (1 Page)

Historic Elevations (2 Pages)

Site Photos (6 Pages)

Existing & Proposed Elevations (5 Pages)

Existing & Proposed Site Plan (3 Pages)

20240124_PH Comment_Gramith (1 Page)

Nelson presented the variance application. He explained the current site conditions and that a variance was necessary because the improvements encroach within the setbacks. The application included a stormwater plan as the property exceeds the hardcover maximum. The applicants design intentioned to bring back the Historic character of the building. Nelson went through the Variance Review Criteria. Further, he stated that he had contacted the State Historical Preservation Organization which had no requirements and did not submit any comments on this application.

Discussion followed amongst the commissioners resulting in asking staff if there was any history of variances granted within the City that are similar to this request. Braaten was not aware of any.

Commissioner Genz opened the Public Hearing. Before the hearing he invited the applicant up to answer any questions.

Andy Vasek, Mound MN (applicant) came up and explained that everything was laid out well and had no other information to share.

Commissioner Polunc asked if his project was a phased remodeling or a onetime remodel. Mr. Vasek explained that it is a long-term investment and yes, it is a phase type of project with no timeline of when and what that will look like. But it will be and stay an Apartment building going forward.

Commissioner Kamerud verified with the applicant the existing stairway location and the proposed stairway location.

Genz asked if there were any public comments. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing.

Motion made by Commissioner Polunc to close the Public Hearing, Seconded by Paulsen. MOTION CARRIED.

Discussion continued amongst the Commissioners regarding the variance proposal.

Motion by Genz to approve the variance application for 32 Vine Street North with the two conditions listed in the staff report. Seconded by Polunc. MOTION CARRIED.

4.2 PUBLIC HEARING - Amend Section 900.05 District Regulations - Battlefield Ministries

[Cover Page](#)

[Public Hearing_R2 Permitted Uses Ordinance Amendment.pdf](#)

[Applicant Zoning Discussion with Other Cities.pdf](#)

Braaten introduced the Ordinance Amendment submitted by Battlefield Ministries. He explained that the proposed amendment would be for all of the R-2 Zoning District. He went through the current ordinance language and the proposed ordinance language.

Commissioner Genz asked about the 1,000-foot buffer and what is currently allowed. The use would be allowed with only three (3) people.

Commissioner Genz invited the applicant forward.

Mikayla Precht, 8947 Partridge Rd. St. Bonifacius and Anthony Benedetti, 220 Walnut Street North from Battlefield Ministries explained their background and affiliations with other organizations. They stated that they want to do whatever it takes to work with the City and to keep providing the services to help people in need. Mr. Benedetti asked one of the board of Directors for the house to come up and to explain his perspective on what the house is all about.

Tim Groth, The Haven Program Director, 233 1st Street West talked about his background and where their program was and where it is going now.

Commissioner Genz opened up questions for the applicant. Polunc asked about opening a second house. Kayla explained that the first house she opened was on CRD 92, outside the city limits. Polunc clarified that there is only one house within the city. Genz asked if the majority of the residents were local. Ms. Precht stated that most of the clients came from either Carver County or Hennepin County. Polunc asked how the house was funded. Mr. Groth stated the house itself is through Carver County GRH funding. Kamerud asked for clarification regarding the licensure. Ms. Precht explained that they are a 501C3 organization and their home does not require a license through the state. She referenced Statue 245G. Polunc asked Mr. Benedetti if they were a member of the Minnesota Association of Sober Homes. Mr. Benedetti stated that they were not and that he had never heard about it but would be open to looking into it. Further, Mr. Benedetti went on to say that the people that come to the house are individuals that want to come and are not placed there. They have already been to treatment places, and this is the next step. Polunc asked Mr. Groth if The Haven was licensed through the State. He stated that they were. He went on to inform the Commission of the criteria for being at the home. Polunc asked what the need was for the Commission to vacate the State licensing in the City Ordinances. Tim said what they need/want is a basic need to help people and what they are dealing with is people with a behavioral disease. They are asking for compassion and help. Braaten stated that the Commission might want to open it up for public comment.

Commissioner Genz opened the public hearing.

Brooke Campell, Watertown MN stated that she was the secretary on the Board of Battlefield Ministries. She explained her personal background and what it meant to her. She indicated the need for this type of transitional house in the area.

Amanda Wilson, 401 West 1st Street stated her home is located next door to Battlefield Ministries house. She stated that she is in agreement that a facility like this is needed but has concerns about where they should be located. She feels it opens up a more complex discussion about this type of facility. Stating that different types of non-licensed facilities could be anywhere in the R-2 district. She went on to share her personal experience living next door. She recalled instances that have happened since the house opened in August of 2023. She contacted Minnesota Association of Sober Homes (MASH) regarding membership and stated that it is optional. She went on to explain the requirements of that organization. She said that Battlefield Ministries chose not to be a member of that organization, which she felt was a red flag. She went on to explain her concerns with her children and other children in the neighborhood being so close to the house. She said that other houses of this type are in rural areas and are much safer.

Allison Cloeter, 125 Walnut Ave South Explained her background and the history of her cousin. She stated that she has great concerns about the location of the sober house which is right around the corner from her house.

Sam Devereaux, 310 Main Street West explained her background and job associated with substance abuse groups. She share her experiences and understanding of addiction and that homes like this help people reunite with their families.

Stacy Zellman stated that she is an independent contractor and does not work for Battlefield Ministries. She is at the house 6 days a week and went on to site her examples of people who have had experiences with the program there. She went on to talk about her involvement with different programs locally and through the State.

Brian Pawela stated that he wanted clarification regarding licensed and not licensed. He cautioned that the Commission should take their time. He also stressed safety being a big concern.

Brett Devereaux, St. Bonifacius talked about his personal recovery and the transitional house and what it meant to him. He is involved in many recovery groups and spoke to the growth of those groups. He stressed that people need a safe place. People are coming here because they want to and not because they are required to. They want to recover.

Brian Pawela came back up to the podium and spoke about his personal story/experience.

Mr. Patterson, 408 2nd Street West stated that he lives across the alley and his concern is the exposure of the kids that walk to the Elementary School. He stated that he is isn't against it, it's just that it is located in the wrong place.

Kelly Devereaux, 310 Main Street West talked about what she sees in different areas in town, and not in front of the sober house. Her kids are exposed to it and it's a perception with people. But the reality is they are people, and this house provides them safety.

Stacy Zellman came back up to the podium and shared an instance where she and a group were walking and came across drugs and needles. Her point was that it happens at other places and not just at the transitional house.

Commissioner Genz asked for a motion to close the public hearing, Motion made by Kamerud and seconded by Polunc. MOTION CARRIED.

Braaten summarized the proposed amendment and the public hearing and let the Commission know what options were. If the Commission needs further discussion, they could table it until they get more information.

Discussion continued amongst the Commissioners. Genz asked if he could hear what the City Attorney had to say with this information, what kind of cause and effect it could have. Kamerud stated that he wasn't ready to make a decision on this until he had done more research and heard from the Attorney.

Motion made by Kamerud to table the Ordinance Amendment until more information is provided by the City Attorney.

Polunc stated that he thought that the license requirement in current city code was valid as it gives standards to a location. Without it, it could happen without rules or direction. He added his experience and how it comes into play with the discussion. He feels there is much more at stake than one location. He went on to say that if it gets tabled to get more information, he will support that.

Genz said that there is a motion to table this until the March 7th meeting.

Seconded by Polunc. MOTION CARRIED.

Braaten stated that he would contact the City Attorney and bring back the information to the March 7th meeting.

[4.3 PUBLIC HEARING - Comprehensive Plan Amendment - 7845 County Road 10 North, Waconia Township](#)

[Cover Page](#)

[Location Map Subject Property.pdf](#)

[Applicant Comp Plan Amendment Request Letter.pdf](#)

[Location Map_Future Land Use Map.pdf](#)

[Klinkner Property - Sewer Capacity Evaluation.pdf](#)

[Existing and Future Land Use Maps_2040 Comp Plan.pdf](#)

[Public Hearing Comments.pdf](#)

Braaten introduced the Comprehensive Plan Amendment and explained the applicant was requesting an amendment which only included the 30 acres directly north of Waconia Landing. The request was to re-guide the property from R, Rual to L, Low Density Residential. Braaten brought up the criteria list for them to consider.

Kamerud asked about service by utilities. Braaten informed them of the sewer evaluation that had been completed. Additionally, Braaten had contacted the Met Council and they indicated that is was an administrative amendment and not a major amendment. Discussion followed.

Genz invited the applicant up to the podium.

Paul Otto – Otto & Associates, Buffalo the applicants engineer, explained what the next steps would be. He explained the first proposal and how in listening to the Commission and the community how they got to the current proposal.

Kamerud asked about access to the property and where it would be. Otto explained the access process options.

Genz opened the public hearing.

Jaimee McPadden, 1680 Sandbar Circle stated her concerns with wildlife and preserving the wetland area. She had issues with the docks. Also, the traffic is an issue along with the growth of the community. She was also concerned about the unknown design of any future neighborhood.

Bruce Dahlke, 8275 Paul Ave. has lived in the area for 40 years is wondering what the next step is. He wasn't for the 1st proposal, which included all 80+ acres, but is in favor of the new proposal presented.

Kamerud asked Mr. Otto about the utilities running through a resident's property and how the utility infrastructure might work if this were to get approved. Mr. Otto stated there is a utility easement in place but was not and is not quite sure as to final design as they have not worked through that detail yet.

Andrea Eaton, 1676 Sandbar Circle stated that she is against the proposal. She has a boat slip and association docks would be in jeopardy. She stated her belief that farmland is better than residential houses for the health of the lake. That there is a lot of development already. She appreciates the wildlife.

Bruce Dahlke, 8275 Paul Ave. came back up to the podium and clarified that he is in favor of low density residential, not multifamily housing.

Steve Grotting, 6064 Drake Drive, Independence stated that he is a real estate broker and said that this amendment is a high-level decision for the City. There are a lot of different ways to go and taking them into consideration and that the owner is open to any and all suggestions. That the owner doesn't have time to wait for the next Comp Plan Review process. He stated that it is the time for the city to look at the growth and also the health of the lake.

John Klinker, 7845 County Road 10 North stressed how environmentally conscience he is about the lake. Talked about the City not wanting to have a polluted lake and that houses would be a better option than farming. He said he doesn't want to wait till the next Comp Plan update. He talked about his age and family and how development of this property in the future would have very little cost to the City and now was the time.

Andrea Eaton, 1676 Sandbar Circle came back up to the podium and asked if the city talked with people about the environmental impact of the lake with fertilizer going into it. Braaten responded to the question indicating that he had reached out to the MPCA and the DNR and they both stated chemicals in agricultural use would be a higher pollutant than urban maintained use.

Trever Foss, 1891 Sandbar Circle Asked about vehicular access, and he thought it would be paramount to have it in place before development. Also concerned about wildlife in the area. Also, he was very concerned about docks. He voiced his opinion about the history and stated he is not against the new proposal and asked if it makes sense for the city. His concern is about losing the dock, and land use.

Jaimee McPadden, 1680 Sandbar Circle came back up to the podium to talk about the wildlife in the area. She commented on the existing eagle's nest and stated that a permit is needed before disturbing or removal of nests. This would have to be done before anything could happen.

Commissioner Genz asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing, Motion made by Kamerud, seconded by Polunc. MOTION CARRIED.

Commissioner Genz commented on limited costs for the city if this property were allowed to develop. Also, he appreciated that the request had been scaled down to 30 acres east of the County Road. He felt it may be important to see what the property and dock situation could look like, along with the road systems. He would also like to get some buy in from the adjoining neighborhoods.

Polunc asked about the highwater mark and the concerns about losing a private dock.

Braaten stated that what the Commissioners were requesting was really the next step, a Preliminary Plat Document, the question in front of you this evening is does this make sense to go forward to plan residential growth in this area.

Motion made by Polunc to approve the Comprehensive Plan Amendment as proposed. Seconded by Kamerud. MOTION FAILED 2-3.

Braaten asked if there was an alternate motion as the first motion failed.

Polunc made a motion to table the Comp Plan Amendment with the Commission looking for more information related to access until the March 7th meeting. Seconded by Peterson. MOTIONED CARRIED.

5) Old Business

Nelson presented the 2023 Land Use Activity Report. He showed data from previous years and talked about the increase in e-permits. He explained home construction trends and informed the Commission that a total of 1,862 building permits were issued in 2023 and based on the number of new homes the projected population was somewhere around 14,825 citizens.

Staff Update:

11 new home permits issued so far in 2024
Upcoming agenda items for March 7th.

Genz asked for a motion to adjourn.
Motion made by Kamerud, seconded by Peterson. MOTION CARRIED.

Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted,

David Havlik

