

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES MARCH 5, 2024

ROLL CALL

The Planning Commission of the City of Prairie Village met in regular session on Tuesday, March 5 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at 7700 Mission Road. Chair Greg Wolf called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Jonathan Birkel, James Breneman, James Kersten, Melissa Brown, Melissa Temple, and Jeffrey Valentino.

The following individuals were present in their advisory capacity to the Board of Zoning Appeals: Chris Brewster, Multistudio; Nickie Lee, Deputy City Administrator; Terry O'Toole, Council Liaison; Adam Geffert, City Clerk/Board Secretary.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Breneman moved for the approval of the minutes of the February 6, 2024, regular Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Birkel seconded the motion, which passed 5-0, with new members James Kersten and Melissa Temple abstaining.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

NON-PUBLIC HEARINGS

PC2024-105 Site plan review for a fence, with exception
 4996 Somerset Drive
 Zoning: R-1A
 Applicant: Raymond Swaney

Mr. Brewster stated that the applicant was requesting to replace an existing fence that did not conform to current zoning standards. Specifically, the request is for an exception to the required setback on Cedar Drive, allowing replacement of a 6' wooden privacy fence in the same location (ranging from approximately 5' to 6' from the property line along the street rather than a 15' setback).

The property is a corner lot on the northeast corner of Somerset Drive and Cedar Drive. The lot fronts on Somerset Drive and has a driveway access off Cedar Drive. There is an existing fence to the north of the driveway extending from the house and enclosing the rear yard. The fence line along Cedar Drive is between 5' and 6' from the back of the

sidewalk at various locations, and approximately 17' from the curb. The adjacent house faces Cedar Drive so the front yard of this property abuts the rear yard and fenced area of the subject property.

Mr. Brewster noted that zoning ordinance required that the fence be set back the greater of 15' or half of the adjoining lot's front setback. In this case, that setback is 28', requiring the fence to be set back 15'. Since the proposed fenced area is in the side and rear yards, there are no restrictions on the design of the fence, other than the general height and design standards.

Mr. Brewster said staff recommended approval of the fence site plan with the exception based on the specified factors.

Applicant and property owner Raymond Swaney was present to discuss the application.

Mr. Valentino made a motion to approve the application as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Breneman and passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Planning Commission training and review

Mr. Brewster gave a presentation noting the role and responsibilities of the Planning Commission. He stated that the basis for the commission's decision-making was the City's comprehensive plan, which is used to guide zoning and development decisions, coordinate public and private development, and prioritize public investments. The Planning Commission's role is to do the following:

- Make the comprehensive plan
- Approve the "location, extent and character" of all public improvements
- Review and recommend the capital improvement program (CIP)
- Adopt subdivision regulations
- Approve plats
- Review and recommend zoning changes
- Address decisions referred to the commission by zoning ordinance
- Review the comprehensive plan annually

Mr. Brewster said that most Planning Commission decisions were of an administrative nature rather than legislative or judicial, meaning decisions are made based on the laws developed by the governing body, and that these types of decisions allow for very limited discretion. He added that the commission ensures that standards are met, and that recommendations given are based on the broad perspective and expertise of commission members. If there are not specific standards identified, the commission should verify whether there is a desired outcome expressed in the zoning regulations.

Continued discussion of potential updates to R-2, R-3, R-4, C- and MXD districts

Mr. Brewster said that the Planning Commission held work sessions on August 22, 2023, and October 3, 2023, to discuss potential strategies for housing policies laid out in Village Vision 2.0. The work sessions were a direct follow-up to the public forums held on June 22, 2023, and July 13, 2023. He added that the Planning Commission had previously discussed concepts and strategies on August 22, October 3, December 5, and February 6.

Mr. Brewster provided the following background based on direction given by the Planning Commission at its October 5, 2023, meeting:

1. Hold the status quo in R-2, R-3, and R-4 districts
 - a. Make existing conditions compliant with standards
 - b. Clean up any conflicts / interpretation issues
2. Allow residential uses in C- districts
 - a. Permit mixed-use residential (upper floors or behind ground level residential)
 - b. Allow subject to current commercial building development standards
3. Improve the MXD district (planned district)
 - a. Promote smaller scale / more practical to Prairie Village's context
 - b. Improve expectations
4. Revise current planned development standards and procedures
 - a. Define planning thresholds to justify flexibility in standards
 - b. Improve expectations
5. Consider MXD for application in a variety of contexts
 - a. Mixed use redevelopment of activity centers
 - b. Strategic infill in activity centers (mixed-use or residential)
 - c. Residential redevelopment in transition areas or multi-family districts

Mr. Brewster next presented suggested potential amendments to the following zoning districts:

- R-3 District:
 - Add intent section and reformat text to tables
 - Reduce lot area per until from 2,400 s.f. to 1,750 s.f.
 - Clarify conflict in building coverage (20% vs. 30%); use 30%
 - Add impervious coverage standard - 50%
 - Add section targeting planned rezoning applications (RP-3) to moderate or large-scale residential building types
- R-2 and R-4 Districts:

- No substantive changes - add intent section and reformat text to tables (added building coverage for consistency - 30% and 50%)
- Add section targeting planned rezoning applications (RP-2 and RP-4) to small or moderate-scale residential building types
- Require planned applications to use MXD neighborhood design standards
- C-0, C-1, and C-2 Districts:
 - Add intent section and reformat text to tables
 - No substantive changes to development standards
 - Add “Residential - Mixed-Use” to the use table for C-0, C-1, and C-2
 - Add performance criteria in C-1 and C-2 for residential uses on upper story or behind first story commercial developed to commercial building standards
 - Add section targeting planned zoning applications (CP-0) in the C-0 district to small scale residential and mixed-use building types
- MXD District:
 - Replace development standards reference (no standards - subject to plan proposals); add specific building type standards for default
 - Add mixed-density neighborhood and mixed-use design standards
 - Remove procedures and defer to improved planned zoning procedures (community plans, project plans, and updated criteria)
- Planned Zoning District:
 - Simplify and improve intent statement
 - Improve procedures with two specific scales of plans:
 - Community design plan - street and blocks, streetscape, open space, general land use intensity and transitions
 - Project plans - specific building types, frontages, building design, site/landscape design
 - Establish base zone district standards as the “default standard”; add specific criteria for deviations in lot coverage, lot area per unit, building heights and setbacks, parking
 - Improved rezoning / P-district designation criteria and “effect of decision” section noting when deviations from plans require review by the city council

Lastly, Mr. Brewster shared proposed design guidelines for mixed-density and mixed-use neighborhoods:

- Community Design Plan vs. Project Plan:
 - Community design plan (10-to-40-acre scale) - streetscapes, circulation, blocks / parcels, open and civic spaces
 - Project plans (lots and block/parcel scale) - frontages, site design/landscape, building scale, massing, and design
- Frontage Design:
 - Building placement - consistent front building line for different contexts

- Vehicle access - coordinate at the block scale and limit at the lot scale to maintain consistent streetscape and avoid interruptions in sidewalks
- Pedestrian access - all buildings and sites from the streetscape
- Parking and garage location - interior of block; limited and screened from streetscapes
- Building Design:
 - Massing - relate buildings to adjacent buildings and sites with similar massing and proportions
 - Articulation - use windows, doors, materials, and architectural features to break up wall planes and have human scale details
 - Transparency - locate windows, doors, and entry features in relation to outside space and activate more important spaces (streets and open space)
- Site Design:
 - Screen intense activities or equipment from streetscape, open spaces
 - Locate utilities or stormwater interior to block or otherwise minimize impact on streetscape
 - Buffers for sensitive edges or adjacencies

Ms. Brown asked if table 19.27 noting allowed uses in districts needed to maintain a distinction between apartments, condominiums and residential mixed-use. Mr. Brewster said he would review the table to see if it could be simplified.

After further discussion, Mr. Brewster stated that the next steps included taking the suggestions received to finalize the direction of the Planning Commission, then presenting that information to the city council, and finally introducing recommendations into a formal public review, comment, and adoption process.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Wolf adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Adam Geffert
City Clerk/Planning Commission Secretary