

**MINUTES OF THE
WATERTOWN CITY COUNCIL
Special Meeting Thursday, February 12, 2009**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the regular meeting of the Watertown City Council was called to order, on **Thursday, February 12, 2009** by Mayor K. J. McDonald at 6:40 PM in the Watertown City Hall Council Chambers.

Upon roll call the following Council Members were present: McDonald, Jodi Martinez, Earline King, Rick Mann and Steven Duske.

The following staff members were present: City Administrator David Mandt, Senior Planner Crystal Foust, Assistant Planner Karyn Islam, and Planning Consultant Mark Kaltsas.

Also present were: Gary Lally of Hoyt Properties, Jennifer Thompson of Pioneer Engineering, Resident John McCain.

2. ADOPT AGENDA

The agenda for the Watertown City Council was a special meeting on the Sanctuary. No motion was necessary for this item.

3. SANCTUARY SKETCH PLAN

Foust introduced a sketch plan proposal for the Sanctuary development. She stated that the sketch plan is the first stage in the development process, and during this stage items such as road alignment, housing, natural resource preservation, utilities, and the overall consistency with the proposed use of the development are considered. Foust stated that staff has spent six to nine months discussing these initial items, particularly the need for two access points into the development. The streets in the Sanctuary development would connect to Mill Avenue, which is classified as a collector street, which then connects to Carver County Road 10/Territorial Street. At one point along Mill Avenue, a connection would be made to Paul Avenue, which serves as a truck route.

Foust explained that the development's net density is compatible with the City's qualifications for low-density residential; the net density of the Sanctuary development is 1.6 units per acre. She described the variety of housing types including large-lot estate-type housing, moderate, single-family detached housing, and smaller-lot single-family detached villa homes, which are clustered on the eastern portion of the development.

Foust discussed the plans for a six to eight-acre park that would be located at the entrance to the Sanctuary, along Mill Avenue. She also mentioned that utilities would be brought from the Forest Hills development located southwest of the Sanctuary development, and that storm water ponds would be necessary to accommodate runoff.

McDonald inquired about and requested clarification on the different stages of the development plan process, particularly for those who may be unfamiliar with those stages. Foust responded by clarifying the process of development plan submittal, including sketch plan, preliminary plat and final plat. She explained the engineer's role,

costs to the City and those costs which are incurred by the applicant by means of an escrow deposit.

Gary Lally from Hoyt Properties introduced himself as a representative of the Sanctuary. He also introduced Jennifer Thompson, who is a Land Planner with Pioneer Engineering. Lally stated the proposed development's intent on sensitivity to the environment, as his team attempted to make every lot have natural amenities, and his optimism in moving forward through the development process to final platting.

Thompson explained the background of the project, addressing issues regarding the impending County Road 20 loop, as well as traffic circulation through the development. She stated that the main goal was to create a development that takes advantage of the natural features found on the land, adding that the Sanctuary would have an amenities package which would include bike trails, fields, and life-cycle housing.

McDonald posed a question about the time span of the development, and whether the developer has taken into account a recently reported estimation from a valuable source that there are presently enough idle, vacant platted lots in the Twin Cities area to provide for the next eight-years. Further, he asked about the impetus for the developer to choose to proceed with the plan considering the current supply overhang in the real estate market.

Lally responded by explaining the benefits of investing during a poor market.

Duske addressed his concern for the traffic capacity of Mill Avenue and Paul Avenue, asking whether the road might need to be widened.

Lally stated that a traffic study may be required to project traffic patterns for the capacity of Paul Avenue and surrounding roads. He stated that he hopes that the housing market will improve and that Paul Avenue will be completed with the build-out of Forest.

Councilmember Martinez stated that she appreciated the time spent by City staff to help each councilmember fully understand the scope of the sketch plan. She also stated she believes that the inclusion of life-cycle housing in the plan would be beneficial for the community, providing a function similar to the life-cycle housing in the City of Waconia. Martinez further addressed the issue of transportation, stating that she is not as concerned with the long-term planning of transportation, but rather concerned with the short-term and more immediate needs for the transportation system into and out of the development, particularly since Paul Avenue is incomplete.

McDonald commended Martinez on her efforts toward learning and studying the various aspects in her role as a newly-elected councilmember.

Councilmember King asked whether the streets are in the flood plain, and if so, what would need to be done to manage that situation.

Foust stated that Mill Avenue and streets located within the Sanctuary development would be built up high enough above the flood plain.

MCDONALD MOVED, SECONDED BY MARTINEZ TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE PREPARATION OF A PRELIMINARY PLAT, WITH CONSIDERATION FOR THE

ADVISORY COMMENTS MADE BY CITY STAFF, PLANNING COMMISSION AND CITY COUNCIL. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED.

4. ADJOURNMENT

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING, KING MOVED, SECONDED BY MARTINEZ, TO ADJOURN THE FEBRUARY 12, 2009 SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WATERTOWN CITY COUNCIL. ALL AYES, MOTION CARRIED AT 7:19 PM.

ATTEST:

Steven Wallner
Clerk-Treasurer

K.J. McDonald
Mayor