

MINUTES OF THE NEENAH PLAN COMMISSION
Tuesday, December 10, 2019
4:15 p.m.

Present:

Mayor Dean Kaufert, Chairman	PRESENT	Gerry Kaiser, Director of Public Works	PRESENT	Nick Piergrossi, Vice Chairman	ABSENT
Kate Hancock-Cooke	ABSENT	Karen Genett	PRESENT		
Gerry Andrews	PRESENT	Ald. Jane Lang	PRESENT		

Also present:

Brad Schmidt, Deputy Director of Community Development	Cassandra Kohls, Administrative Assistant Community Development	Ald. Cari Lendrum
Lauri Asbury – Neenah School District	Betsy Ellenberger – Neenah School District	

Minutes: MSC Kaiser/Andrews to approve the November 26, 2019 meeting minutes. All Aye. Motion passed.

Public Appearances: None. Mayor Kaufert closed Public Appearances.

Public Hearings: None.

Betsy Ellenberger (Neenah School District) introduced herself to the Plan Commission. Mayor Kaufert explained Michelle Swardenski, School District President, will send an email to confirm the appointment of Betsy to Plan Commission. Mayor Kaufert spoke in favor of School Board representation on Plan Commission.

Action Items:

1. Final Plat - First Addition to Integrity Acres

Deputy Director Schmidt provided an overview. First Addition to Integrity Acres is located west of Liberty Heights and south of County Highway G. The proposed plat includes 27 single-family lots, each averaging 24,000 square feet. The development is consistent with the first phase. The final plat conforms to the preliminary plat and applies changes provided in review comment from the city. Integrity way ends east and west and dead ends on the west. Honor Street extends north and south. Sidewalks are planned along Integrity Way and Honor Street which will be located on the east side of the lots. Lots 34-37 have restricted access to County Highway G. Lot 37 includes a vision clearance area. Access along the west side of Honor Street is restricted without the city's approval. Two parcels to the west of the subject may develop in the future. A Development Agreement will be presented to Council next week.

Betsy Ellenberger (Neenah School District) inquired about a sidewalk along Respect Avenue. Deputy Director Schmidt explained that this was not part of the plan. At some point a trail will be located on the north end along County Highway G and on Wooden Shoe and County Highway G.

Mayor Kaufert inquired about Honor Street extending out to County Highway G. Deputy Director Schmidt explained that Honor Street met the minimum distance requirements from the intersection. The west portion functions as a driveway. The county requires a separation of 600 feet between driveways. The developer purchased this as an access point. Mayor Kaufert asked if the driveway will be brought up to street standards. Deputy Director Schmidt confirmed.

MSC Kaiser/Genett to recommend Common Council approve the Final Plat for the First Addition to Integrity Acres subdivision. All Aye. Motion passed.

Discussion Items:

1. Gravel Driveways

Deputy Director Schmidt explained that Ald. Lendrum raised the discussion at Common Council about requiring hard surface for driveways.

Ald. Lendrum spoke in favor of creating an ordinance requiring impervious material for driveways for any new construction. She clarified that her intent was not to require this when a home changed hands during a sale. She is looking for consistency with new builds. She explained Menasha has a similar process and it has been positive for the community.

Mayor Kaufert explained Habitat for Humanity has recently changed their policy to now include garages with new home construction. Driveways are not part of the programming.

Ald. Lendrum explained Habitat for Humanity offers interest free loans for new construction. Property owners will pay much less for impervious driveways or garages if this is included with the no-interest construction loan rather than if they wait and will be then paying full retail.

Deputy Director Schmidt explained staff could ask Ryan Roth if that is what the ordinance requires that they do.

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Plan Commission Minutes

December 10, 2019

Page 2

Mayor Kaufert cautioned that this may hinder the amount of construction as Habitat for Humanity would not be building as many new homes.

Deputy Director Schmidt inquired about the enforceability. He explained in older neighborhoods with gravel driveways, parking on grass is typical. He would like to explore allowing existing gravel driveways to remain and be maintained but limiting expansion.

Ald. Lendrum raised concern about runoff with gravel driveways. She address Mayor Kaufert's concern about hindering Habitat's amount of new construction indicating Menasha has not seen a decrease in construction.

Member Genett indicated the State took away municipalities' ability to require updates such as this at the time of closing.

Ald. Lendrum inquired about the ability to install an asphalt pad next to gravel. Deputy Director Schmidt explained that this would be allowable.

Director Kaiser indicated the ordinance requires any gravel apron to be hard surfaced within a year of the redo of the street. As streets are redone, gravel aprons are eliminated.

Member Genett raised concern about driveway installations in larger portions of the front yards. She cited a property located on Henry St. She asked if this was allowable. Deputy Director Schmidt explained that this is currently allowable, however, some communities restrict that if it becomes an issue. The challenge is with smaller lots.

Ald. Lang questioned when an apron is installed before the street is finished. She was in favor of the gravel apron up until the point that the street was finished. At that point, a hard surface apron would be appropriate.

Member Andrews explained that Green Bay Habitat for Humanity requires garages. He spoke in favor of this as it eliminated outside storage. He questioned how to define alternative materials such as permeable pavers. Deputy Director Schmidt explained the ordinance includes anything that is not gravel.

Ald. Lendrum cited a property on Meadowview that has a gravel apron. She indicated this caused a concern from neighbors as they paid for the street assessment. Neighbors were concerned that the asphalt edges of the street would wear away over time from the gravel and would require repairs.

Director Kaiser indicated there would needs to be consideration for new buildings built 1 year after the road was constructed. There are no requirements for those driveway aprons to be hard surfaced.

Ald. Lendrum inquired about who would pay for the new apron. Director Kaiser explained the owner would pay.

Betsy Ellenberger (Neenah School District) inquired about garages being detached verses attached. If the property owner initially installs gravel until the street was constructed, who pays for that redo? She explained a lot of people wait to remove the gravel. This is an added cost for the prospective home buyer.

Director Kaiser explained gravel aprons must be removed within 1 year after the final street is installed. He further explained "final" means that curb and gutter and black top have been installed. This is not a requirement when there is just a temporary mat.

Mayor Kaufert asked if the Loan Assistance Fund would assist with driveway updates. Deputy Director Schmidt indicated he would look into that.

Betsy Ellenberger (Neenah School District) inquired about the number of gravel driveways. Deputy Director Schmidt indicated that our Code Enforcement officer is documenting this information.

Member Genett asked about the handling of calls due to parking on grass. Deputy Director Schmidt explained our Code Enforcement officer will perform an inspection, send a letter, perform a follow-up inspection, another letter would be sent, and then a citation would be issued.

Member Andrews inquired whether the code would consider design parameters. He referenced a chip driveway with solid stone borders.

Deputy Director Schmidt indicated he would work with Ald. Lendrum to create a draft of the ordinance and bring this back to Plan Commission and Public Services and Safety.

Mayor Kaufert indicated that there should be consideration to include materials that are good for the environment.

2. Garages

Deputy Director Schmidt explained that the necessity to require garages stemmed mostly from Habitat for Humanity construction. An ordinance to require garages could be developed.

Ald. Lendrum indicated that Habitat for Humanity fill in new construction does not fit with existing neighborhoods. She would like to see more rehabilitation of existing homes.

Announcements and Future Agenda Items:

Next Plan Commission meeting is scheduled for January 7, 2020.

Adjournment: The Commission adjourned its meeting at 4:50 P.M. MSC Kaiser/Andrews. All Aye.

Respectfully Submitted,



Cassandra Kohls
Administrative Assistant, Community Development