



PLANNING COMMISSION

City Hall – 131 N Main St

December 14, 2021 at 7:00 PM

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Ryan Scott, Chad Harrison, Ryan Runnells, Zac Henson, Bret Albers, Melissa Olthoff, Steve Gile, Nate Kutilek, Administrator Danielle Young

OTHERS PRESENT

Marc Bennett, Eileene and David Sagner, Whitney Hansen, Ed Laverentz, Jonas Stucky, Chuck Robinson- Schwab Eaton

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Planning Commission Minutes June 22, 2021

Commission member Ryan Runnells moved to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2021 Planning Commission meeting.

Commission member Melissa Olthoff seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION OF SANTA FE PLAT

The City of Cheney recently purchased the 680' x 125' tract of land between Main Street and Garfield, just north of Santa Fe Railroad tracks. The City wishes to plat the property into Santa Fe Street that will run east/west, 4 lots that will be sold, and tie into Jefferson Street. The plan is to straighten the current Santa Fe Street. Due to limited traffic, there are no plans to curb/gutter/pave the road, but crushed asphalt will be used as surfacing.

The plat map was presented for the Planning Commission to review. Administrator Young stated that the Plat shows 4 new lots, with 2 lots between Main and Jefferson and 2 lots between Jefferson and Garfield. The City purchased the property and the property is not zoned. The plat defines the west lots as commercial and the lots to the east as residential. There's currently a water main down Main Street and there is a drainage and utility easement along the south side of the lots to allow for the water main to be extended. There is a sewer and gas line that comes down the alley that can be extended to the lots. Once the plat is approved, the City will proceed with selling the lots, but first Santa Fe Road will have to be straightened out to run within the 60' wide road right-of-way. A drainage plan has been done by the City engineer. The drainage will extend the inlet pipe on the north side of Santa Fe to the south side of Santa Fe and then drainage will go towards Jefferson. There will be a

20' concrete flume across Santa Fe, which will make the water run north down Jefferson. There will be a swell along the west side of Jefferson for the water to flow.

The plat aligns with the Comprehensive Plan showing the future land use in that area as commercial and residential. The current zoning code states that residential lots are to be 70' x 120' and these lots are just under 65' wide because 60' was needed for the road right of way. There is no minimum lot size on commercial lots. The lots will be offered for sale to adjacent property owners. Planning Commission member Chad Harrison asked if adjacent property owners would be contacted first to purchase the lots and Young stated they had already been contacted. Young explained that if or when the adjacent property owners purchase the adjacent lots, they could be merged with their current lots into one parcel. The plat will go on to the Council for final approval.

Jonas Stucky stated he was an adjacent lot owner and was concerned about the drainage. His concern was the amount of water draining to the north down Jefferson. Currently, it cuts across the corner of his property and water puddles and then goes to 1st Ave and washed out the whole corner. Stucky wanted to make sure that down the line is taken care of, so it's not an issue later on. If he built a building pad in the low area then he wants to make sure Jefferson will be able to handle the additional water flow. Young stated when Santa Fe is straightened, they will put in the swell along Jefferson and it's intended for the water to flow to 1st Ave. Harrison asked if Jefferson could be paved by owners if petitioned? Young stated yes, and that Jefferson has some existing pavement, but a majority of it is dirt, with no existing curb/gutter.

Chuck Robinson, Schwab Eaton, stated the intent of the drainage plan was to regrade and swell along south side of Santa Fe and then a flume (valley gutter) for the flow to continue on north. The intent is to have any additional runoff to go north down Jefferson, and thought additional runoff should be minimal. Young mentioned that the current pipe on the north side of Santa Fe that has water flowing towards Stucky's adjacent lot, will be removed and re-routed to the south side of Santa Fe. Santa Fe will be built at a slight slope for water to run towards south and thought the water that is flowing towards his lot now, should flow away. Stucky thought that should help, but just wanted to make sure what's going along Jefferson to the north and that the swell is improved a little bit so the water makes it to 1st Ave and so the corner at 1st/Jefferson is also cleaned up.

The drainage pipe that runs east of Main Street was discussed on how there is currently no defined route for the water to take. Albers reiterated that the water will still end up going down Jefferson, it will just take a different route by going to the south side of Santa Fe first.

Stucky asked if the intention is to make Jefferson the same as Santa Fe with crushed asphalt. Young stated it would be looked at when work is done and it's her intention to make Jefferson similar to Santa Fe. Albers stated some of the statements may need to be addressed with the Council and it was their job to discuss approval of the plat and could approve it with emphasis on addressing concerns down Jefferson.

Planning Commission member Ryan Runnells moved to approve the one-step preliminary and final plat for Santa Fe Addition.

Planning Commission member Chad Harrison seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-0.

DISCUSSION OF SANTA FE CROSSING DEVELOPMENT

Ed Laverentz owns Santa Fe Crossing at Lake Road and Santa Fe. Council previously discussed the development and the next steps must be taken by the Planning Commission. Laverentz would like to do a lot split of the north lot and re-plat the south lot into multiple lots. Currently, Santa Fe Street is only 30' wide along the south side of Laverentz's lots and is not wide enough for the standard 60' road right-of-way.

Ed Laverentz approaching the Planning Commission and reported he would like to create development for single family residential housing on his property. He explained that he would like to do a lot split of Lot 1 (the north lot along the southside of Heather Lane) and make it into two lots that face Heather Lane. Heather Lane is currently a gravel/dirt road. The Lot Split could be approved by the City Administrator. The City Council has already voice approval for allowing development on those lots.

On Laverentz's Lot 2 (south lot along north side of Santa Fe), Laverentz would like to develop this lot into 5 individual lots. Currently the lot size is 475' x 190' so the lots would be 90' wide facing Santa Fe Street. The challenge is with Santa Fe since the City engineer wants to see 60' right-of-way and the City doesn't own the full 60'; however, if the railroad would abandon, enough right-of-way could be acquired.

Laverentz stated he planned to ask for a variance from the current statues to allow for building to happen without installing pavement/curb guttered streets. If he feels the Planning Commission is in favor, then he will proceed with the variance application. If the variance isn't approved, then he will not develop the north lot because he doesn't want a worthless south lot. Laverentz thought the City Council seemed to be in favor at their meeting when he presented his proposal to them. The City Attorney said at the Council meeting that it was unique situation since City does not have ability to curb/gutter the road since there is not a proper 60' right-of-way.

Laverentz stated he was willing to deed 5' to the City as part of plat, so the full 60' right-of-way could be obtained upon the railroad abandoning; however, Laverentz explained that the challenge is Diskin's house to the east does not have footage to give up. According to a recent survey, half of Santa Fe is on Laverentz's property already and he has no intention to ask City to do anything with it.

Planning Commission member Albers asked what happens if City doesn't get full 60'? Young has asked the engineer if anything less than 60' could be used for the right-of-way or if the drainage/utility easement along the south part of Laverentz's property could be used as the road right-of-way. Young mentioned a limited access sign or a one-way sign could be used along Santa Fe. Planning Commission member Harrison asked about the railroad future. Young mentioned 11 months ago the Prairie Travelers were going to talk to the railroad about it being abandoned, but there has not been any updates since. That group wanted to abandon the railroad from Garden Plain to Murdock, but they wanted the City to maintain several miles of trail outside the City limits. Young stated that if a Notice of Intent for Trail Use is done, it would give ownership to the right-of-way, or if it's actually abandoned then half of it would revert back to adjacent property owners. Young stated that there are two maps showing the width of the railroad right-of-way being two different widths, 25' or 50', so Young will look further into it.

Planning Commission member Harrison asked if the City would want to straighten out Santa Fe in the future. Young mentioned that a grant was applied for from WAMPO a few years ago to straighten Santa Fe and the estimate was just over a million for the project. Albers asked if the variance was done, it would leave the road as is with the 5 lots exiting onto Santa Fe, even though the engineer was adamant about 60' for road right of way. Young stated the variance would allow the lots to be built with 30', but the it was brought up at the Council meeting if any additional improvements should be made to the current Santa Fe road, even though that section is the nicest part of Santa Fe. Young stated the variance would allow Laverentz to leave the road conditions as they are since the proper road right of way width can't be obtained.

Planning Commission member Harrison asked about sewer and water. Young stated the sewer would have to be added in. There is a sewer manhole that would need to be lowered in the alley, since individuals are driving over Laverentz's property to access the alley due to the manhole. Each lot would either have their own grinder pumps or a duplex lift station would be installed. Planning Commission member Olthoff asked who would pay

for the sewer. Young said the sewer cost could be assessed as specials or the developer would pay for it. Laverentz replied that he was trying not to assess specials on the lots.

Harrison hated to hold the development back and mentioned that Santa Fe had been a curvy dirt road and didn't care if the right-of-way was narrower than the 60' and didn't see why a variance couldn't be granted for that.

Planning Commission member Steve Gile asked why the south lot would be worthless since the lots could still be built off of 391st. Laverentz stated he didn't think utilizing over 2 acres of property in the City was the best use for only two lots.

Planning Commission member Zac Henson asked if there was enough space for a cul de sac. Laverentz said he had a drawing on hand with a cul de sac through the middle, which is much more expensive, but the cul de sac would make existing homes off of Heather Lane look at the backs of the new homes and he didn't think that was the best situation since screening would then have to be installed.

Laverentz stated his goal was for single family. It was discussed if duplexes would be allowed. Mr Sagner stated that the covenants for that area shows only single family detached homes are allowed. Young stated the City does not enforce covenants and would allow what it's zoned for. Mrs Sagner mentioned that if duplexes were built, that would be 14 families, with several cars, and thought it was a narrow space for that many people and vehicles in that small area. Sagner stated his concern about the current width of Heather Lane and his concern with adequate parking along Heather Ln as he didn't think it was wide enough for cars to park there.

Sagner also asked about drainage from the property and how it would be addressed. Laverentz said there is a 20' drainage easement. Laverentz mentioned a stormwater drain at 391st/Heather Lane.

Marc Bennett stated he would rather see two lots on the south side of Heather Lane as a condition of the south lots, but would like to see the same variety of house with 1500-2000' sq ft and keeping with the neighborhood. He did think 5 lots was a lot to squeeze in there and if the variance is not approved, Bennett did not want to see duplexes/commercial property built to make the development work without a variance.

Albers stated the variance was for the south 5 lots. Young mentioned this meeting was for discussion only and a variance application and public hearing would still need to be held. Gile asked if Heather Lane would need a variance. Young stated Council had discussed Heather Lane at a prior meeting as a dirt road with over 50% development on it. If we were to require curb/gutter to be put in along Heather Lane, we would have to assess that out and since over 50% of the lots are already built on, you'd need to get approval from 51% of the homeowners and Young didn't think the other homeowners would approve that assessment.

It was mentioned that the variance is to allow for the ROW width for Laverentz to develop the south lots. Olthoff asked if it was up to City on what is allowed to be built on the lots. Young said she wasn't sure if that could be listed as a condition on the plat on what is allowed to be built. Laverentz said the variance does not approve the plat, the variance is just allowing for the lots to be built on without curb/gutter. The plat is the second step in the process. Young stated tonight nothing is final, it's just for discussion purposes only. The next step would be for a Public Hearing for the Variance and the Planning Commission would make a decision then and then a Plat would need to be applied for. Laverentz and the Planning Commission thanked the adjacent property owners for being there.

Albers asked the members to state their opinions about Laverentz's ideas.

Ryan Scott thought he'd be okay, but agreed with concern of having homes being like the rest of the neighborhood and wondered about the lots getting tight. Laverentz mentioned the size of the lots will exceed the existing lots in that area. Size of other lots in town were discussed to show Laverentz's lots would be larger.

Chad Harrison liked the idea of having the drives facing north and south and doesn't like the idea of a cul de sac.

Ryan Runnells agreed with 7 lots, with 5 lots along Santa Fe. He thought he could make more money by going to duplex, but doesn't think dumping into a smaller road to the south should hold it up.

Zac Henson agreed.

Bret Albers agreed and thought the City needed housing. Thought it was Council's job to address similar homes of the neighborhood to be built to blend with the neighborhood. Albers thought it was unique that it's not 60' wide and in favor.

Melissa Olthoff said it's hard to say no to someone who will bring more families to the community and thinks Santa Fe is quirky and mentioned she lives off of Santa Fe.

Gile saw no problem with 55' wide ROW and said signs could be put for no parking along Santa Fe since it's narrower.

Nate Kutilek drives up and down Santa Fe and didn't see any problems.

Laverentz appreciated the input and said he would proceed with formal application for a variance in January and have a plat ready to go soon thereafter.

ADJOURN

Commission member Zac Henson moved to adjourn at 8:19 pm.

Commission member Melissa Olthoff seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-0.



David Woodard, Planning Commission Chair

Attest:

Danielle Young, City Clerk