

**TOWN of MAY
WASHINGTON COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION
April 27, 2017**

The Planning Commission of the Town of May met for their regular meeting on Thursday, April 27, 2017. Those in attendance included: John Arnason, Chairman; Lester Rydeen, Jeff Chase, Chad Nelson, Jyneen Thatcher, Don Rolf, and Steve Magner. Absent: Mitch Otterson. Also present: Bill Voedisch, Town Board Chairman and Nate Sparks, Town Planner, NAC. Chairman Arnason called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

Keller Major Subdivision Concept Plan Review

Sparks stated that Stephen Keller has made an application for a concept plan review for an Open Space major subdivision. The property is located in the 13300 block of Manning Trail on the west side of the road. The proposal is to divide a 50 acre site into five lots with an open space outlot. The lots for building sites range in size between 2.9 and 7 acres in size. The proposed lots generally meet the applicable performance standards. The property is zoned Rural Residential and lies within the Shoreland District. The property is riparian to Lynch Lake, which is a Natural Environment Lake.

Sparks stated that the yield plan allows for 4 lots but by utilizing the open space design, a fifth bonus lot is permitted. It is required that 70% of the lots are adjacent to the open space. The proposal meets this by proposing a 40 foot wide flag to touch several of the lots. The open space lot is 23 acres, which meets the minimum standards for size. The applicant must identify a qualifying easement holder for the open space prior to preliminary plat. Additional open space will be required to meet the requirements of the County's ordinance and it will require a CUP with the County.

Sparks said the concept generally appears to be consistent with Town regulations provided that an acceptable easement holder can be identified, County requirements are met, and that the access drive has the appropriate easements.

Arnason asked if the entire access drive was on the subject site. Milo Horak of Landmark Surveying representing the applicant said it was not. Arnason also noted that the County was requesting additional right-of-way for Manning Drive.

Chase stated that sight lines are difficult at the current driveway location. Sparks said that is why the County may require an adjustment to the location of the access point.

Rydeen asked if it were considered to extend the road to properties to the west. Horak said no.

Rydeen asked what the width of the easement will be from the end of the cul-de-sac to the open space. Sparks said that it would need to be 20-30 feet at minimum. Voedsich said that width would be consistent with Hunter's Ridge, a previously approved open space subdivision.

Rydeen noted that access could be an issue since part of the property is not under the applicant's control. Rolf concurred that the applicant would need to provide more information on the access.

Arnason noted that the 40 foot wide strip to the open space along the southern edge of the property crosses wetlands and would be difficult to use as access. There should be a plan for the open space. Stephen Keller said they plan to mow paths and that they are talking to potential easement holders. Voedisch said that they will need to mow periodically and that some conservation lands require burning.

Voedisch asked when the current driveway was built. Keller said it was in 1984 or 1985. Voedisch said it far exceeds any driveway he's ever seen and asked why the County allowed this to be built in this place if it were unsafe.

Motion by Arnason, second by Chase to recommend approval of the concept plan with the conditions noted in the staff report including a requirement regarding adequate access to the open space. All approved.

Wilder Foundation/Grove School – CUP Amendment/Text Amendment – Public Hearing

Sparks stated that the Wilder Foundation and the Marine Area Charter School have made an application for a Zoning Ordinance text amendment and a conditional use permit amendment to allow for the Grove Elementary Charter School to occupy the portion of Wilder Forest formerly occupied by the Concordia Language Village (CLV). This area has been occupied by a camp since the early 1980's.

Sparks stated that the property is zoned Conservancy. Schools are not a permitted use within this district. Uses in this district are intended to advance the goals of preservation of environmentally sensitive natural areas and open space. Uses within this district include Nature Centers, Educational Retreat Centers, recreational uses, and single family homes. To allow for this use within this district, the Town would need to find that this use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the purpose of the district.

Generally, the proposed CUP amendment would replace the CLV camp use with the elementary school. The current CUP allows for 112 users on the site at any time, 7,000 total in one year, and 22,000 people days. It also allows for a maximum of 50 cars in and out per day. The school proposes to have about 200 students on site for 180 days a year and 35 staff members for 190 days a year for 42,650 people days. CLV had an allowance for 10% of their users to be outside users. The school is proposing additional users to be allowed including Community Forest, a group that the Town Board has previously allowed to run a trial at the site.

Motion by Rolf, second by Chase to open the public hearing at 8:00 pm.

Lisa White representing the Marine Area Charter School said that they would have up to 100 cars allowed but not every day. 15 of the cars were for staff and some of the children would be dropped off.

Chase asked if there would be before and after school programs. White said there may be, if interest.

Rolf asked if there was an assessment on the buildings to determine their suitability for this type of use. White said there was a report provided by an architect and reviewed by the Town's Building Official that determined minimal upgrades will be needed. The Fire Inspector is still putting that report together. Rolf stated that he would like to see the site used but has concerns about traffic.

Rydeen said the past Wilder uses had tons of traffic and that this would be a great educational opportunity. White said they propose to have 1 section per grade and they cannot have more than eight classes, as currently planned.

Kevin Kiesow, a neighboring property owner, stated that the tar is busting up and the roads need to be fixed. Diane Kiesow said the trees are hanging over the road. Voedisch said that if there are road issues, the Town will review and resolve it, if necessary, regardless of the outcome of this application.

Magner asked what the enrollment of Marine Elementary is currently. Glen Mills from the Marine Area Charter School said it was between 175 and 200. White said they have 240 applicants. Magner asked if they considered Christ Lutheran or Marine Elementary as alternatives. Mills said they have had discussions about the school building and it could be used as additional space in the future, if needed.

Thatcher stated that traffic has been an issue in the past and that outside groups and busses were a concern. There is a big difference in use pattern including seasonality. Outside meetings and events should be identified with a report at the end of the year, at minimum. She asked if community forest would be included in this permit.

Kelly Urista from the Wilder Foundation said that Community Forest is a ground that works with area school districts to do racial equity simulations and was a trial use. Voedisch elaborated on the nature of the trial. Urista said it was contained in the village area that would be used by the school. Thatcher asked if it were ongoing and asked about the number of users. Arnason asked who was in charge of outside users. Urista said that the school would be in charge of outside users. Voedisch said large outside users should have a separate CUP.

Magner said he was concerned about traffic and the larger impact to the community but that he values the school use and that the site would be a good fit. There is also a concern about use of the site by outside groups.

Rick Markwart, a neighboring property owner, said he was concerned about traffic and the road condition and outside groups using the facility.

Annette Glamos, a neighboring property owner, said she wanted to ensure it was just through 6th grade and that the other groups were concerning. She asked if the lake would be used.

White said they will only be there from September to March and would not use the lake much.

Rydeen said it reminded him of an old country school.

Voedisch said that the Wilder program was in the Summer, the CLV was in the Summer, and that the Minnesota Food Association, on the other portion of the Wilder site, is a harvest time use. The school use will be during the day and in the school year which is counter to the previous use. Outside users should be defined before they begin use of the site.

Arnason said school affiliated users should be identified in an annual report.

Motion by Arnason, second by Rydeen to approve the text amendment. All approved.

Motion by Arnason, second by Rolf to approve the CUP amendment. Arnason said the CLV camp use should be expunged, the conditions in the staff report should be included, and that reporting should be required. All approved.

Motion by Chase, seconded by Rolf to close the public hearing at 9:09 pm.

Motion by Arnason, seconded by Rolf to adjourn at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Nate Sparks, NAC
Planning Consultant**