



# Planning Commission

## Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

1408 Lake Street South  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
[www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us](http://www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us)

Karin Derauf, Deputy City Clerk

Wednesday, January 12, 2022

7:00 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

### 1. Call to Order

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Susan Young	Commission Vice-Chair	Present	
Paul Girard	Commission Chair	Present	
Dennis Batty	Planning Commissioner	Present	
Kevin Miller	Planning Commissioner	Present	
Michael Kuehn	Planning Commissioner	Absent	
Justin Brink	Planning Commissioner	Absent	
Geneva Kubal	Planning Commissioner	Remote	

### 2. Roll Call

### 3. Pledge of Allegiance

### 4. Approve the Agenda

- Motion To:** Approve the Agenda

**RESULT:** ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]  
**MOVER:** Dennis Batty, Planning Commissioner  
**SECONDER:** Susan Young, Commission Vice-Chair  
**AYES:** Young, Girard, Batty, Miller, Kubal  
**ABSENT:** Michael Kuehn, Justin Brink

### 5. Election of Officers

- Motion To:** Elect Chair Girard as Chair of Planning Commission for 2022

**RESULT:** ADOPTED [4 TO 0]  
**MOVER:** Susan Young, Commission Vice-Chair  
**SECONDER:** Kevin Miller, Planning Commissioner  
**AYES:** Susan Young, Dennis Batty, Kevin Miller, Geneva Kubal  
**ABSTAIN:** Paul Girard  
**ABSENT:** Michael Kuehn, Justin Brink

- Motion To:** Elect Vice Chair Young as Vice Chair to Planning Commission for 2022

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [4 TO 0]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Kevin Miller, Planning Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Dennis Batty, Planning Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Paul Girard, Dennis Batty, Kevin Miller, Geneva Kubal
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	Susan Young
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Michael Kuehn, Justin Brink

## 6. Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from December 8, 2021

1. **Motion To:** Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from December 8, 2021

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [4 TO 0]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Susan Young, Commission Vice-Chair
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Dennis Batty, Planning Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Susan Young, Paul Girard, Dennis Batty, Geneva Kubal
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	Kevin Miller
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Michael Kuehn, Justin Brink

## 7. 355 Broadway Ave W – American Legion Sign Variance Permit Application

Interim Zoning Administrator, Frannie Nielsen, provided information that was heard at the previous meeting when items for American Legion Sign variance requests were tabled. Commissioner Miller asked why the sign is being placed at the requested location as opposed to the other end of the lot where there is more visibility. The applicant noted that they wanted the sign out in front of their courtyard. Commissioner Miller commented that when the trees are in full bloom, the sign won't be visible. The applicant noted that they will be regularly pruning the trees to ensure the sign is visible. Commissioner Young expressed the same concerns regarding the visibility of the sign and setting precedence of granting variances.

The applicant's representative from Think Digital Signs discussed the height and size of the sign. Commissioner Batty indicated location of the sign is the biggest concern. There was discussion about the line of sight from both the east and west, and the placement of the sign.

Chair Girard commented on the zone and the number of signs in the area. He noted that this would be the only pylon sign in this zone. He asked about the west end of the building and setbacks. He noted that his greatest concern is about the height and setback variances. There was discussion about the height of the sign and the architectural parapets on building.

Public Hearing opened at 7:44 p.m.

Sam Husnik, resident, commented on the digital technology, height of the sign, and the ordinances.

Jerry Peltier, resident, commented that the digital sign can also be used to provide emergency messages to the public.

Public Hearing closed at 7:48 p.m.

1. **Motion To:** Approve a Variance to the percentage of allowable electronic sign copy to a total of fifty-two and a half (52.5) percent, subject to conditions proposed by staff

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Dennis Batty, Planning Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Kevin Miller, Planning Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Young, Girard, Batty, Miller, Kubal
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Michael Kuehn, Justin Brink

2. **Motion To:** Approve a Variance to construct a sign exceeding the maximum sign height to a total height of sixteen (16) feet subject to conditions proposed by staff

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Dennis Batty, Planning Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Kevin Miller, Planning Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Young, Girard, Batty, Miller, Kubal
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Michael Kuehn, Justin Brink

3. **Motion To:** Approve a Variance to construct a freestanding sign within the required setback area to a minimum setback of seven (7) feet from the public right of way, subject to conditions proposed by staff

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [4 TO 1]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Dennis Batty, Planning Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Paul Girard, Commission Chair
<b>AYES:</b>	Paul Girard, Dennis Batty, Kevin Miller, Geneva Kubal
<b>NAYS:</b>	Susan Young
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Michael Kuehn, Justin Brink

## 8. MXR-1 Zoning Discussion on Zoning District Lot Standards

Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst provided a summary of the previous discussions including lot widths, trails and sidewalks, density, parks and parkland dedication, and residential facades. He noted that the Planning Commission discussed options for developers regarding parks and parkland dedication. Commissioner Batty indicated that he would like to see larger parks. Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst noted that if there are developments abutting each other it would make more sense if the park spaces were directly adjacent to each other to create a larger park. City Administrator Casey noted that it is much easier to ask for the land over fees to acquire the green space area.

Commissioner Young indicated that parkland negotiations can be done through the PUD phase of development. She also mentioned density that has been discussed and isn't in support of greater density noting the city expense per residence versus property tax collected. She cited several examples of expense indicating there are no long term benefits to the City. City Administrator Casey commented that Commissioner Young was correct and additional examples were cited regarding expense.

Commissioner Batty commented on keeping up in the city and attracting commercial developers. He discussed infrastructure, and developable space. He expressed concerns about striking a balance with developers and city infrastructure. City Administrator Casey agreed that roads are a challenge and the City is behind in keeping up with road reconstruction and maintenance.

Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst provided a chart with major subdivisions since 2010. He noted there were several developments that did not require PUD deviations. He also indicated that some of the deviations included minimum lot size, minimum lot width and the minimum setbacks in front and side yards.

Commissioner Miller asked if developers overlook Forest Lake based on the current standards. Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst noted that it is possible for developers to do that because they cannot "pencil" a development meaning they cannot develop a parcel cost effectively if the standards are dictating they won't profit. He also noted there are ways to incorporate the City's wants or needs and mentioned PUD negotiations.

Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst discussed density based on lot size and estimated number of units per acre. He also provided information on the proposed MXR-1 Standards based on discussions with emergency services. There was discussion on the comparison of developments that have been proposed as of 12/2021. There was additional conversation about the Hidden Creek Development and an aerial review of the parcel. Councilmember Monson provided her comments on the discussion.

Chair Girard commented that looking at PUD's may be a more favorable direction to consider smaller lots with benefits to the City, such as sidewalks on both sides of the street. Commissioner Miller asked if it's possible to apply PUD's within designated areas in the MXR-1 rather than developing standards for the whole area.

## 9. Other

Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst commented on the January 26, 2022 scheduled meeting and that it will be a full Agenda.

Commissioner Batty commented that he will not be seeking reappointment to the Planning Commission at the end of his term on January 31, 2022.

Commissioner Young commented that she will miss Commissioner Batty's perspective and contribution to the Planning Commission. She also commented on the Rotary Winter Plunge event on February 19, 2022.

Chair Girard mentioned that the Downtown Planning Community Engagement session will be held on January 25, 2022.

## 10. Adjourn

### 1. Motion To: Adjourn

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Dennis Batty, Planning Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Susan Young, Commission Vice-Chair
<b>AYES:</b>	Susan Young, Paul Girard, Dennis Batty, Kevin Miller
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Michael Kuehn, Justin Brink, Geneva Kubal