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**City of Lake Forest Park
Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Summary*
17425 Ballinger Way NE—The Forest Room
May 8, 2007**

Commissioners present: Judy Herring, Chair; Jeff Foster, Vice Chair; Don Shaffer, Linda Owens, Chuck Paulsen, Tom Lerner, Robert Lee

Commissioners absent: Shary Van

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

Others present: Marvin Wheeler, Citizen of Lake Forest Park; Elizabeth Walker, Urban Tree Task Force Consultant

Call to order: Judy Herring, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:06pm.

Approval of meeting notes:

Commissioner Lerner moved to accept the April 10, 2007 minutes with the following changes; replace ~~‘Consultant Walker stated that it is challenging for developers to reduce the number of trees to the minimum tree density of 35 tree units per acre because of the extensive review required’~~ with ~~‘Consultant Walker stated that the extensive development review process does not allow developers to automatically reduce the existing tree density to the minimum of 35 tree units per acre’~~ on page 2, lines 8 and 9, and replace ~~‘Chair Herring asked the Commission to postpone its discussion of tree removal permit posting until the next meeting’~~ with ~~‘Chair Herring asked the Commission to continue its discussion of tree removal permit posting until the next meeting due to time constraints’~~ on page 2, lines 43 and 44. The motion unanimously carried, Cmr. Lerner and Cmr. Foster abstained.

Public Comments:

Marvin Wheeler stated that he did not wish to make any comments.

Unfinished Business:

Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance Discussion

The Commissioners discussed the relationship between the Cottage Housing Demonstration Ordinance and the proposed Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance. There was concern that the proposed Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance would make a developing cottage housing even more cumbersome. Dir. Bennett stated that the Cottage Housing Demonstration Ordinance has its own tree retention requirements that are more restrictive than the proposed Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance. The Commissioners discussed possible provisions in the proposed Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance that would be specific to cottage housing.

The Commissioners discussed the Planning Commission Draft of the Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance. Dir. Bennett stated that the Planning Commission Draft contained changes the Planning Commission had discussed during previous meetings.

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2 The first alteration in the Planning Commission Draft of the Tree Protection and Replacement
3 Ordinance included an altered introduction including elimination of the ‘Findings’ section and the
4 creation of a new section titled ‘Introduction’. The Commission discussed the value of including
5 the ‘Findings’ section in the proposed Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance.
6

7 Consultant Walker discussed the new term, ‘Prune’ and its definition that was added. The
8 definition reads “‘Prune’ means removing branches or roots from a tree using approved practices to
9 achieve a specified objective.” Consultant Walker explained that the definition came from an
10 arboriculture terms glossary. She stated the term ‘Trim’ was replaced with the term ‘Prune’
11 throughout the ordinance. The Commission discussed the term ‘Prune’, specifically that a person
12 would not be allowed to prune a tree on their property without a permit. Consultant Walker
13 explained that pruning is restricted only in sensitive areas and their associated buffers.
14

15 The Commission discussed definitions of terms such as ‘allowable site disturbance’, specifically
16 how a citizen can positively measure or determine what is an allowable site disturbance.
17

18 The Commission discussed changes related to tree replacement requirements associated with Level
19 I Tree Removal Permits. The new language does not require a replacement tree for each tree
20 removed under a level I permit but instead requires tree replacement only if the tree removed is one
21 of the last two trees on the property. Discussion ensued regarding the permit and application
22 requirements for a Level I Tree Removal Permit.
23

24 The next addition to the proposed Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance was discussed. The
25 addition was to the following sentence in the Level III Permit section; “When there are feasible and
26 prudent location alternatives on site for proposed building structures or other site improvements,
27 viable trees are to be preserved. This may require site redesign including but not limited to;
28 redesign of streets, sidewalks, stormwater facilities, utilities, reducing or limiting proposed site
29 grading; and changing the locations of building or building lots.” The Commissioners discussed
30 the potential contradiction with the sentence that follows the altered sentence that reads, “Tree
31 retention with a Level III Tree Permit shall be pursuant to this Chapter, provided that such tree
32 retention will not reduce the applicant’s development potential allowed by the Lake Forest Park
33 zoning code.” Consultant Walker explained that it becomes a property rights issue if a developer is
34 unable to build to the potential of the property because of the requirements associated with the Tree
35 Protection and Replacement Ordinance.
36

37 The final alterations to the proposed Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance were discussed.
38 These alterations included the addition of the following sentence to the Level III Permit section;
39 ‘While all viable trees that can be retained are to be preserved, the minimum tree density is 35 tree
40 units per acre for development requiring a Level III Tree Permit’ and the addition, “When viable
41 trees are retained in a grove, a higher minimum tree density is set based on the nature of the
42 grove(s)”, “On sites where there are inadequate numbers of viable trees (existing or retained) and the
43 site falls below the minimum tree density, then supplemental tree planting shall be required to meet
44 the minimum density.”
45

46 The Commissioners discussed increasing the minimum tree density required for Level III Tree
47 Removal Permits.
48

1 Dir. Bennett discussed the variance section of the proposed Tree Protection and Replacement
2 Ordinance. Specifically, Dir. Bennett discussed the criteria the Hearing Examiner will use to grant
3 variances for tree removal. He stated that the \$1,200 dollar fee associated with a variance application
4 would restrict the use of the variance process to citizens that have good reason to remove a legacy or
5 heritage tree. The Commissioners discussed the possibility of the administrative variance process for
6 tree removal.

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8 **New Business: New Member of the Planning Commission**

9

10 Cmr. Lee introduced himself as a new member of the Planning Commission.

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12 **Adjournment: 9:00 PM**

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14 Aaron Halverson, Clerk

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APPROVED:

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Judy Herring, Chair

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