

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING - MONTICELLO PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Tuesday, February 2nd, 2021 - 6:15 p.m.**  
**Mississippi Room, Monticello Community Center**

Commissioners Present: John Alstad, Paul Konsor, Andrew Tapper, Alison Zimpfer, and Eric Hagen  
Council Liaison Present: Charlotte Gabler  
Staff Present: Angela Schumann, Steve Grittman (NAC), and Ron Hackenmueller

**1. General Business**

**A. Call to Order**

John Alstad called the Regular Meeting of the Monticello Planning Commission to order at 6:15 p.m.

**B. Appointment of Officers for 2021**

ANDREW TAPPER MOVED TO ELECT PAUL KONSOR AS CHAIR OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION. ALISON ZIMPFER SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED, 5-0.

PAUL KONSOR MOVED TO ELECT JOHN ALSTAD AS VICE CHAIR OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION. ALISON ZIMPFER SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED, 5-0.

ERIC HAGEN MOVED TO ELECT CITY STAFF AS SECRETARY. JOHN ALSTAD SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED, 5-0.

**C. Consideration of approving minutes**

**a. Regular Meeting Minutes – January 5th, 2021**

ALISON ZIMPFER MOVED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – JANUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>, 2021. ANDREW TAPPER SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED, 5-0.

**D. Citizen Comments**

None.

**E. Consideration of adding items to the agenda**

None.

**F. Consideration to approve agenda**

ALISON ZIMPFER MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. JOHN ALSTAD SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED, 5-0.

**2. Public Hearings**

**A. Continued Public Hearing – Consideration of a request for Ordinance Amendment relating to R-1 Zoning District standards**

**Applicant: Capstone Homes**

Andrew Tapper reclused himself from this item.

Steve Grittman explained that this was a continued Public Hearing from the January Planning Commission Meeting.

Grittman explained that the City developed building material standards several years ago with the intent that the zoning regulations (including 5/12 roof pitch and 15 percent brick or stone treatment) were to point towards higher end housing. Grittman noted that the applicant, Capstone Homes, is actively building in Monticello (Haven Ridge) and is seeking amendment to the code for architecture. The requested amendments are separated by the minimum roof pitch standard and brick and stone treatment.

Grittman noted that some of the homes Capstone typically builds have less of a roof pitch on ornamental features (such as over a porch, gabled dormers, or shed dormer). The overall roof structure would meet the minimum code. Staff presented the applicant's proposal, the staff recommendation to Planning Commission from the January meeting, and staff's recommendation to Planning Commission for February. A chart of these three alternatives for both proposed ordinance amendments was provided in the staff report.

Grittman then discussed the proposed amendment for the brick and stone requirements. Capstone has noted they have several popular models that do not have brick or stone on the front façade but rely on the architecture and the style of siding on the home.

Alison Zimpfer asked if what the applicants were suggesting, without the brick and stone, were not considered high end features or if it was just a different architectural concept. Grittman noted that staff were not suggesting that the builder was not constructing high end homes, but that it was the way the City defined high end features when they adopted the current ordinance. Grittman noted that the current ordinance was easy to apply and that builders have been meeting that requirement. The applicants previously suggested that this standard is unusual without any flexibility.

Paul Konsor clarified that this would be a city-wide amendment and not just for a specific development. Grittman confirmed that this would change the City's Zoning Ordinance to require every builder to comply with the new rules unless builders are completing homes within a Planned Unit Development and specific standards are noted with that approval. Konsor asked if this applicant would fall under the optional façade treatment section of the proposed code. Grittman noted with the proposed amendment, if they would like to build homes without the 15 percent treatment of brick and stone, their option would be to present it to the Planning Commission.

Eric Hagen asked if it were known how much brick and stone would be removed, on average, if windows were excluded from the total façade requirement. Angela Schumann noted that examples were provided in the Planning Commission packet and added that it would vary based on the design of the home and number of windows on the façade.

Hagen also asked if what staff were proposing, could all three options for façade architectural standards be found in a development or just one of the three options per development. Gritman noted that the intent would be up to the builder/developer to work with the portfolio they wish. Staff were not suggesting that they had to choose one option for the entire development. Hagen mentioned the importance of being cognizant of consistency within a development but understood the desire for a variety of options.

Hagen also noted that the current ordinance allows 70 percent stucco or real wood with only 5 percent brick or stone coverage. He asked what the remaining 25 percent could be used for. Gritman noted that it was free reign but imagined that it could, for example, be lapped siding or shakes on a gable end.

Konsor noted that the applicant proposed to also remove from the façade requirements the square footage for doors (in addition to removing windows and garage doors). He asked why staff's recommendation did not include removal of the doors from the total façade requirements. Gritman noted that staff did not want a builder to have to eliminate having windows because of the brick or stone requirement and that it was a good trade-off to exclude the windows from the façade, but not the door.

Konsor also asked why a developer would enter a development and then later ask for an amendment to the building materials standard. Gritman deferred to the applicant, but it was noted that the developer has mentioned their long-term commitment to Monticello. Gritman noted that the amendment could apply to the developer's future construction, rather than current.

Paul Konsor opened the public hearing.

Heather Lorch, Capstone Homes/applicant, introduced herself and provided a short presentation. Lorch noted that after they first contracted the lots and applied for building permits, they were not aware of the extent of the ordinance. Lorch explained that very rarely have they seen in communities that brick or stone is a requirement, which is why they did not dig into it too deeply. She also noted that the roof pitch exempted several styles of homes they offer, which is why they decided to work with the City to come up with a resolution together. Lorch noted the history of Capstone Homes and explained that they completed 350 homes in the metro area for 2020. Lorch explained they have a very strong warranty and quality assurance program for their homes. Lorch noted the importance their company places on quality and quality building materials. Lorch mentioned that they feel the easier the building permit applications are, the more successful builders can be, buyers can have good and multiple choices when selecting a home, and staff are not burdened by having to look through so many plans. She noted the high demand for farm style homes that do not have brick or stone.

Lorch provided additional considerations from staff's recommendation for amendment to the zoning ordinance for the brick and stone requirement and the roof pitches.

Zimpfer asked if the applicant has proposed changes in other communities. Lorch noted that she has not requested an ordinance amendment to other communities in her four years with the company. Zimpfer asked what the targeted age range of the homes they sell would include. She noted that their company is a production builder that builds attainable homes. Lorch noted that their target price range is between \$350,000 and \$500,000 homes. They tend to get first time home buyers with small families. They have been building detached townhomes that includes lawn and snow maintenance that receives interest by many single parent homeowners. They also have a villa product that are geared towards retired aged individuals that are looking to downsize. She explained that it is the full gamut of the market.

Hagen asked how many of their existing models meet the 15 percent brick or stone standard. Lorch estimated that it was about half. Hagen asked if it would significantly limit the types of homes in Haven Ridge. Lorch confirmed that they had to remove some homes from their product line. She added that without the roof pitch change, it eliminated 75 to 80 percent of their homes. She asked that the brick or stone requirement be removed to offer homes to buyers that are not interested in having that and added that they would lose buyers if that requirement stayed in place. Hagen asked if they have any models that are 100 percent one building material or all have at least two building materials. Lorch confirmed that all models utilized at least two building materials.

Konsor asked for clarification from the applicant's presentation regarding the proposed three material/styles exception of brick or stone. Lorch clarified the chart provided in the staff report and noted they would propose that if the builder is proposing no brick or stone, they would need two of the listed building materials and 25 percent of each. Schumann wanted to be clear on what the 75 percent material would be and what the 25 percent would be.

Zimpfer asked if the applicant saw any concerns with what staff recommended. Lorch appreciated the efforts that staff had put forth but asked for consideration that homes with front porches be exempt from having the brick or stone requirement. Hagen clarified with staff that an 80 square foot or larger porch would exempt a builder from any brick or stone. Gritman confirmed that was the intent and he felt the applicant was asking that if the home has a front porch, they could drop the brick or stone requirement without special approval by the Planning Commission. Hagen asked for clarification if the brick or stone exemption was just for the porch area or the entire structure. Gritman felt the intent was if there was a porch that met those conditions, there would be no brick or stone requirement on that building. Konsor added an issue that could occur if an accessory structure were constructed that required brick and stone and a principal home was constructed with a porch that would be exempt from having brick or stone. Hagen asked for further clarification on the porch exemption if it would apply to the standard for 70 percent of stucco or real wood and the requirement for 5 percent brick or stone. Gritman believed that was the intent. Hagen asked if the applicant had the same understanding. Lorch confirmed but noted they hadn't thought of those options as they do not use stucco or real wood as a building material.

Charlotte Gabler asked if there was flexibility on the homes that are not shown with brick or stone. Lorch confirmed that they had other elevations of models that contained the brick or stone if a buyer requested that. Gabler asked if additional landscaping would be required for homes that do not have brick or stone. Schumann explained that the proposed ordinance amendments try to balance what the City is trying to achieve and simplicity. Schumann noted that staff are not proposing other amendments to the zoning ordinance at this time.

Hagen asked if the Planning Commission was approving Capstone Homes the provision for optional façade treatments prior to building permit when additional architecture so warrants separately from the change to the ordinance. Schumann believed that the assumption was that the Planning Commission was asked to make a recommendation regarding the ordinance amendment and separately Capstone Homes would determine how that impacts their designs and would potentially come back to the Planning Commission with designs for approval. It was reminded that the City Council would ultimately decide on the zoning ordinance amendment language.

Andrew Tapper, 2528 Meadow Oak Lane, noted that in his neighborhood of Briar Oaks, there are several homes that do not have brick or stone and are still considered high quality. He thought that the City was being closed in design styles. Tapper also questioned the recommendation of staff for approval by the Planning Commission of individual housing styles and the logistics of adding these items to future agendas.

Hearing no further comments, the public hearing was closed.

Further discussion occurred regarding the staff recommendation during the January Planning Commission meeting. Hagen asked the applicant if their plans would be able to meet the proposed changes to the ordinance from the previous recommendation. Lorch asked that the last sentence (column three/building materials) be adjusted to 25 percent of the two lesser materials. She reiterated that the 15 percent proposal would give a clunky and unbalanced design.

Hagen asked if this was the first time that the City had seen a deviation from brick or stone or if this was something routinely brought up. Ron Hackenmueller noted that there have been battles over the years regarding the 15 percent, especially as other communities do not have this standard. Hackenmueller noted that builders have revised their plans to ensure the 15 percent standard has been met, although some homes in Monticello may not have any or less than the 15 percent amount. Hackenmueller stated that the roof pitch amendment will allow flexibility and would help the Building Department when reviewing a plan.

ERIC HAGEN MOVED TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. PC-2021-006  
RECOMMENDING ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 7XX  
INCORPORATING STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS OF FEBRUARY 2<sup>ND</sup>,  
2021, BASED ON FINDINGS IN SAID RESOLUTION. JOHN ALSTAD  
SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED, 4-0.

### 3. Regular Agenda

#### A. Consideration of amendment to regular monthly Planning Commission meeting time

JOHN ALSTAD MOVED TO SET REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS AT 6:00 PM THE FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH. ALISON ZIMPFER SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED, 5-0.

#### B. Monticello Capital Improvement Plan Update

Angela Schumann noted that the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is adopted by the City Council each year as a part of the budget and tax levy. The plan thinks about the next five to ten years in terms of public infrastructure and improvements. Schumann noted that the City will rely on the Monticello 2040 Comprehensive Plan as the foundation for the preparation of that plan. Minnesota State Statutes provide that for City's that adopt comprehensive plans, the Planning Commission should hear an annual report on the CIP.

Matt Leonard, City Engineer/Public Work's Director, provided an overview of the CIP. Leonard highlighted some larger items on the CIP, including: the construction of a new Public Works building, pedestrian and bicycle improvements including ADA improvements, road and utility (re)construction, stormwater management improvements, park improvements, completion of a feasibility study for a water treatment plant, updating the SCADA system (communication system for water and sewer utilities), fire department updates and upgrades, construction of a new liquor store location, and completion of an updated comprehensive water plan.

Leonard encouraged the Planning Commission if they had any projects they would like staff to review, they were open to their feedback.

He noted that there are grants that the City may apply for to help offset some of the costs of these projects.

Leonard also provided MnDOT's Capital Highway Investment Plan and Wright County's long range plans. Leonard specifically highlighted projects that impact Monticello.

#### C. Consideration of the Community Development Director's Report

Angela Schumann provided the Community Development Director's as provided in the agenda.

### 4. Added Items

None.

### 5. Adjournment

JOHN ALSTAD MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:19 P.M. ALISON ZIMPFER SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED, 5-0.

Recorder: Jacob Thunander \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: February 2nd, 2021

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Angela Schumann, Community Development Director

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