



# 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, September 28, 2022

7:00 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

[City of Forest Lake - Livestream and Recorded Meetings](#)

### 1. Call to Order

### 2. Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Paul Girard	Commission Chair	Absent	
Susan Young	Commission Vice-Chair	Present	
Kevin Miller	Planning Commissioner	Present	
Justin Brink	Planning Commissioner	Present	
Geneva Kubal	Planning Commissioner	Present	
Don Stehler	Planning Commissioner	Present	

### 3. Pledge of Allegiance

### 4. Approve the Agenda

Comments:

Motion to: Approve the Agenda

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Don Stehler, Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Geneva Kubal, Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Young, Miller, Brink, Kubal, Stehler
<b>NAYS:</b>	
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Girard, Commission Chair

### 5. Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from August 24, 2022

Comments:

Motion to: Approve Planning Commission Meeting Minutes from August 24, 2022



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<b>MOVER:</b>	Geneva Kubal, Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Don Stehler, Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Young, Miller, Stehler
<b>NAYS:</b>	
<b>ABSTAIN:</b>	Brink, Kubal
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Girard, Commission Chair

### 6. Birchwood Estates Revised Concept Plan

Comments: Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst presented information on Birchwood Estates and a revised concept plan. He noted that there were changes made to meet the Watershed District expectations for wetland preservation as well as the City goals for development standards. He noted that the alignment of the roadway is similar to the previous plan, the unit count is the same, and the mix of the detached townhomes in the southwest corner is the same. Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst commented that the main difference between the two plans is the single family plot widths. He noted the reasons for bringing this to the Planning Commission is recognition of the difficulty due to wetlands and to obtain feedback from the Commission on the revised plan.

Commissioner Miller commented on the original plat sidewalks and that the new plan does not have any sidewalks or paths indicated. He also commented on the wetlands and the lots that are overlaid on the wetland area.

John Anderson, Eternity Homes Developer, commented that the approved preliminary plat had 74 units. He indicated that the new concept plan is one unit less. He also commented that the intention is to add the same sidewalks and trails as the original plan but was not illustrated on the revised plan. He also discussed several other changes that were made to meet City and Watershed requirements. He noted that the original plat was approved last spring based on Watershed approval, but was not able to acquire that approval. So changes were made to meet Watershed requirements of wetland preservation.

Commissioner Young commented on the wetland areas that will be filled in and no longer wetland. She also commented on the outlot areas that will remain wetland. John Anderson confirmed the outlot areas will be wetlands. Commissioner Young asked about this area being an HOA and maintenance of the wetland areas. Mr. Anderson commented that the wetland areas are natural and will not require the City to maintain those areas. He also commented that the northeast outlot was approved on the original plat as a parkland as part of the parkland dedication. He also asked about long-term plans as an HOA because other neighborhoods are dissolving their HOA.



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Commissioner Young commented on the smaller lots and the potential addition of duplexes or triplexes and if that would help the developer's financial position. Mr. Anderson indicated that they would not build that type of product and would walk away if that was the requirement. There was discussion of the side yard setbacks and the different types of models with two-car garage and three-car garage options. There was also a discussion on an amended City Ordinance versus a PUD as the vehicle to move forward with the project.

### 7. Comprehensive Plan Implementation – Zoning Code Changes

Comments: Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst commented on the discussion surrounding the MXR-1 standards, agricultural uses, and the Highway 61 Corridor. He also commented on the density of developments versus wetlands in the areas. He mentioned lot size standards and noted patterns of the past for minimum lot sizes. He also noted that the city is permitting smaller lot sizes but still only getting to 1 to 3 units per acre. He commented on a minimum lot size of 65 feet wide for detached lots. Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst mentioned the setback pertaining to front yard, side yard, and rear yard setbacks noting the current city standards. He indicated that design elements can be incorporated to account for the front yard setback. He also discussed the side yard setback of 7.5 feet compared to 10 feet. He indicated that the Fire Chief prefers the 10 foot side yard setback for emergency vehicle access.

Commissioner Miller asked about front yard setbacks with sidewalks. Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst commented that sidewalks and trails are in the right of way so the setback is measured from the front property line. Commissioner Young commented that she would be comfortable to set minimum lot standards over PUDs. She commented on Bridle Pass development and the smaller lot sizes. She indicated that the lots are not necessarily "family friendly" because there are kids playing in the streets and that the lot sizes don't accommodate extra vehicles. She mentioned the values and overarching goals of the Comprehensive Plan in relation to the wetland areas. She indicated that she would like to have discussion about the amount of MXR-1 allowed in the City, where agricultural land is valued, and other ways to achieve density. She provided an example of accessory dwelling units to achieve more density which the city does not allow.

There was discussion of an acceptable 20-foot setback to house and 25-foot setback to the garage as front yard setbacks. There was also discussion of the width of sidewalks and Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst indicated that the City standard is 6 feet for sidewalks and 10 feet for trails. Commissioner Brink indicated he would be more favorable to a 10-foot side yard setback and a 25 and 30-foot setback for front yard house and garage setback. There was a discussion on lot sizes versus market demands. Commissioner Young mentioned a 30-foot setback for rear yard as a minimum. She also commented on garage recess design. Commissioner Kubal commented that she has seen many houses as the garage protruding forward on a house. Commissioner Young commented that a forward garage doesn't portray an esthetic of a welcoming design.



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Commissioner Stehler commented on various plan layouts in developments. Commissioner Young noted that the design standards will carry through in all MXR-1 zoning areas so house footprints will all be the same which doesn't provide a variety of aesthetics. There was a discussion about lot sizes, market demand, and increases in property values.

### 8. Other

Comments: Interim Zoning Administrator Fuerst mentioned that the new City Planner will start tomorrow.

### 9. Adjourn

Motion to: Adjourn

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Geneva Kubal, Commissioner
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Don Stehler, Commissioner
<b>AYES:</b>	Young, Miller, Brink, Kubal, Stehler
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Girard, Commission Chair