

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL  
LITTLE CANADA, MINNESOTA**

**APRIL 27, 2022**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof a regular meeting of the City Council of Little Canada, Minnesota was convened on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2022 in the Council Chambers of the City Center located at 515 Little Canada Road in said City.

Mayor John Keis called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and the following members of the City Council were present at roll call:

**CITY COUNCIL:** Mayor Keis, Council Members Fischer, Torkelson, McGraw and Miller. Absent: None.

**ALSO PRESENT:** City Administrator Chris Heineman, Community Development Director Corrin Wendell, Public Works Director Bill Dircks, Parks & Rec/Community Services Director and City Clerk/HR Manager Heidi Heller.

**MINUTES**

McGraw introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

***RESOLUTION NO. 2022-4-56 – APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 13, 2022 WORKSHOP AND THE APRIL 13, 2022 REGULAR MEETINGS AS SUBMITTED***

The foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Miller.  
Ayes (5). Nays (0). Resolution adopted.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Keis read an Arbor Day Proclamation declaring Friday, April 29, 2022 as Arbor Day in the City of Little Canada there will be an Arbor Day event on May 6 at 1:00 p.m. at Spooner Park.

The City Administrator announced that the City has purchased the property at 2750 Rice Street for future redevelopment.

The Parks & Rec/Community Services Director announced the second annual Little Canada SAP Run is on Saturday, May 7, 2022 starting at 8:00 a.m. He stated that registration for the run is open and volunteers are also needed to help with the race.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**PUBLIC HEARING – CONSIDER A MINOR SUBDIVISION OF 3000 ARCADE STREET**

Council member McGraw excused himself from this item. The Community Development Director explained that Terry McTeague, the property owner of 3000 Arcade Street, is requesting approval of a minor subdivision to split the parcel into two lots. She stated the property is zoned R-1, Low Density Residential, and currently has one single-family home located on it. She stated the applicant plans to demolish the small existing home and garage and build two new single-family homes. She reported that each new parcel will be 75 feet wide and far exceed the minimum square footage requirements.

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Keis asked the applicant what his timing would be. Mr. McTeague stated he is currently waiting to hear when the utilities would be disconnected, but is anticipating the demolition would occur in mid-May. He explained that he is going to build a new house for himself on the north lot and is now going to sell the other lot due to a change of plans.

There were no comments from the public. Upon motion by Keis, seconded by Torkelson, the public hearing was closed.

Fischer introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

***RESOLUTION NO. 2022-4-57 – APPROVE THE MINOR SUBDIVISION OF 3000 ARCADE STREET (PID 042922230009) FROM ONE PARCEL INTO TWO PARCELS AS PRESENTED***

The foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Torkelson.  
Ayes (4). Nays (0). Resolution declared adopted.

**PUBLIC HEARING - 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT TO CHANGE GUIDED LAND USE FROM MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL TO HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**

The Community Development Director explained that the City received a Comprehensive Plan Amendment application to change the guiding of two parcels of vacant land from Medium Density Residential to High Density Residential in order to construct two multi-family housing buildings. She stated in December 2021, the City Council approved rezoning the parcels from R-1, Low Density Residential to R-3, High Density Residential, contingent upon a Comprehensive Plan Amendment. She explained that the developer, Reuter Walton, has now secured most of the financial commitments needed to construct Phase 1 of a 60-unit multi-family apartment building. She noted the two parcels were purchased by the City of Little Canada in 1981 through tax forfeiture.

Paul Keenan, Reuter Walton, reviewed the proposed multi-family project for these two parcels. He stated that after hearing concerns from the neighborhood, they have made some adjustments to the site plan. He explained the building will be placed as far back from Twin Lake Boulevard as possible and have trees for screening from Twin Lake Boulevard. The parking lot will have landscaping to help shield headlights, and the building height is limited to 3-stories. He reported that the rent amounts proposed are similar to other new market-rate apartment buildings in the area. He noted that none of their tenants will receive any government assistance, such as Section 8. He stated that all of the tenants will have to prove they meet the minimum income level needed in order to pay the rent. He reported that Twin Lake Boulevard will have a full reconstruction and a sidewalk installed on the north side.

The Community Development Director explained that per Minnesota State Statute, municipalities proposing to amend their Comprehensive Plans must allow impacted and adjacent governmental agencies 60 days to review and comment on the proposed amendment before it can be reviewed and approved by the Metropolitan Council. She stated that city staff distributed the proposed amendment to neighboring communities and governmental agencies for review on January 26, 2022, and the impacted agencies had 60 days or until March 26, 2022, to submit written comments. She reported

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that “no conflicts comment” letters were received from Vadnais Heights, Shoreview, and Ramsey County, 9 agencies didn't respond, and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) submitted a comment letter advising that a drainage permit would be required for the project. She noted that she had a conversation with Tim Wold, the Assistant Superintendent from White Bear Lake Schools, and they had no concerns about this project.

The Community Development Director reviewed the housing chapter in the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan: Our Housing Strategy is to achieve new housing through redevelopment of certain sites from lower-density to achieve infill on open parcels. Infill and redevelopment are guided toward middle and higher density housing types. Projected growth for developed communities is anticipated to occur through reinvestment at higher development densities. The City's land use policies and strategies reflect this regional strategy. Through 2040, the Plan states that 158 acres or 6% of the city's land use will be utilized for higher density residential. The private market is expected to respond to the need for additional housing by making good use of available properties. The Metropolitan Council has asked Little Canada to accommodate 72 more units of affordable housing at varying Area Median Income levels between years 2021 and 2030.

The Community Development Director listed some of the concerns that she has heard from direct comments and at the neighborhood meeting: traffic, increase of vehicles, pedestrian safety, preserving natural areas, play space for kids, road improvements, trail improvements, parking on the site and underground, lack of sidewalks, exterior building materials, stormwater and the number of units.

Gunar Bruvelis, 3248 Twin Lake Road, stated his concern is there will be 120 units and the water pollution, and 126 parking spaces is not enough, and traffic will be bad. He is totally against this project and it should be left as natural as possible.

Dan Leibel, 105 Twin Lake Boulevard, stated he has lived in this neighborhood his whole life. He does not feel there is enough parking capacity and the site is not large enough and it will not fit. He stated that nobody wants this.

Lorray Rolfer, 3290 Hamel Court, stated they did not receive the notice in December, and then received the notice for the April meeting three days before she was going to leave the country. She stated that she and her husband walked around and they have 70 signatures from people in their neighborhood that oppose this. She stated that is 70 people that do not want this, one that does and two are undecided. She stated this project is not offering the neighborhood anything, such as a restaurant like there is at the McMillian on Rice Street. She stated they are not opposed to development, but are opposed to that many people living there. She stated the green space is just fine as is. She is asking the Council to take a step back to have a collaboration to see what the neighborhood wants.

Nicole Kaphing, 3245 Twin Lake Road, stated her mom lives in the row of trailers right behind the proposed building, and now the apartment building is being pushed back farther from the street. She asked if anybody thought about the people who live in the trailer park. She stated it does not belong there, and they love their neighborhood and want to keep it.

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Tom Mallet, 122 Twin Lake Boulevard, stated that he feels the Council already has made a decision, but wants the Council to take a step back and listen to the neighborhood. He bought his house for the peace and quiet and now there will be 250 people there, and he has concerns with the rise in crime rates and the lower income people that will be living there.

Miller stated she has concerns about the mailed notices that neighbors said they have not received. The Community Development Director stated the notices were mailed to a much larger area than required, and she has the list of addresses where all of the notices were mailed. The City Administrator noted that public hearing notices are mailed first-class postage. Miller asked if staff or Council were presented with the petition. The City Administrator stated that the petition has not been given to the City.

Fischer stated that he has had a lot of contacts and conversations with residents about this, and has received some positive comments from people that live in the neighborhood. He noted they do not love the apartment building, but they love the amenities that are coming with it, like the road improvements and the sidewalk. He explained that he voted against the rezoning change in December because he felt it happened too quickly, but has since become more comfortable with the development since the site plan has been adjusted based on comments, and he is more comfortable with the funding sources. He noted the developer has a good reputation with several other similar projects in the metro area. He stated he personally does not see a reason to stand in the way of this. Keis stated he has also heard some positive comments about the project.

The City Administrator explained that the Twin Lake Boulevard road improvement would be assessed the same way as any other road improvement. He noted it has taken four years to plan because it is a joint project with the City of Vadnais Heights. He stated the City of Little Canada has received grant funds to help fund the cost of the sidewalk. Torkelson clarified that the new sidewalk would be placed within existing city right-of-way, and no additional property would be taken.

McGraw asked the City Administrator how this project would help the city. The City Administrator explained that it will be an investment in the community, and the housing growth will help the city retain money that is paid out to other communities through Fiscal Disparities.

There were no further comments from the public. Upon motion by Keis, seconded by Fischer, the public hearing was closed.

Keis introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

***RESOLUTION NO. 2022-4-58 – APPROVE THE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO CHANGE THE GUIDED LAND USE ON THE LITTLE CANADA 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP OF TWO PARCELS ON TWIN LAKE BOULEVARD, PID 313022310001 AND 313022310002, FROM MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL TO HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL, AND AUTHORIZE SUBMISSION OF THE AMENDMENT TO THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL***

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The foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Torkelson.  
Roll Call Vote: Keis, Fischer, McGraw, Miller and Torkelson.  
Ayes (5). Nays (0). Resolution declared adopted.

*The petition referenced by a resident was submitted to the City on May 2, 2022 and is included in these minutes.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Fischer introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

***RESOLUTION NO. 2022-4-59 – APPROVING THE CONSENT AGENDA WHICH CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING:***

- Approval of the Vouchers
- Reschedule June 22 City Council Meeting to June 20, 2022
- Approve Purchase of Large Area Mower

The foregoing resolution was duly seconded by McGraw.  
Ayes (5). Nays (0). Resolution adopted.

**WRITE OFF OUTSTANDING DEBT**

The City Administrator explained that the City was approached by Danny Lincoln with The Lincoln Group in 2016 with a proposal for a housing development at 3000 Labore Road. He stated that Mr. Lincoln submitted a formal concept review planning application in January 2017 which was reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Council on two separate occasions, but Mr. Lincoln opted to not move forward with his project in late March 2017. He explained that due to the complexities of the site, the review process required significant engineer and planning consultant time to provide feedback on the proposal. He stated the applicant paid an initial Concept Plan Review application deposit of \$750.00 and was invoiced for the additional costs. After multiple attempts to collect the debt, the developer informed staff that he would not be paying since it could be assessed to the property owner.

The City Administrator explained that one of the property owners had signed a Cost Agreement when the application was submitted, and was understandably upset that these fees were not paid by the developer. He stated that attempts were also made to collect this debt from the property owners, but they refused to pay since they had not been made aware of them as these fees were being incurred. He reported a total of \$6,238.82 in outstanding developer fees were incurred from July 2016 to April 2017. He stated that in order to remove this outstanding debt from the books, staff is recommending that this uncollectable debt be written off. Fischer clarified that the former developer is no longer in business, and noted that attempts were made to recoup the expenses.

Keis introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

***RESOLUTION NO. 2022-4-60 – APPROVE WRITING OFF UNCOLLECTABLE DEBT FOR OUTSTANDING DEVELOPER FEES FROM JULY 2016 – APRIL 2017 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$6,238.82 FROM PLANNING CASE #1348***

The foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Miller.

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Ayes (5). Nays (0). Resolution declared adopted.

**DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH LANDMARK OF LITTLE CANADA, LLC FOR  
GERVAIS WOODS 2<sup>ND</sup> ADDITION AT 3000 LABORE ROAD**

The Community Development Director stated that the City Council approved the Preliminary and Final Plat and variances for the 15 single-family lots development at 3000 Labore Road on January 26, 2022, contingent upon approval of a Development Agreement. She reported that city staff has been working with the developer and other parties to finalize the agreement and noted the timeline was extended for negotiation on the lift station needed. She stated that staff has now finalized the details of the agreement which includes site improvements, developer improvements, park dedication fees, and warranties.

The City Administrator explained that a lift station is required for the sanitary sewer system. He stated that there is a connection available in another location, but it requires an easement across private property and that property owner would not agree to it. The Community Development Director noted that the park dedication fees will be paid upfront. Fischer noted that this is an example of the large costs for infrastructure as part of development.

McGraw introduced the following resolution and moved its adoption:

***RESOLUTION NO. 2022-4-61 – APPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE CITY OF LITTLE CANADA AND LANDMARK OF LITTLE CANADA,  
LLC AS PRESENTED***

The foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Miller.  
Ayes (5). Nays (0). Resolution declared adopted.

**COUNCIL REPORTS & MEETING UPDATES**

Fischer stated he attended the Fire Relief meeting, but there is not much to report at this time. He stated that he has heard from a few residents that areas of trees are being clear-cut, and he has seen Xcel Energy out doing tree trimming and noted they are not elegant about it. The Parks & Rec/Community Services Director stated that Xcel does do extensive tree cutting around their power lines to mitigate fire risks, but noted they could maybe do a better job of notifying neighbors when it is occurring. He reported that Xcel is also big advocates of putting in pollinator plants under the power lines where the trees have come down. Fischer and Miller reported they did receive automated phone calls from Xcel informing them that tree-trimming would be occurring in their neighborhoods.

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.**

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John T. Keis, Mayor

Attest:

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Christopher Heineman, City Administrator