



**COTTAGE GROVE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**12800 Ravine Parkway South**  
**Cottage Grove, MN 55016**

**May 19, 2025**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER - 7:00 P.M.**

The Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission was held in the Council Chamber and telecast on Local Government Cable Channel 16.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Frazier called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Pradeep Bhat-Here; Ken Brittain-Here; Jessica Fisher-Here; Evan Frazier-Here; Eric Knable-Here; Emily Stephens-Here; Terrence Woodman-Here.

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Emily Schmitz, Community Development Director; Samantha Pierret, Senior Planner; Max Erickson, Planner; Crystal Raleigh, Assistant City Engineer; David Clausen, City Council Liaison

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

***Brittain made a motion to approve the agenda. Stephens seconded. The motion was approved unanimously (7-to-0 vote).***

**4. OPEN FORUM**

Frazier opened the Open Forum and asked if anyone wished to address the Planning Commission on any non-agenda item. No one spoke. Frazier closed the Open Forum.

**5. CHAIR'S EXPLANATION OF THE PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS**

Frazier explained the purpose of the Planning Commission, which serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council, and that the City Council makes all final decisions. In addition, he explained the process of conducting a public hearing and requested that any person wishing to speak should go to the podium and state their full name and address for the public record.

**6. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND APPLICATIONS**

**A. ISD #833 Transition Building - Cases SP/CUP/V2025-014**

**Koma Architects, on behalf of South Washington County School District ISD #833, has applied for a Site Plan review, Conditional Use Permit, and Variance for impervious surfaces for an addition to the current structure located at 7000 Jamaica Avenue South. The addition includes approximately 8,373 square feet for classrooms and other educational spaces. Additional site improvements include renovation of the current structure for a cafeteria, nurse's office, conference rooms, and classrooms, landscaping for an outside activity area, and restructuring of the parking lot.**

Erickson summarized the staff report and recommended approval based on the findings of fact and subject to the conditions stipulated in the staff report.

Frazier asked if there were any questions for staff.

Fisher said so the impervious surface issue, is that the building plus the basketball court plus the other like exterior things going on? Erickson replied the total 49 percent that I had mentioned includes all of the additional, plus what's existing, so they'd be 9 percent over the 40 percent threshold with the basketball court and the additional paving and the new building. Fisher said okay, got it, thank you.

Brittain said I'm assuming that the reason that we have the impervious surface rules, surface rules, is for runoff, and he asked how does the additional 9 percent or whatever that was affect the runoff from the property or storage within it? Erickson replied there is a proposed stormwater pond to be constructed on the eastern edge; they're going to actually create a swale, so here's the pond, and then they're going to reconstruct a swale around here, which will collect and capture any of the additional runoff created from any of the expanded portion. Brittain said okay, thank you.

Fisher said okay, I have more to my question. So, on this picture, the outdoor play area, is that considered impervious surface? I think I see it says turf, sod. I'm just wondering because this is for young adults, right? So, I'm just wondering like what the play area is because if it were for like early childhood, it would make sense to have a play area; but I'm wondering if that's considered impervious surface, if there's enough of that that can be tweaked so that they can actually meet the requirements. Erickson replied in that play area, the sod would not be considered impervious. As to the use of that area, I could point to the folks at the School District to talk a little bit more about what that space might be utilized for. Fisher said okay, I just wasn't sure because I thought if it were turf, if that was like AstroTurf or whatever, I don't know.

Frazier asked if there were any further questions for staff; there were not.

Frazier asked if the applicant would like to approach the podium and add anything additional. Kyle with the District said I live in the District at 7421 Hidden Valley Trail, and I got voted to come up here. He asked I'm sorry, you wanted more information? Frazier replied just anything additional you wanted to add. Kyle replied oh, I thought you had more questions. Frazier said I do have a question for you, but I'll let you say what you want. Kyle said we're excited about this, as this brings two groups that we have in strip malls now into one location, and it's going to help us focus our resources and give these kids really what they need, so we're super excited about it, but go ahead with your question.

Frazier said so my question is about the impervious surface, and so, I don't know if you're going to have a good answer for this or you can nominate another one of your teammates here. So, I guess where I'm concerned about it is Max in his presentation said there's 88 parking spots on site now, we're going to go down to 70, and City Code only requires 20 on site; a parking lot is considered an impervious surface. So, I guess my question is for variances, obviously it's a fairly high bar to grant a variance, is there a reason why we have to keep so many parking spots on site? Kyle replied this is Kevin, with BKBM, he's our Civil Engineer, and he can probably talk more about the parking stalls and stuff, and we do have Nicky back here, too, who runs the program, and if you have any questions about the staff parking and how many spots we need, she could answer that better than me.

Kevin Bohl said I'm with BKBM Engineers, gave his address as 11623 Fergus Street NE, Blaine. From a parking standpoint, we looked at a couple different options for different layouts and trying to get the parking to what we needed it to; ultimately, we talked to the District and I forget the exact counts offhand here, but there are some van parking stalls that we need, there's staff parking, and then there's also student parking. Based on all of those needs, that's where we came up with the required 80 for our site. Another big challenge is we need to get buses in and out of the site, too, so we can't have parking in that main center parking lot that's currently where all the car parking is, as buses need to be able to turn around and need a lot of space for those turning movements. So, it's one of the reasons why we have to kind of keep the parking as it is here. Frazier said okay, so even though City Code says you guys only need 20 parking spots, just based on the use of the property as well as kind of the ongoing challenges about the types of vehicles that are going to be in there, that's why we need all of this parking and pavement area. Kevin replied you got it, and Frazier said all right, thank you.

Frazier asked if there were any further questions for the applicant; none were asked. Frazier thanked both Kyle and Keith for coming up.

***Frazier opened the Public Hearing. No one spoke. Frazier closed the Public Hearing.***

Frazier asked if there were any further comments or discussion from the commission.

Stephens said I guess I would just add for everybody asking about the impervious surfaces, a lot of times just for context and I think they kind of touched on it a little bit with the stormwater, they're going to manage it all whether they had 50% or 59%; so, it doesn't really make any difference for what leaves the site. A lot of times, in my opinion, I feel like it's a harder sell when it's just apartments or residential or something like that versus a community building. So, I just wanted to throw that in there really quick that I think from a perspective, the impervious is pretty minimal because it will be managed regardless. So, that's my two cents. Frazier replied, thank you, and I appreciate that, and kind of where I was going with my questions is more the ordinance side of, you know, we should only be granting variances when there is no other way that we can make it work on site. And, so, the extra information we had about the fact that there's some special challenges with this area, there's going to be some special vehicles that are going to be on site where we need to have this kind of extended pavement; I think makes it clear that a variance is appropriate in this circumstance as there's no other way to use that site and get to the impervious number that City Code requires.

Frazier asked if there was any further discussion by the commission.

Bhat said this is just for my clarification. So, you said the impervious surface went from 40 percent to 49 percent, the 9 percent increase if I just look at the area, it's certainly not coming from the additional building, right? So, is it just the basketball court behind and plus anything that's in front of the building? Erickson replied so, the 9 percent would be the addition of the building, a little bit of pavement, but it would include the basketball court. The threshold right now as it is, it's very, very close, and I don't have the number on me, it's like just below the threshold, so it's pretty close to 40 percent as it is. Bhat said okay, and this is 49 percent of the total area. Erickson replied the site, so the whole parcel. Bhat said okay, thank you.

Frazier asked if there was any further discussion. Otherwise, I would look for a motion.

***Woodman made a motion to approve the Site Plan Review, Conditional Use Permit, and Variance for the proposed Transition Building. Bhat seconded.***

Frazier asked if there was any further discussion on the motion. Brittain asked does the motion include the conditions stipulated in the staff report? Frazier said good, clarifying question. Commissioner Woodman is nodding his head, so I'm assuming that's a yes, all right. Woodman replied I was just bringing them up quick. Frazier said okay, so, I have a motion to approve, subject to the conditions in the staff report; I have a second for that motion. Any further discussion? There was none.

***The motion was approved unanimously (7-to-0 vote).***

## **B. Real Estate Equities (Hadley Ave. Apartments) - Cases CP/ZA/SP2024-024**

**Real Estate Equities has applied for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to change the land use of a 4.7-acre parcel of land located on the southeast corner of 100th Street and Hadley Avenue from Medium Density Residential to High Density Residential; a Zoning Amendment to change the zoning from AG-2, Agricultural, to R-6, High Density Residential; and a Site Plan Review of a proposed 164-unit affordable rate apartment building.**

Pierret summarized the staff report and recommended approval based on the findings of fact and subject to the conditions stipulated in the staff report.

Frazier asked if there were any questions for staff.

Brittain said you mentioned that the density that was on the driving range, the old Mississippi Dunes, was transferred to this site. Can you expand upon Met Council's requirement for our community as a whole to have a specific housing density within the community and how that may pertain to the desired transfer of density from one area to another? Pierret replied yes. So, the proposal would be for the density to be guided, so it has not happened yet, it would take this body and the City Council to approve re-guiding this parcel as High Density Residential. Essentially, with the Met Council, it is in our 2040 Comprehensive Plan that this area was guided as Medium Density Residential, just from a standpoint of density, proposed development, all of those

sorts of things. However, with the DNR purchasing the driving range, that land will be preserved, it will not be developed upon; so, those units of density can be shifted within the same general area with Met Council approval to give additional density to parcels within the same area. The Met Council's approval for administrative review includes things such as minimum parcel size, that this will not affect our public utilities infrastructure, and things like that. So, we have planned for this many units; they're just shifting from one part of the neighborhood or community, we'll say, to this specific parcel so that a higher-density development can happen. Brittain asked so, how do we go from Medium Density, Medium Density to High Density? Is it taking the number of homes or housing units that were predicted for this area here, and the number that were predicted for this area over here, and combining them? And due to the challenge of the shape of this property required High Density to over a broader area still having to support those same number of housing units is the reason why it needed to become High Density? Pierret replied yep. So, Commissioner Brittain, you are correct. So, the density for the Medium Density portion of this Real Estate Equities parcel, like I mentioned in here was up to, I believe, 15 units per acre. When we take the units per acre that were designated for the DNR's parcel, we're not going to be taking all of those units, we'll only be taking about 50 of those units that were designated for the DNR's parcel and shifting them to the Real Estate Equities parcel. So, we are adding those together on this Real Estate Equities parcel to get some greater density, multifamily housing that is greatly needed in the community, as well as on this specific parcel. Medium Density Residential and Single-Family homes on a 4.7-acre parcel would be much more difficult to develop. Brittain said so, we're attempting to meet an overall community housing density, and we're using this as a tool in order to meet those overall numbers for the community as a whole. Pierret replied correct, and Brittain said okay, thank you.

Fisher asked can you give an example, and you may not be able to, given that you're fairly new here, of a time when we used transferred density in the past? Maybe Emily might be better suited to answer that. Pierret replied I could answer it, but I'll let her go for it. Schmitz said Mr. Chair, Commissioner Fisher, I can think of two other instances: So, the Norhart project, if you're familiar, in this exact same area, one of the parcels, we conveniently refer to it as the Zywiec 40, but that Norhart project was approved with the transfer of density as well to meet that High Density. And then the second was a project, the Bluestem Apartments, we evaluated the area and some of that area was preserved for quite some time as pond and open space, and so that density was not ever used. And to Commissioner Brittain's point, when we look at our Comprehensive Plan, the Metropolitan Council guides us to a total density or growth that they would like to see the community meet, and obviously, that's spread across multiple different types: You have Low Density, Medium, and High, and however the community develops, you're wanting to meet that standard that you've identified in your long-range plan. So, a little bit more than you asked for, Commissioner Fisher, but I hope that answers your question. Fisher replied no, I understand it. Where is the Bluestem Apartments again, or do those not exist? I don't remember. Schmitz replied that is just across from Grove 80, or the old City Hall location; those apartments have just been constructed, actually hopefully opening within the next month or so. Fisher replied by Dunkin' Donuts, Schmitz said exactly, yeah. Fisher said I know that place, thank you.

Bhat said so, I do see that there is already an existing High Density area here, just next to the lot. Why is that lot not being used, and why are you rezoning this lot? Pierret replied that parcel that you are referring to is the former Norhart parcel that was approved for up to 299 apartment units around 2023. They were attempting to revamp their Site Plan last year; however, that project has now been withdrawn and will not be constructed. So, the Norhart project was moving forward while the Real Estate Equities group was also attempting to move forward with their project, so the Norhart project has been dropped; so, that is why there is another High Density parcel there, and it is not Real Estate Equities' property, and they were not working on that because it was anticipated another apartment development was going there. Bhat said thank you.

Woodman asked is there a standard for the number of entries and exits for an apartment complex like this? I noticed there's only a single egress and ingress point, it'd be going right onto Hamlet, which would then divert traffic down to Hadley and around. So, it's almost like to get in and out of the apartment complex, you have to drive all the way around the complex, which I'm sure homeowners in the area would rather have that exit directly onto 100th and that type of thing. So, is there a minimum or the reasoning behind that? Pierret replied I'll invite our Assistant City Engineer, Crystal Raleigh, and then the applicant looked like he may have wanted to step in and answer that, so we'll take turns. Raleigh said part of the reason for the entrance being right onto Hamlet Avenue is that it's a lower-volume roadway. When we've got a decent amount of traffic coming in and out of an apartment building, it's better to put them out on that lower-volume roadway than it is to have several accesses on the high volume 100th Street or Hadley Avenue.

Frazier said we'll hold off on the applicant; we'll get to you guys, but we're going to do staff questions first, though, so any further questions for staff?

Stephens said so, with some of the stormwater stuff, there is and maybe you can just clarify a little bit, there was some discussion about the back-to-back not meeting the freeboard requirements. I think my only question about that, because it's on the back-to-back, Hamlet would overflow, is that right? Raleigh replied this is a really interesting site as it relates to stormwater, it really sits in a low area, which it doesn't appear to be a low area when you're out there, but there's not a lot of places for stormwater to go. So, it's been an interesting challenge for the developer to try to meet the City's big freeboard standards. So, given that, we did have them run the back-to-back, 100-year; so, I don't have my report right in front of me, but I believe that's somewhere around the line of 14 inches of rain in a 24-hour period, or perhaps a 48-hour period. We evaluated that condition to see what would the stormwater do in that instance: It would overtop a little bit out onto Hamlet Avenue. At that point, it would be into the storm sewer system of Hamlet Avenue. If the storm sewer system is surcharging, we did evaluate that neighborhood to the north to see are we flooding anybody out and we're not. And that was, again, a back-to-back 14 inches of rain, it's a big event. Stephens said and they would still have, if it flooded, the apartment people, they'd still have access, they can just go around, right? Like if the crossing flooded, they still have access on Hamlet, right? Raleigh replied that's correct, yes, to Hamlet. There would maybe be 6 inches of water in the street, and don't quote me on that number, but the street would still be passable in that condition, yes. Stephens said okay, and I saw that the apartments are like well above it, it's just the Hamlet; so, I just wanted to ask about that with the access. Raleigh replied yeah. With the evaluation, what we were really looking at there was to see if it was going to overtop and go down into their garage, and it doesn't do that. Stephens said it looks like it just drops off down there, that's why I wanted to ask. Okay, thank you for clarifying that.

Fisher said it was referenced several times that this is helping meet the need of the community for this type of housing. How do we know that this is the type of housing that people in our community are looking for? Is there a survey or is there some sort of, do you go off the census? Like how does the City take those, I mean, where do we get that statement that we need that in our community? Pierret replied good question, that comes from the Maxfield Housing Research Study that we did in 2024 for the City of Cottage Grove; that found that particularly the affordable rental market in Cottage Grove is at a 0% vacancy rate, so there is a pent-up demand for this type of rental unit in the City. I believe in the report it stated that Cottage Grove could support up to 177 units of affordable residential, so this will really go towards that need in the community. Fisher said thank you.

Knable asked with the parking garage being about 200 feet off from the entrance, how's the garbage going to be taken care of there? I mean, are they going to have a separate stall that will be down in the parking ramps? Pierret replied good question, probably for the applicant, though. Knable said and then what are the total number of stalls? I don't know if I missed it somewhere on here. Pierret replied that is a good question. So, the total number of stalls is over 300 parking stalls total on the site; they are required by the County for some of their funding and things to have a 1:1 parking ratio of above-ground parking I'll say, so they have 164 parking stalls outside, open air, and then they also have I believe it was 140 or so underground stalls. So, they are over 312 stalls, which is over and above what is required by City Code. Knable said thank you.

Frazier asked if there were any further questions for staff, and none were asked. Frazier thanked Pierret very much for fielding those.

Frazier said all right, at this time, if the applicant would like to approach and add anything additional and maybe answer a couple additional questions.

Enrico Williams with Kaas Wilson Architects, 1301 American Boulevard East, Bloomington, Minnesota, said I am the Project Manager and Project Architect for this particular building. I can speak to any questions you may have about the building itself, it's just a very high level, we are looking at four stories above grade, one level underground. The underground parking houses 148 parking stalls. Williams said there was a question about trash. Typically, for this type of building, we have an internal trash and recycling chute that goes down to a trash collection room. Then, during trash pickup days, the maintenance person will take a skid or a four-wheel drive, cart the dumpsters out to the garage entrance for the garbage trucks to come, pick up the trash, and leave. So, it's as anti-invasive as possible. There was a question about one entry point for the site. The site design was laid out for a number of different reasons, one of them being information from the Traffic Study, another one is working with the City, and the third is Fire Code. So, when you're under approximately 200 units, you only need one entry in and out of the site. For the building itself, we designed the exterior façade to meet City Code standards, as listed in the report: So, 35% Class A materials, some Class 1 materials, the primary material will be a cultured-stone look adhered to the side of the building, and then a mix of different varieties of siding panel and wood-look siding. We have varying parapet heights at 47' above grade, on average; the intent of the varying heights is to break down the scale and massing of the building overall as you work your way around. There's a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units of various sizes. So, that's just a very high-level description of the building. If you have any specific questions, I'd be happy to field whatever I can.

Frazier said all right, thank you, and asked if there were any questions for the applicant.

Fisher said I'm looking at one of the photos that shows the corner of the building really like very, very close to the setbacks of the corner of the lot, around the curve of 100th. I'm just curious if there are concerns about traffic there, because that road's going to become very, very busy over the next 10-to-15 years, with the development there and with the realignment that we have been planning and talking about. I'm just wondering if there are concerns about cars taking that curve too fast and slamming right into the building there, because it just seems like it's very, very close to that corner, and I know it technically meets setbacks, but also just knowing how people drive, it seems a little dangerous to me to have that so close there. Raleigh replied one thing that's important to remember about those setbacks is that these are big, wide Right-of-Ways; so, we have 180-foot of Right-of-Way, I believe, dedicated through there. So, most typical subdivisions have a 60-foot Right-of-Way and then that 20-foot setback. So, we're getting an additional, I can't do the math, but it's quite a bit of open space, so that it's not anticipated that that building corner is going to be a vision problem because it is set quite a ways back from the intersection itself because of that wide Right-of-Way. Fisher said okay, thank you.

Bhat asked so, regarding the Hamlet Avenue realignment, is that a permanent thing, or is it only during the construction? Because if I look at these drawings, it seems that it is a permanent thing that Hamlet Avenue is going to be realigned or rerouted. I do see a curve coming up from the Site Plan. Raleigh replied Hamlet will not be changed, like the geometry of Hamlet Avenue how it currently is won't be changed. This driveway will be an additional driveway off of Hamlet as it is today. Hamlet Avenue is currently a rural section, so there are some gravel shoulders and ditches; the developer is required to upgrade that to an urban section with curb and gutter and storm sewer system, so that will be happening. But the road that's there today will be there after the development. Bhat said thank you.

Woodman asked is Hamlet and 100th, all of that area, are those roadways measured to be able to handle this capacity into the future? I'm just not familiar with that planning there. Raleigh replied the Hadley and 100th intersection was definitely designed with growth in mind, as we know this area of the City is expanding. That design kind of started in 2016 and was finally finished up in construction last year, but it is set up for additional traffic that's in this neighborhood and is going to be in this neighborhood over the next 5 to 10 to 15 years.

Frazier asked if there were further questions for the applicant or staff, I guess, since Crystal's still there, and none were asked. Frazier said thank you very much to Williams.

***Frazier opened the Public Hearing.***

Frazier said before we have our first person step up, we did receive two letters that were placed on the dais for commissioners, a letter from Annie Elmer and a letter from Lyle Bergman. Both of those will be included in the public record without objection. So, whoever would like to step to the podium first, state your name and address.

Commissioners, my name is Mike Porter, I live at 9870 Hamlet Court. So, I've lived in Hamlet Court for over 20 years, it was all corn, and I have no problem with change, but listening to some of the stuff the developer and the ladies had said doesn't make a lot of sense to me. They talked about they don't have enough space for the seepage and they talked about the garages. All these places have basements with egress windows, so you're not worried about the garage flooding, the house is going to flood. They talked about the Dunes, the Dunes is so far away and it's down; it doesn't matter how much or how big they build back there, I would never see it, I'd never hear it, it wouldn't matter about the dog park, the light, nothing would bother me. These places are directly across from us, they will block our view, they will block your solar, the amount of traffic will triple from what people are already living there. The people that live there, we have two exits for 144 places, that is probably five times the space. All they want is to come here and have an excuse to make a bunch of money. They are going to realign 100th, build that stuff down by the highway when they get the realignment. It doesn't need to be across from us. Thank you.

I'm Nancy Delmore, I live at 9835 Hamlet Lane. My basement has flooded several times, and they've had to redo the area around my basement, that's before you do this rainwater issue. My insurance company paid \$5,000, and my Homeowners Association paid the outside costs. Another thing to consider is that our Hamlet was not made to be a thoroughfare. Hadley is made somewhat to be a thoroughfare, but we have a school on Hadley Avenue, that when you go through there at different times of the day, there's children playing in that playground. That road backs up when parents are leaving off their children and picking them up. The school buses run all over there, the school bus runs on Hamlet, that's where the kids from my neighborhood are

picked up. This is just wrong. If you wanted to empty out on 100th, that's a different story. If you go out there and look at the way it is, it's a mess. When they changed 100th to go a different direction, it really made it so I have to go through my neighborhood instead of just going out on 100th and over to Jamaica, and now we're going to have all these extra people there. The children in my neighborhood are used to playing in the neighborhood, often they're playing on the streets, I know that isn't probably right, but if you're going to turn it into a racetrack. Plus, when I was younger, I volunteered for South Washington County's Community Justice Program, and I know that 80-to-90% of the police calls were for the high-density apartments. Thank you.

Hello, my name is Andrew Nelson, I live at 9874 Hamlet Lane South, which is again those townhomes directly to the north. I'm kind of getting a lot of assurances that we're not really going to be affected, but I mean, we live there. It doesn't really pass the eye test to me, especially something of that density in a rather small section of land there, which again has a limited entry point as it is. The way things are currently, we're already getting a bunch of houses that are built that were not there even 10 years ago. We have massive expansion already going on in our neighborhood, and I can tell you even if people are going onto 100th, rather than Hadley, not everybody's going to be going onto 100th, a lot of those people are going to be going up Hadley. And I don't know if anybody is aware that on the council here, but 80th is already becoming a problem at the intersection at Hadley, 80th and Hadley. It's backing up to the point where we're having accidents at that stoplight at the Holiday at 80th, and there's another stoplight directly to the east there from the 80th intersection with Hadley, and I can't see how this problem gets any better with all of that. And then on top of this, I feel like we don't talk enough about how the Pine Hill Elementary School is already at capacity, and we didn't really get what we needed as far as expanding that, and we already have houses going up near the Dunes over there and all around our townhomes. And I just, I don't know, I guess I'm not understanding how what we're doing is going to be properly supported by the existing roads and the school infrastructure, and I know the School Board is desperate to get their schools expanded. I feel like we're just putting them behind the eightball with all of this, on top of putting the rest of us behind the eightball with really a concentrated large expansion in one area. Anyway, that's some of my concerns, hopefully that'll be things that'll be considered.

Hello, Bonnie Matter, 6649 Inskip Avenue South, it's nice to see you. My only questions are this: I know the Met Council requires high density, I understand that and I understand why. I guess what I would like to know is does the Met Council then look at the infrastructure that's required from a water standpoint, energy standpoint, or heating and lighting, and also waste? So, that's what I'd like to know. Thank you.

***No one else spoke. Frazier closed the Public Hearing.***

Frazier said I'm going to have staff address some of the concerns or questions that were brought up so that way we can get those answered for the commission.

Pierret said thank you, Mr. Chair. So, when we talk about the stormwater, the flooding of houses and everything across the street, I will probably have to defer more to our engineering crew. I just want to make sure we heard Crystal talking about the water that would overspill onto Hamlet, that would be 6 inches, and it would not impact any of those surrounding residences, the townhomes and single-family homes. All of that has been investigated. When we talk about the future realignment of 100th Street and better places for this type of development, the City is actively working on future redevelopment or future planning for these types of projects, like the realignment of 100th Street. However, those projects are not ready right now, those areas are not ready for development right at this moment. And like I mentioned earlier, the housing research study says that we need this multifamily housing in Cottage Grove right now to house our people, as there's a 0% vacancy rate right now. When we talk about the schools and the overcapacity that the City understands and the School District, who was just here tonight, of course understands all of that. The City has biweekly meetings with the School District, we are very much connected with them, and they have several projects that they are bringing forward, including many more that you will be seeing in the coming year and the coming years ahead for expansion of various schools within Cottage Grove within the School District. So, the School District is well aware of their needs, they are addressing those needs, and the City is working with them on addressing those needs. When we talk of the size of the parcel, the density, the development size, it is acknowledged this is a smaller parcel at 4.7 acres, compared to say the other parcel, the former Norhart parcel. But the developer has done a very good job of fitting in what they could fit in on this parcel, as far as the number of units, the parking that they were required to add due to the County's requirement for that 1:1 outdoor parking; they've really fit what they could fit on the parcel, they meet all of the City's standards for our setbacks, our height, our impervious surface coverage, all of those items. Regarding the Met Council for higher density, if they look at energy, wastewater, all of those types of things, that is another big part of what the Met Council does; they look at not just the density needs, but if we need this density, how will that affect the other portions of our community, the

wastewater needs, the water needs, the energy needs. All of that is something that the Met Council does take into consideration, and it's something that we as a City are required to also be taking into consideration as we move towards our 2050 Comprehensive Planning process. I'll stop there.

Frazier said all right, I think that's all I had, too. Samantha, I just do want to ask you about the density because I know there's been some discussion about the size of the property and is this an appropriate property, based on it being just under 8 acres, I think it is, for a high-density project. How we measure density, how the Met Council measures density is based on the size of the lot itself, correct? Pierret replied, correct. Frazier said and so when we're talking about a high-density unit of being over 15 units per acre, that calculation is already factoring in the size of the property as well, correct? Pierret replied Mr. Chair, you are correct. So, high density is going to be that 15 up to 30 units per acre; when running the numbers for this particular project, we hit around 21 units per acre, so we aren't even at that total maximum there. However, this number is what the site can handle as far as we can see that they are meeting all of our Code standards, but they are meeting, they are just meeting them, so that's important to know. Frazier said okay, thank you.

Brittain asked could you expand upon 100-year back-to-back and what that means, and how likely it is to occur when you talk about storms? Pierret replied Commissioner Brittain, I will certainly have Crystal expand upon that for you. Frazier said and Crystal, maybe you can answer Commissioner Brittain's question first, but then touch on the issues with neighbors having basement flooding and what's going to happen with this project as well. Thank you. Crystal said when we talk about the back-to-back 100-year storm, this isn't something that we're modeling often, this is something that we model in a condition where some areas of development are situated maybe higher on a hill than other areas. So, in those typical scenarios, we're evaluating a 100-year storm and looking at where it overtops and what happens if we get some big catastrophic rain event. In areas like this one, when there's not really a lot of space for the stormwater to go, that's when we look at a back-to-back 100-year storm. So, we really dive in and double the amount of water that comes to the site artificially, through a stormwater model, and then we look at where does the pond to in this development when we run that back-to-back storm. It's important to note that the townhomes to the north were constructed under different stormwater standards, which are less stringent than our stormwater standards today. So, while there may be some flooding that's happening in the townhomes to the north on big storm events, it's likely due to the standards that that subdivision was designed under. Today's standards are much more stringent and we're requiring the site to contain more of its stormwater than would have been required in the past. Does that answer the question? Brittain said so, 100 years, back-to-back, how likely is that to occur? It isn't something you expect to happen very often, it's a worst-case scenario that you're planning for, and if it were to happen, you're expecting some water to pool off into the street, but it'd still be drivable. Crystal replied yeah, that's correct. In my lifetime, I haven't seen a back-to-back 100-year storm event; I mean, I think we've seen some events around here, maybe approaching 10 inches in a 24-hour period, that's a pretty high flood. This wouldn't overtop to Hamlet Avenue in a 10 inches in a 24-hour rain event; it would take something bigger than that, and even in that instance where we're overtopping to Hamlet Avenue, we're still not into the subdivision to the north. Brittain said okay, thank you.

Fisher asked do we know which school, which elementary school this parcel is being directed to? I know Pine Hill is the closest one; however, I know that the development to the west of there is Pullman. So, do we know where the kids that would potentially live here would go? Schmitz replied from a City's perspective, no, we don't know exactly. However, I do know that the School District, as I had mentioned, we meet with them biweekly, and we also provide them monthly updates with our projects. And, so, I'm certain they're planning internally, but to your point, some of those students are going to Armstrong, to Pine Hill, but I'm not certain of the answer there. Fisher said the gentleman that was up here talking about the school being inundated, I see that, I live on that side of the highway, and we do see that. My kids go to Pullman and have seen quite a large influx of kids from that new development just south of Summers Landing. So, I do think that's an important consideration, especially with something this large, you know, because the number of kids is bound to be pretty large. Raleigh said yeah, I did want to mention that the School District does utilize the Comprehensive Plans of the City when they're designing future plans for the schools. So, they're looking at our future land use, too. I know they're anticipating growth and development in this area, and that is triggering some of the projects that they're currently doing under that referendum, which I understand. I think Pine Hill's coming. Fisher said right. Has this project specifically been addressed? Because we're asking to go from medium density to high density, I mean that's a fairly large jump in what they maybe have been planning for or considering. Raleigh replied right, but with that density swap, from the SNA property to this property, it's still the same amount of homes that were in our planning. Fisher said so, they haven't talked directly about this specific one? Raleigh replied not that I know of. Fisher said okay. Schmitz said Mr. Chair, Commissioner Fisher, they're well aware that this project has been on the horizon. This project has been in the works for quite some time, and we've had that open communication with the School District, they're well aware. Fisher replied okay, thank you.

Frazier asked if there were any further comments or questions from the commission, and there were none. He said I want to thank everyone for coming out and giving your opinion, even just sitting and listening and being a part of the process. It's not very often that we get a full audience to see these meetings, but anyone who's been here before can tell you I give the same speech when we have a lot of people show up is thank you for showing up. Because this is the most direct form of government that has an impact on your life every single day, and so the fact that you show up and you care about your neighborhood, you care about your families, you care about your kids enough to come out on a Monday night when it's raining cats and dogs outside, says a lot about you and it says a lot about what you want in Cottage Grove to be better. All of us up here do, too, none of us are getting paid to do this, we all live in the community, just like you, and we're trying to do what we think is best for the community, based on the information we get. What I can tell you is this: Based on my personal view of what's going on right now, at this point it was already guided as medium residential. My back of the napkin math meant that even without re-guiding this, a developer could already put 100 units on that lot and would not have to come before us, we wouldn't have to be doing any re-guiding, rezoning, and they would already be able to do that without question. So, the question is now, if we are adding 50 more units to this piece of property, while protecting some other part of land in the City so that we can have some more park and open space, does that make sense knowing we have a need for this type of housing where there is none left? To me, that makes sense. I think the developer has done a good job here of making sure they're taking concerns about how many units are going in, about what's going on in this neighborhood, because they could have put a lot more units on this property. I think the Planning staff report says they could have put 234 units on this piece of property and been within the high density, and they're not asking for that; but they're asking for something that is going to give the City what it needs as far as housing and is going to give them the ability to do this and obviously make some money because that's the business they're in. But it's something that the City needs and at least in my view, I think the developer is trying to do what they can to be a good neighbor and to make sure that the people who are moving into this area can be neighbors to you all as well. I think the concerns about the School District, obviously that's a concern, the School District is a separate government organization, they have their own budget, they have their own needs, they control their own buildings. All we can do is tell them here's what's going on in the City, here's what we're expecting, and it's their job to make sure that their budgeting and putting students in desks where they can do that. Based on the presentation I've seen tonight, I believe that this is in the best interests of the City and that there is a good reason to amend the Comprehensive Plan and rezone this property in order to do this development. Would anyone else like to speak?

Stephens said I'll just clarify, I was asking about the storm event, was just curious to kind of hear, but to add a little bit more clarification that the back-to-back storm event we were talking about, just a 100-year event is less than a 1% chance; back-to-back, I don't know the statistics, but 1% and then 1%, it's like its rare. But it does look to me like obviously all of that work was done, and the City would have all of that assessment and everything for any downstream impacts, which makes me feel pretty good and like the due diligence was done for the stormwater piece of it. So, I mean, I agree it seems like the developer has done everything we kind of asked, checked all the boxes, and done what they could.

Woodman said I am in agreement that it's likely the right plan for it, but I would like to have the City come up with some type of Comprehensive Plan for this particular quadrant, like these four lots, at least an idea of what should be there knowing that NorthStar, or whatever that was called, has now cancelled or withdrawn. We're shifting what was going to be one big complex into another; what does that, like ideal state, what do those four look like? Taking into consideration what's been shared tonight, since we do have three more lots there now that don't really have clear owners to them. I would just like the City to come back with some type of idea in the future of how those should be used, ideally, since I don't think putting four giant complexes there would be the right idea. But, yeah, that's all.

Fisher said this one is hard for me, personally, because I understand what everyone has said out there. But as a commissioner and as somebody looking at this, willing seller, willing buyer, a plan that meets all of the laws and Codes that we work so hard to keep updated and clear, it's something I agree with my fellow commissioners that have spoken that it's something that we can't legally have a commission say no to, right? Is that reasonable? Frazier replied I agree. So, I appreciate what Chair Frazier said, too, about we like when people come out and talk about it. So, that's all I have to say.

Brittain said well, since our whole role here is to interpret the Zoning and Planning rules that we have in place and apply them to the project before us, I see that this project meets the rules that the community has in place at this time.

***Brittain made a motion to approve Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Zoning Amendment, and Site Plan Review, subject to the findings of fact and conditions stipulated in the staff report. Stephens seconded. Motion passed unanimously (7-to-0 vote).***

### **C. Summer Woods - Cases ZA/PP2025-011**

Summergate Development has applied for a Zoning Amendment and Preliminary Plat on four parcels totaling 34.99 acres of land located north of 65th Street, west of the Langdon Hills Development, and south of the Eastbrooke Development, which will rezone those parcels from R-2, Residential Estate District, to R-3, Single Family Residential District, to plat 56 single-family lots.

Frazier stated that the applicant and staff agreed to continue this application to the June 23, 2025 Planning Commission meeting.

*Fisher made a motion to continue Public Hearing on the Zoning Amendment and Preliminary Plat for Summer Woods to the June 23, 2025 Planning Commission meeting. Woodman seconded. Motion passed unanimously (7-to-0 vote).*

## **7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

### **A. Approval of the March 24, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**

*Knable made a motion to Approve the March 24, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Bhat seconded. Motion passed unanimously (7-to-0 vote).*

## **8. REPORTS**

### **A. RECAP OF APRIL AND MAY 2025 CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Schmitz summarized the actions taken at the April 2, April 16, and May 7, 2025, City Council meetings.

Schmitz said as you can see, Council Member Justin Olsen is not with us this evening, as he is in Las Vegas at the ICSC conference; however, Council Member Dave Clausen has joined us this evening, and he has made himself available for any questions that you all might have for him.

Clausen said thank you, Emily, I'm just filling in for Justin, and Justin is much better at speaking than I am. If you have any questions for the Council, I'm happy to try to answer them, but she did a great job of reviewing the last two months.

Frazier asked if there were any questions for Emily or Council Member Clausen.

Woodman asked that plat by Woodbury, that's the next extension of Ravine Parkway, correct? Is that the plat? Schmitz replied yes, so as a part of that project, that segment of Ravine Parkway will go in as well.

Frazier said all right, thank you.

### **B. RESPONSE TO PLANNING COMMISSION INQUIRIES**

Frazier said there was just one from the last meeting and asked Emily to go ahead. Schmitz said there was a letter response, as there were some questions posed about the Code Amendments and the EIS, EAW process and how that relates to State Statute, so there was a response in there for you.

### **C. PLANNING COMMISSION REQUESTS**

Bhat said so, as we were going through the discussion today, I was wondering can we get a quick guide somewhere with respect to all these Zoning minimum and maximum specifications with regard to the number of housings? I know it's included in the packet, so instead of going back to the packet every time to look up that answer, could we have like a website or someplace where we can easily access those? Schmitz replied we'd be happy to put together, I'm going to call it maybe a little bit of a cheat sheet that would be a quick reference guide for all of you, absolutely. Bhat said if you could print it out and have it ready, that would be great; Schmitz replied yes, we'd be happy to.

Bhat said I have one more request. Again, going back, we keep talking about this Met Council always with regard to the fact that we have no Affordable Housing left in the City. Is that again somewhere we can access that information? Schmitz replied yes, we can provide you with those sections of our Comprehensive Plan, as well as our Housing Study that was just recently adopted, and all of that data is incorporated into both of those documents. Bhat said thank you.

## 9. ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

### **A. APPROVE 2025 PLANNING COMMISSION RULES**

*Staff Recommendation: Approve the 2025 Planning Commission Rules.*

Frazier said we already did officers at the March meeting, but there was a motion by staff to table the Rules until our next meeting, and we missed April, so here we are in May. The proposed Rules were included at the back of the packet for everyone to review. Unless there are any additions or modifications that someone wants to make to the Rules, I would look for a motion to Approve the Rules.

***Fisher made a motion to Approve the 2025 Planning Commission Rules. Second by Knable. Motion passed unanimously (7-to-0 vote).***

## 10. ADJOURNMENT

Frazier said one last thing before we adjourn tonight, this is Commissioner Stephens' last meeting so we will miss her on the commission. You've been a very great member to have just because you have that engineering background and the stormwater background and are able to ask those questions, as appropriate, because most of that goes way over my head. So, I really appreciate your expertise you bring to the commission and the fact that you do such a great job every time at the meetings. So, thank you very much for your work for the City and your work for this commission. We'll miss you. Stephens replied thank you. I'll hopefully be back, this is just a break, so, yeah, it's been great working with you all. I've learned a lot.

***Stephens made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Fisher seconded. Motion passed unanimously (7-to-0 vote). The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.***