



**CITY OF OAK PARK HEIGHTS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, January 10, 2019 –Oak Park Heights City Hall**

I. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance:

Chair Freeman called the meeting to order @ 6:00 p.m. Present: Commissioners Giovinazzo, Kremer, VanDyke and White; City Administrator Johnson, City Planner Richards, and City Councilmember Liljegren.

II. Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Kremer stated that he would like to add Comprehensive Plan to Old Business.

Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner VanDyke, moved to approve the Agenda as amended, to include Comprehensive Plan under Old Business. Carried. 5-0.

III. Approval of December 12, 2018 Meeting Minutes:

Commissioner Kremer, seconded by Commissioner VanDyke, moved to approve the Minutes as amended, correcting a type on page two, paragraph three changing the word “not” to “note” in the third sentence and correcting the voted to adjourn on page three from “4-0” to “5-0.” Carried 5- 0.

IV. Department/Commission Liaison / Other Reports:

City Councilmember Liljegren introduced Councilmember Carly Johnson, in the audience and noted that at the City Council’s recent meeting a presentation thanking Mark Vierling for his service to the City as City Attorney was made. Also, that Council appointments were made for Commission liaisons, including himself to the Planning Commission, Carly Johnson to the Parks Commission and Chuck Dougherty to the Cable Commission.

V. Visitors/Public Comment: None.

VI. Public Hearings:

A. Ridgecrest Oak Park Heights I: Review and consider approval of vacation of a public drainage and utility easement controlled by the City of Oak Park Heights.

City Administrator Johnson reviewed the request for vacation of a drainage and utility easement at the Ridgecrest Development. Johnson noted that the City has been working with the Ridgecrest developer and has pending land exchanges and a signed development agreement in place. The easement was created years ago when the property was originally developed and its vacation was missed during the re-development process.

Johnson stated that the easement is not anticipated to be necessary to the public and that it has been replaced with new easements at the perimeter of each parcel in the development as required by City Ordinance 402.07.D1. As the north and south running easement crosses over the lot lines and is beneath the new building and sidewalk area, the developer would like it vacated. Staff recommends approval.

Chair Freeman opened the public hearing at 6:08 p.m. and invited public comment.

There being no visitors for comment to the public hearing, Commissioner Kremer, seconded by Commissioner White, moved to close the public hearing at 6:09 p.m. Carried 5-0.

Commissioner White, seconded by Commissioner Kremer, moved to recommend City Council approval of the request for vacation of the drainage and utility easement.

Carried 5 – 0.

VII. New Business: None.

VIII. Old Business:

A. Comprehensive Plan:

Commissioner Kremer noted the Commission had issues with the Comprehensive Plan process at earlier meetings and City Administrator Johnson had suggested that if the Commission would like to take that up with the Metropolitan Council, they could contact District 12 Representative Harry Melander, who represents Oak Park Heights.

Kremer said that he gave Representative Melander a call to discuss things and found that he was not eager to discuss anything. Kremer stated that he understood Representative Melander would be leaving Metropolitan Council in February.

Kremer advised the Commission that he wrote Representative Melander a letter. He did not communicate with him as a representative of the Planning Commission, but as an individual who has observed the Comprehensive Plan process from the beginning and found the process flawed. He noted that he found the Metropolitan Council to be too much of an overseer as opposed to being a partner in the planning process, adding that the cost for preparing the plans was excessive for a city the size of Oak Park Heights, which is nearly built out.

Chair Freeman asked Commissioner Kremer if he wanted to read the letter and discussion ensued as to whether the Planning Commission wished to make the letter part of the meeting record. Consensus was to have the matter placed on the next meeting agenda for discussion.

City Administrator Johnson suggested that if the Commission wished, they could convey what they collectively want to the City Council, who in turn could send a letter to the Metropolitan Council supporting the Planning Commission's position.

Commissioner Kremer stated that he felt it would be beneficial for the person replacing Representative Melander to meet with the Planning Commission once a year or so to visit about what's happening at the Metropolitan Council. He did note that he believes Representative Melander had met with the City Council at some point in time, but that he believed it to be years ago. Chair Freeman recalled the Commission discussing visiting the Comprehensive Plan's elements regularly versus waiting until it is time to complete an updated plan.

Discussion of Commissioner Kremer's communication will be placed on the next Planning Commission meeting Agenda.

IX. Informational:

Planning Commission Terms: City Planner Richards noted the upcoming completion of Commissioner terms and inquired of those with terms completing at the end of May, whether or not they might be seeking reappointment.

February Planning Commission Meeting: City Administrator Johnson reminded the Commission that their February meeting is scheduled for Valentine's Day and that if any of them had plans for that evening and wanted to reschedule the meeting it is something they could consider. Brief discussion ensued as to the need to reschedule, if desired, may be moot dependent upon business for the Agenda. Chair Freeman indicated that if there is not sufficient business for the February meeting Agenda, he would prefer to just see that meeting skipped.

South Frontage Road – 60th St. N.: Chair Freeman noted that he has had inquiries as to what is going on with the frontage road and asked City Administrator Johnson if there was any public update that could be given. City Administrator Johnson stated that easements from Wal-Mart were received earlier in the week and are being recorded by the City Attorney. In the terms of land rights, two-thirds are in place. He stated that the alignment of the roadway is being worked on and discussed funding. City Engineer estimate to date for the project is approximately two million dollars. Toward the funding goal, the City has received a \$644,000 grant from MnDOT. It is anticipated that the City Council will have to commit some funding and that the City will petition the State Legislature to provide funds toward the project as well. Brief discussion was had as to the alignments and road design.

The 2/14 Planning Commission meeting date was noted in early discussion. Chair Freeman stated that there was no point in talking about the 2/14 meeting until it is known whether or not there is enough on the Agenda for a meeting and that it could be discussed if it comes up and a change made.

A. Upcoming Meetings:

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| • Tuesday, January 22, 2019 | City Council | 6:00 p.m./City Hall |
| • Thursday, February 14, 2019 | Planning Commission | 6:00 p.m./City Hall |
| • Tuesday, February 26, 2019 | City Council | 6:00 p.m./City Hall |
| • Thursday, March 14, 2019 | Planning Commission | 6:00 p.m./City Hall |
| • Tuesday, March 26, 2019 | City Council | 6:00 p.m./City Hall |

B. Council Representative

- Tuesday, January 22, 2019 – Commissioner Freeman
- Tuesday, February 26, 2019 – Commissioner – Kremer
- Tuesday, March 26, 2019 – Commissioner – Giovinazzo

X. Adjourn.

Commissioner Kremer, seconded by Commissioner VanDyke, moved to adjourn at 6:23 p.m. Carried 5 – 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Hultman
Planning & Code Enforcement

Approved by the Planning Commission: 02/14/2019 (5-0)