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**City of Lake Forest Park
Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Summary*
17425 Ballinger Way NE—The Forest Room
April 10, 2007**

Commissioners present: Judy Herring, Chair; Don Shaffer, Linda Owens, Chuck Paulsen, Shary Van.

Commissioners absent: Jeff Foster, Vice-Chair; Tom Lerner

Staff present: Stephen Bennett, Planning Director; Shana Restall, Associate Planner; Aaron Halverson, Clerk

Others present: Elizabeth Walker, Urban Tree Task Force Consultant; Robert E. Lee, Candidate for the Planning Commission.

Call to order: Judy Herring, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:09pm.

First Order of Business:

Chair Herring introduced Robert E. Lee as a potential new member of the Planning Commission upon confirmation by the City Council.

Approval of meeting notes:

Commissioner Paulsen moved accept the April, 10th, 2007 minutes with the following change; replace ~~‘Commissioner Lerner entertained the motion to accept the March 13th, 2007 minutes with the following changes’~~ with ‘Commissioner Lerner moved to accept the March 13th, 2007 minutes with the following changes’. The motion unanimously carried, Cmr. Van abstained.

Unfinished Business:

Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance Discussion

Director Bennett discussed the tree density handout that included pictures of local properties. This handout was intended to help the Planning Commission understand the tree density credits associated with Level III Tree Removal Permits. Dir. Bennett stated that larger trees receive more points so they will be more likely to be retained.

Consultant Walker explained that the tree density units are applied only to sites that are proposed for development. She stated that the tree density handout might not measure tree density units accurately. Furthermore, she stated that developers try to maximize developments as much as possible with building size because the cost associated with purchasing property makes it challenging to be profitable. Therefore, the pictures in the handout are not accurate because the building potential of the lots have not been maximized.

Consultant Walker stated that during the review process the tree density calculations are a “trigger” for tree replacement on lots proposed for development. She explained that the application review process involves consideration of the number of viable trees on the property that can be retained considering the size of the development. Then, she stated that tree density is calculated and if the

1 development results in tree removal that reduces tree density below that required by the property size
2 then the developer will be required to replace trees.

3
4 The Commissioners were concerned that a tree density of 35 tree units per acres is not dense enough
5 to be consistent with the tree density in Lake Forest Park. Consultant Walker stated that 35 tree units
6 per acre provide tree canopy over one-third of the lot.

7
8 Consultant Walker stated that it is challenging for developers to reduce the number of trees to the
9 minimum tree density of 35 tree units per acre because of the extensive review required.
10 Furthermore, she stated that the 'Site Design for Development' section of the proposed Tree
11 Protection and Replacement ordinance will retain Type I and Type II trees unless there is a conflict
12 with development.

13
14 Dir. Bennett explained that a property owner has the right to develop a lot. He explained that the
15 setbacks and other issues are applied and a building area is established, then tree retention is
16 negotiated according to the requirements associated with the proposed Tree Protection and
17 Replacement Ordinance. The proposed ordinance allows the development proposal to be altered for
18 the retention of Type I and Type II trees, unlike the current Tree Protection and Replacement
19 Ordinance that requires 35% of significant trees be retained without consideration for the value
20 associated with large trees. This often results in the retention of many small trees and removal of
21 large and valuable trees.

22
23 The Commissioners discussed exemptions for specific species of trees and trees that the property
24 owner planted. Discussion ensued regarding the requirement for a permit to remove a tree that a
25 property owner planted themselves and the associated replacement requirement. Cmr. Shaffer stated
26 that loss of the tree coverage in Lake Forest Park is primarily the result of development, not from
27 private property owners removing trees. In addition, he stated that instead of being intrusive and
28 punitive, the City should encourage people to plant trees.

29
30 Dir. Bennett explained the Level IV Tree Removal Permit that allows a property owner to manage the
31 stands or groves of trees on their property. He stated that, with a Level IV Tree Removal Permit, the
32 City creates an incentive for somebody, willing to provide information about the trees on their large
33 lot, to do forest management on their property under an open-ended permit that could be valid for
34 many years.

35
36 The Commission discussed whether tree replacement should be required for ornamental trees that
37 private property owners planted themselves. Consultant Walker explained that exempting tree
38 species is very subjective.

39
40 The Commission discussed posting of Tree Removal Permits before tree removal to allow interested
41 parties to be aware of tree removal before its occurrence.

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43 Chair Herring asked the Commission to postpone its discussion of tree removal permit posting until
44 the next meeting.

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New Business:
Nominations for Planning Commission Vice-Chair

Chair Herring explained that the Planning Commission selects the Vice-Chair while the Mayor selects the Chair.

Cmr. Owens was nominated and selected by the members of the Planning Commission as the next Vice-Chair of the Planning Commission.

Chair's Meeting

Cmr. Owens attended the meeting and stated she understood that the Environmental Quality Commission had submitted comments on the proposed Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance to the City Council and was concerned that the Planning Commission's review of the Ordinance was not of any value. Dir. Bennett explained that review of the propose Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance by the Planning Commission valuable and necessary.

Adjournment: 9:04 PM

Aaron Halverson, Clerk

APPROVED:

Judy Herring, Chair

* A full audio record of this and all other Planning Commission Meetings may be obtained at the City of Lake Forest Park City Hall.