



**MINUTES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
May 18, 2021 City Hall  
Council Chambers 6:30 p.m.**

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairperson Nichols-Matkaiti. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this meeting was held virtually.

**II. Roll Call**

Members Present.....Chairperson Erin Nichols-Matkaiti, and Commissioners Liza Allen, Todd Biedenfeld, Youssef Enanaa, Jeanne Frischman, Tim McQuillan, and Eric Nelsen

Members Absent.....None

Also Present .....Ben Gozola (Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development) and Councilmember Abdullahi Abdulle

**III. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion by Commissioner Frischman, seconded by Commissioner Enanaa, to approve the May 18, 2021 agenda as presented.**

**A roll call vote was taken. Approved 7-0.**

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

**Minutes from April 20, 2021**

**Motion by Commissioner Biedenfeld, seconded by Commissioner Allen, to approve the April 20, 2021 meeting minutes as presented.**

**A roll call vote was taken. Approved 7-0.**

## V. Report from City Council Liaison

Councilmember Abdulle provided the Commission with an update from the City Council. He stated the Council discussed Commission optimization and work plans at a recent worksession meeting, along with the role of student commissioners. He reported the Council had a robust discussion regarding manufactured home parks and received an update from Ramsey County regarding their HRA efforts.

## VI. Public Hearing

### (A) **Ordinance 884: An Ordinance to rezone properties from R-3B and R-2 (the Lakeside and Oak Grove Manufactured Home Parks) to MHC (Manufactured Home Community), and to update regulations relating to manufactured homes in Chapter 16 of City Code and Chapter 4 of the Zoning Code.**

Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola reported in April, the Planning Commission and City Council were introduced to a host of problems in the City Ordinance relating to existing and future manufactured home parks. Existing codes had guided the City's manufactured home parks for decades without issue, but a recent complaint prompted an in-depth examination of our regulations, and staff agreed that historic practices could not continue given how code was written. Without immediate action, this discovery was poised to have a significant impact on ALL manufactured home owners (over 360 homes) in the form of increased permit costs (\$350+) and permit review times (+40 days). To protect these residents and to maintain past practices, staff immediately published notice for Ordinance 881 to update the City Code and Zoning Code as needed to eliminate the newly identified problems. On April 27, 2021, Ordinance 881 was approved, but will not be effective until the City's Manufactured Home Parks are rezoned to the newly created Manufactured Home Community (MHC) zoning district. Ordinance 884 will complete the rezonings, and will make minor amendments to the language approved in Ordinance 881 in response to feedback from the Planning Commission and Council last month. It was noted the Lakeside Manufactured Home Park will be rezoned from R-3B to MHC. The Oak Grove Manufactured Home Park will be rezoned from R-2 to MHC. Chapter 16 is being further updated to ensure development of new parks or expansion areas of existing parks results in overall densities consistent with historic expectations. Staff provided further comment on the request and recommended approval of Ordinance 884 based on the following rationale:

- Ordinance 884 will implement the changes approved by Ordinance 881, and will ensure our oversight of manufactured homes remains unchanged from previous decades.
- Failure to approve this ordinance essentially ends activity within our manufactured home parks unless variances are both applied for and granted, thereby increasing both cost and review time to complete projects within the existing parks.
- Resident requests to create new standards for manufactured home parks can be considered as part of the upcoming zoning code rewrite project. Adding new regulations is not the intent of Ordinance 884.

Chair Nichols-Matkaiti asked for comments or questions from the Commission.

Commissioner McQuillan asked if the sales area within the Lakeside Manufactured Home Park along Old Highway 8 was allowed. Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola reported he does not know the rules and regulations for sales, but noted the park has space set aside for unit sales.

Commissioner Nelson stated it felt like there was a degree of urgency. He questioned if there were any active applications for either of these lots. Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola explained Lakeside was looking to move a new home onto one of their vacant areas and this was when the City was notified and Chapter 16 was then reviewed by staff.

Chair Nichols-Matkaiti inquired if there was a penalty for an existing park that was looking to expand the property. Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola described how a manufactured home park could expand and how staff would review the overall analysis. It was noted that any deficiencies within the park would have to be addressed on the new land.

Chair Nichols-Matkaiti opened the Public Hearing at 7:12 p.m.

Steve Barns, 1400 Piper Drive, requested further comment on how the City calculated the size of the Lakeside Manufactured Home Park. Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola discussed how staff calculated the size of the Lakeside Manufactured Home Park.

Mr. Barns stated 95% of the units within the Lakeside park have 25 foot spacing between the long sides of the homes. He commented if only a 10 foot setback was required and the neighbor on the west side of his house moves, he could potentially lose three-fourths of his yard space. He believed this was unfair as a resident. Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola explained these are not new rules.

Mr. Barns explained these were new rules. Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola stated he would have to disagree. He reported he went through every file for the Lakeside development and understood the old owners chose to maintain bigger separations because this provided value to their development. He understood there were two different owners for the parks and they have gotten to two different end points.

Mr. Barns did not believe the old owner was lying. He was of the opinion more information could be gathered by speaking to the old owners of the park. He indicated there was no urgency to this matter and commented residents don't typically pull permits because a lot of work does not get done on the units. He believed more residents should be weighing in on this. He explained residents believe the 25 foot setback was being enforced. He anticipated more people would be in attendance if the meeting information was made available, especially if the residents were made aware they could be losing 50% of their yards.

Chair Nichols-Matkaiti stated if the City has stricter standards, the manufactured home park owners could still enforce their own setback standards. Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola reported this is the case. He explained the owners of the manufactured home park have every right to enforce their own rules and regulations. He stated this was similar to the actions taken by HOA's within single family residential developments. He indicated the City does not get involved with regulating these matters.

Curt Williams, Regional Manager for Riverstone Communities, reported his company owns and operates the Lakeside North. He spoke to several of the issues that were brought up. He explained Riverstone purchased the community in 2016 from the previous owners. He indicated the previous owners conducted manufactured home sales and had large equipment to move the homes. He stated Riverstone Communities owns 80 properties across the country. He commented he did not want the overall aesthetic of the Lakeside community to be changed. He wanted to see the spacing maintained in order to protect the yards and greenspace. He discussed the location of the utility and sewer hookups for his 245 addresses within Lakeside and stated it would not make financial sense to move these hookups. He reported he would not be expanding the Lakeside community but rather would maintain the existing 245 addresses. He then reviewed several photographs of the homes and spacing within the Lakeside community.

Chair Nichols-Matkaiti thanked Mr. Williams for his presentation and for sharing photos with the Commission.

Mr. Barns commented he appreciated how the new owners were following the same guidelines as the previous owners. He hoped the park would continue to have the same look and feel. He supported the 25 foot setbacks within Lakeside be kept in place, and that each lot have one tree.

Mr. Williams discussed the notes he received from the previous owners and how it was held to a very high standard. He understood the City did not require one tree per lot, but he would keep this in place.

Commissioner Biedenfeld asked how legal non-conformities were be managed by the City and what would happen if the City were to adopt a 25 foot setback requirement within manufactured home parks. Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola described how every property owner within the Oak Grove community would have to apply for a variance in order to be allowed to remain in their current location. He noted the variance process was \$350 and was a 40+ day process.

Mr. Barns questioned how many permits were pulled by manufactured home owners each year. Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola stated he did not have that data in front of him, but noted when permits are pulled, the properties are inspected by the City.

**Motion by Commissioner McQuillan, seconded by Commissioner Frischman to close the Public Hearing.**

**A roll call vote was taken. Approved 7-0.**

Commissioner Biedenfeld commented the differences between the manufactured home parks was similar to the differences within HOA's, as was noted by staff. He stated he did not want the City to be overly restrictive and he appreciated staff's insight and recommendation for this Ordinance.

Commissioner Enanaa agreed staff had done a good job on presenting this Ordinance. He noted he would be supporting staff's recommendation.

Commissioner Frischman agreed.

Commissioner McQuillan stated he supported this Ordinance moving forward to the City Council.

Commissioner Nelson questioned if the City would be making additional changes to the zoning code. Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola reported the City Council has assigned residents to a Zoning Code Steering Committee and he expected this group would be working on the zoning code for the next 12 to 18 months.

Chair Nichols-Matkaiti discussed the differences between the City's proposed requirements and one of the manufactured home parks. She indicated the management of the Lakeside community has chosen to be more restrictive.

**Motion by Commissioner Frischman, seconded by Commissioner McQuillan, to recommend the City Council approve Ordinance 884, An Ordinance to rezone properties from R-3B and R-2 (the Lakeside and Oak Grove Manufactured Home Parks) to MHC (Manufactured Home Community), and to update regulations relating to manufactured homes in Chapter 16 of City Code and Chapter 4 of the Zoning Code.**

**A roll call vote was taken. Approved 7-0.**

Councilmember Abdulle commented City staff was working to make things easier for residents and not more difficult through this Ordinance. He thanked the Commission for their discussion and deliberation on this matter. He encouraged the public to reach out to him, or any other Councilmember with questions or concerns.

## **VII. Business Items**

Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development Gozola discussed the plans for the Zoning Code Steering Committee.

**VIII. Adjournment**

**Motion by Commissioner Frischman, seconded by Commissioner Biedenfeld, to adjourn the meeting.**

**A roll call vote was taken. Approved 7-0.**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:52 PM**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Gozola". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "B" and a cursive "G".

Ben Gozola  
Assistant Director of Community Assets and Development