

**CITY OF MENDOTA HEIGHTS  
DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
November 25, 2008**

The regular meeting of the Mendota Heights Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, November 25, 2008, in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 1101 Victoria Curve at 7:00 P.M.

The following Commissioners were present: Chair Lally, Commissioners McManus, Norton, Viksnins, and Hennes. Those absent: Commissioner Povolny. Those present were Public Works Director John Mazzitello, Assistant to the City Administrator Jake Sedlacek, and Planner Steve Gritman. Minutes were recorded by Rebecca Shaffer.

**Approval of October 28, 2008**

**Commissioner Field moved, seconded by Commissioner McManus, to approve the minutes of October 28, 2008 of the Planning Commission meeting.**

**AYES           6  
NAYES         0**

**Hearings**

**PLANNING CASE #08-31  
Steven Mager  
729 Mohican Court  
Variance**

Mr. Gritman reviewed a map showing the location of 729 Mohican Court, which is a single family parcel zoned R-1, Residential. This parcel is adjacent to the Friendly Hills Elementary School. It was noted that the property is a very odd shape, with smaller frontage expanding wider as it progresses to the back of the property.

The home contains a very small two car garage and the applicant is proposing to construct a third addition to the south side of the garage. The proposed expansion of 10-ft would result in a 5-ft setback from the property line.

Mr. Gritman said the applicant feels the hardship for the variance is the very small garage as the home was built in the 1950's and said it is a reasonable use to have a three car garage in the community.

It was also noted that the applicant had previously submitted this application and was approved by the City Council some years ago, but the applicant never continued with the work. Based on this rationale, staff is recommending approval of this variance request as it will create a reasonable type of garage and allow the needed access to the home.

Commissioner Norton asked who owned the property immediately to the south.

Mr. Steven Magers, 729 Mohican Court, said this is city owned property on which there at one time a water tower. Mr. Magers said this was a very small parcel and would doubt that any structure would be built there. Mr. Gritman confirmed that there would be no construction of a home on that parcel.

Commissioner Viksnins said he believed that the real hardship is the shape of the lot, and asked if that was the Council's basis for approval years ago on this approval. Mr. Gritman said that was correct. The garage could theoretically be built to the back, but there would be difficulty in providing access.

Mr. Magers explained that he had constructed an addition to the home, taking a part of the original garage space and converted it to a mud room, so now he only has a 1-1/2 car garage.

Commissioner McManus asked how far this will come to the nearby hillside. Mr. Magers explained that it was steep and his plans were to build up the foundation as well as putting in a retaining wall, in the hopes that he will not have water runoff damage. Commissioner McManus said he sees no other alternative for the additional garage space and is in support of this variance request.

Chair Lally opened the public hearing. Seeing no one coming forward wishing to speak, he asked for a motion to close the public hearing.

**Commissioner Field moved, seconded by Commissioner Norton, to approve close the public hearing.**

**AYES            6**  
**NAYES         0**

**Commissioner Viksins moved, seconded by Commissioner Norton, to recommend approval of the variance with the finding that a hardship has been identified based on the configuration of the lot.**

**Commissioner McManus recommended a friendly amendment that the applicant obtains the proper building permits.**

**AYES            6**  
**NAYES         0**

### Discussions

#### December Planning Commission Meeting

Chair Lally proposed that the December Planning Commission Meeting be cancelled as it historically is, unless there are any planning cases that need to be addressed. Assistant to the City Administrator Jake Sedlacek said there are no cases planned at this time.

**Commissioner Norton moved, seconded by Commissioner Hennes, to recommend cancellation of the December Planning Commission meeting unless staff feels there is a need to address planning cases.**

**AYES            6**  
**NAYES         0**

#### Commission Appointments

Chair Lally said Commissioner Povolny and Commission Hennes' terms will soon expire, and both the commissioners have expressed interest to take a new term. Chair Lally said there is also openings on the Parks and Recreation Commission as well as the Lower Mississippi Watershed District, and encouraged residents to apply if there are interested. More information can be obtained by calling City Hall and asking for Mr. Sedlacek or City Administrator Jim Danielson, as well as on the city's webpage.

#### Update on Mendota Mall

Mr. Sedlacek said Paster Enterprises will be moving ahead with the concept plan, which was reviewed by the City Council last week. The Council gave a head nod to the applicant to continue with this project. Paster Enterprise

reviewed more detail architectural and landscape plans at that council meeting. Council still has roughly 15 items that need to be addressed.

The City Council has requested that the Planning Commission hold a joint meeting at the next City Council meeting scheduled for January 6<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Sedlacek said the Planning Commission will be participating in the discussions and staff will provide them with a full packet one week prior to the meeting. Paster Enterprises said they will be able to have the full package for review at this meeting.

Mr. Sedlacek said residents are welcome to contact City Hall with any questions, and they can also visit the site to see some of the sampling of the materials that are being constructed

Commissioner Field expressed his appreciation that the Council is keeping the Planning Commission involved in this process.

**Verbal Review**

Planning Case No. 08-28                      Somerset Country Club                      Conditional Use Permit  
♦    Approved by the City Council as recommended by the Planning Commission.

Planning Case No. 08-29                      Telecom Transport (TTM)                      Conditional Use Permit  
♦    Approved by the City Council as recommended by the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Field asked for an update to the property at 694 Wentworth Avenue. Public Works Director John Mazzitello said staff obtained an administrative warrant to enter the property to inspect the structure were there were some deficiencies found. Staff is currently working with the City Attorney to determine what the next move is.

**Commissioner McManus moved, seconded by Commissioner Norton, to adjourn the meeting 7:27 pm**

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Shaffer, Recording Secretary