

CITY OF HAM LAKE  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2024

The Ham Lake Planning Commission met for its regular meeting on Monday, December 9, 2024, in the Council Chambers at Ham Lake City Hall located at 15544 Central Avenue NE in Ham Lake, Minnesota.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Commissioners Brian Pogalz, Kyle Lejonvarn, Dave Ringler, Jeff Entsminger, David Ross and Erin Dixson

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Commissioner Jonathan Fisher

**OTHERS PRESENT:** City Engineer Dave Krugler, and Building and Zoning Clerk Jennifer Bohr

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Pogalz called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

The pledge of allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Motion by Lejonvarn, seconded by Entsminger, to approve the minutes of the November 25, 2024, Planning Commission meeting as written. All present in favor, motion carried.**

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

Melinda McDermott, Elevate Hope House, requesting Preliminary and Final Plat approval for Elevate Hope Addition, a Minor Plat (2 residential lots and one outlot) in Section 16

Ms. Melinda McDermott, Elevate Hope House, was present. Chair Pogalz asked Ms. McDermott to provide information on the progress of the plat. Ms. McDermott stated over the past eleven months she has been working with representatives of the Ham Lake Baptist Camp (HLBC) to create a subdivision that will include two residential properties to support mothers with children who are experiencing homelessness in the county. Ms. McDermott stated the HLBC has allowed her to start clearing the land where the development will be. Ms. McDermott stated she hopes to have a home open by January 1, 2025. Ms. McDermott stated a home constructed by students from Spring Lake Park High School will be moved onto Lot 2. Ms. McDermott stated a building permit application has been submitted to the city. Chair Pogalz asked Engineer Krugler to comment. Engineer Krugler stated this plat is following the minor plat process where the preliminary and final plat is reviewed at one meeting. Engineer Krugler stated parkland dedication of

\$2,500 must be paid for each lot. Engineer Krugler stated the plat has received approval from the Coon Creek Watershed District and the Anoka County Highway Department. Engineer Krugler stated the applicant must obtain a County Right-of-Way Permit for grading within the county right-of-way and a County Access Permit for the proposed driveway access to Xylite Street NE for Lot 1. Engineer Krugler stated a 15-foot-wide trail easement, adjacent to the easterly 10-foot drainage and utility easement, is required; trail easement deeds must be recorded with the county before any building permits will be issued. Engineer Krugler stated there is an 85-foot wide United Power Association easement, aka Great River Energy or GRE, that encroaches 25-feet into the easterly portion of Lot 1 and Lot 2. Engineer Krugler stated a variance permit is required for the Lot 1 driveway and a variance permit will be required for future trail construction. Engineer Krugler stated a building permit cannot be issued for Lot 1 until the GRE variance permit has been issued. Engineer Krugler stated soil borings have been done to verify that there is adequate area for a primary and secondary septic system on each lot. Engineer Krugler stated a special assessment for the 1994 upgrade to East Ham Lake Drive has been paid in full by HLBC. Engineer Krugler stated the developer is required to protect any threatened and endangered species that may be found within the plat. Chair Pogalz stated the process for this (minor) plat is typical of the process followed for other small, two or three lot subdivisions that have been approved by the city. Engineer Krugler stated that it was. Engineer Krugler stated the standard platting process may need to be followed if HLBC decides to subdivide the property further in the future. Chair Pogalz asked for verification that Elevate Hope House must follow all the same code requirements and regulations that any other applicant wanting to subdivide property or construct a home must follow. Commissioner Lejonvarn asked if a house moving permit is required. Building and Zoning Clerk Bohr confirmed that a building permit application had been received. Building and Zoning Clerk Bohr stated Building Official Jones has been speaking with the contractor for this project. Building and Zoning Clerk Bohr stated the same code requirements and regulations, that any other applicant wanting to subdivide property or construct a home, must be followed. Commissioner Lejonvarn completed the inspection; a copy which is on file. Commissioner Lejonvarn stated he spoke with Ms. McDermott via telephone on December 6 and did some research online on the Elevate Hope House organization and inspected the site. Commissioner Lejonvarn stated trees are currently being cleared from the area where homes will be constructed, a temporary driveway is being constructed on Lot 1 and that he did not see any existing structures. Commissioner Lejonvarn stated constructing new homes on the site will be a good use of the land.

**Chair Pogalz opened the public hearing at 6:12 p.m. and asked for public comment.**

Matthew Williams, 15747 E Ham Lake Drive. Mr. Williams asked if there are plans to clear additional trees for more development or will trees remain outside the developed area.

Diane Boisjolie-White, 2618 158<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. Mrs. Boisjolie-White stated she lives to the east of the development. Mrs. Boisjolie-White asked if the siding color of the new homes could be a beige or neutral color so the new homes could blend into the surroundings.

Steve Hundley, 15739 Xylite Street NE. Mr. Hundley asked how large the homes would be, how many acres will each lot be, how many tenants will be living in the homes, how

often tenants will change, who will own the lots, is any consideration being given to changing the speed limit on Xylite Street NE if children will be living in the homes, and is any consideration being given to constructing a sidewalk from the southern border of Lot 1, north to East Ham Lake Drive along Xylite Street NE.

Marueen Wilson, 15836 Zumbrota Street NE. Mrs. Wilson stated she recently learned about this development. Mrs. Wilson asked who would take care of the property. Mrs. Wilson stated the area is a very natural environment and would like to see the siding on the houses be a color that would blend into the environment and have some landscaping. Mrs. Wilson asked if the lots would have yards, and if so, who would maintain the yards and the property.

Chair Pogalz stated the property, and what is on it, is owned by the applicant. Chair Pogalz stated if the applicant wants to clear and improve the property, that is her prerogative. Chair Pogalz asked Ms. McDermott to comment on some of the questions asked by the residents. Ms. McDermott stated the plat was designed to meet the city's minimum lot size requirements. Ms. McDermott stated she worked with a resident, who lives near the plat, to determine what tree removal company would be the best company to work with. Ms. McDermott stated she does not intend to clear cut the property as the trees offer privacy which is important to her and the residents that will be living in the homes. Ms. McDermott stated the residents like living in Ham Lake as they feel it is a safe place to be. Ms. McDermott stated she does not believe HLBC has any desire to clear any more trees. Chair Pogalz asked Ms. McDermott how large the homes will be. Ms. McDermott stated they will be three-bedroom, two-bathroom rambler homes; the first home will be a slab on grade home, the second home may have a basement. Ms. McDermott stated Elevate Hope House will own the homes and will enlist the help of the residents to take care of the property. Ms. McDermott stated some businesses intend to donate materials for landscaping, and area youth sports organizations may provide volunteer labor for the landscaping. Ms. McDermott stated residents (mothers and children) can live in the homes for up to two years. Commissioner Dixon interjected stating the questions asked by the residents are beyond the scope of questioning asked of any other applicant. Commissioner Dixon stated that Ms. McDermott should not have to provide answers to most of the questions that were asked and that the questions are not related to what the Planning Commission needs to address related to recommending approval of the plat. Chair Pogalz stated he agreed. Chair Pogalz stated Ms. McDermott is showing good faith by answering the questions and explaining what she is planning to do with the property. Commissioner Dixon stated she understands that but reiterated that no other applicant has had to provide answers to the types of questions asked by other residents tonight. The residents in attendance had various comments. Chair Pogalz informed the residents that Ms. McDermott has the right to do what she wants to do with the property if what is done, meets all regulatory requirements of the city, county and state. Commissioner Ringler asked if homes that will be constructed in this subdivision must meet the same requirements as any other home constructed in the city. Building and Zoning Clerk Bohr stated that the requirements for construction of homes on lots in the Elevate Hope Addition are the same as those for any other residential home in the city. Building and Zoning Clerk Bohr stated the only landscaping requirement the city has for residential homes is that all the area disturbed during construction be re-established with turf. Building and Zoning

Clerk Bohr stated an escrow would be collected if the turf is not established when construction has been completed but that is the only landscaping requirement the city has. Mr. Hundley asked if the speed limit on Xylite Street NE will change. Engineer Krugler stated Xylite Street NE is a county road. Engineer Krugler stated a request for a speed study would need to be made to the Anoka County Highway Department. Engineer Krugler stated the speed limit for East Ham Lake Drive is 30 MPH and that speed limit will remain as is.

**Chair Pogalz closed the public hearing at 6:27 p.m.**

**Motion by Lejonvarn, seconded by Dixon, to recommend approval of the request of Melinda McDermott for Preliminary and Final Plat approval of Elevate Hope Addition (2 single family residential lots and one outlot) located in Section 16 subject to meeting the requirements of the City Engineer, and meeting all City, State and County requirements. All present in favor, motion carried. *This application will be placed on the City Council's Monday, December 16, 2024, agenda.***

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**COMMISSION BUSINESS:**

City Council Update

Chair Pogalz informed the commissioners that the City Council tabled the first reading of the proposed wetland banking ordinance for Article 9. Chair Pogalz stated the City Council has directed Engineer Collins to contact the Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR) to request the attendance of a BWSR representative at a future, joint Planning Commission and City Council meeting. Chair Pogalz stated information will be provided about this meeting when it is available. A planning commissioner will not be attending the December 16, 2024, City Council meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion by Dixon, seconded by Ringler, to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 6:32 p.m. All present in favor, motion carried.**

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Jennifer Bohr  
Building and Zoning Clerk