



Variance Board Meeting
City Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive
Minutes – Wednesday, January 3, 2018 – 5:30 p.m.

1. **Call to Order**

Chair Daire called to order the Variance Board meeting at 5:30 p.m. and reviewed the role and purpose of the Variance Board.

2. **Roll Call & Introductions**

At the request of Chair Daire, City Planner Thomas Paschke called the Roll.

Members Present: Chair James Daire, Vice Chair Chuck Gitzen, and Member Peter Sparby

Members Absent: Member Julie Kimble

Staff Present: City Planner Thomas Paschke

3. **Approval of Agenda**

MOTION

Member Gitzen moved, seconded by Member Sparby to approve the agenda as presented.

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

4. **Review of Minutes**

Member Gitzen inquired if Member Sparby was present at the October 25, 2017 meeting.

Member Sparby confirmed he was present [in the audience as the alternate] and requested the minutes be changed to reflect this.

MOTION

Member Gitzen moved, seconded by Member Sparby to approve meeting minutes of October 25, 2017 as amended.

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

5. **Public Hearings**

Chair Daire reviewed protocol for Public Hearings and public comment.

a. **PLANNING FILE 17-020**

Request by Meritex-Highcrest DC III, LLC, 2501/2503 Walnut Street, for a variance to City Code §1011.03.A.3.e (Minimum Landscape Requirement) to allow a reduced number of trees and shrubs than required by the Code.

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City Planner Paschke reviewed the variance request for this property, as detailed in the staff report dated January 3, 2017. He reported the applicant proposes to build two 144,000 square foot office/warehouse structures on the property, which would require the installation of 288 trees and 1,728 shrubs under the Zoning Code. Due to the size of the current lot, the applicant would be unable to incorporate all the required trees and shrubs. They are requesting a variance to instead install 144 trees and 627 shrubs throughout the site, which is substantially more trees and shrubs than the perimeter landscape requirement identified in the Zoning Code.

Mr. Paschke reported after reviewing the Zoning Code, the Planning Division concluded that the landscaping requirement never contemplated this type of large industrial development, it is an exception to the types of development projects the City typically considers, and staff recommends approval of this variance request with the following condition:

1. A final landscape plan consistent with the variance approval be submitted to the Planning Division for review and approval prior to building permit issuance.

Dan Williams, consultant with Meritex, commented the two formulas in the Zoning Code yield very different quantities of trees and shrubs required. They found other communities requirements compared more closely to Roseville's parcel perimeter formula. They propose to install double the number of trees required under the parcel perimeter formula and also plan to incorporate 224 perennials.

Chair Daire inquired why the Norway Maple is included as part of the landscape plan since it is a high maintenance tree.

Mr. Williams responded he was unsure, but would relay the concern to the landscape architect. He agreed they would not want a high maintenance tree.

Chair Daire commented the landscaping looks to be set up to make the parking area attractive. There is water impoundment on the south end, and the traffic takes place on the interior of the two buildings. He inquired who will maintain the landscaping on the site.

Mr. Williams responded Meritex will be responsible for ground maintenance and the cost would be billed backed to the tenants.

Mr. Paschke stated they have not approved every trees species, perennial or shrub that are a part of this request. The included condition of approval indicates staff will continue to work with the applicant on the landscape plan. The final landscape plan will include the specific number of trees, shrubs, and perennials as part of the permit issuance. There may also be additional things required by the watershed with the infiltration areas.

Member Sparby inquired how the property is currently being used and how it will be used after it is developed.

Mr. Paschke explained the building was formerly used as an office building for Unisys, which had 500 employees and a couple million square feet of building area. It has been reduced to this site, which consists of a three-story office building. It was purchased by Meritex with the goal to redevelop the site into two industrial office/warehouse buildings. The old building will be razed, and two new buildings will be constructed in its place. The square footage of both buildings triggered the higher standard of landscaping. In this area, there are two other large warehouses. They were able to meet the landscape requirements because either the square footage did not trigger the higher amount of landscaping or the larger property size provided enough room for it to be done.

Member Sparby inquired if the property could handle the required number of trees and shrubs if the proposed buildings were smaller.

Mr. Paschke responded the building could be designed to a size to allow the required landscaping to be included, but it defeats the purpose of redevelopment. When the zoning ordinance and landscape requirement was instituted, it did not contemplate this type of development project. They typically run into the number of trees related to tree preservation. It is not necessary to modify the code because the City is mostly developed, and they will only run into these types of variance requests once in a while.

Member Daire inquired if the proposed number of parking spaces matches the code requirement.

Mr. Paschke responded the applicant has a few more spaces than is required.

Mr. Williams responded they were advised to increase the number of spaces based on trends in the marketplace, and it is designed to accommodate up to 25 percent of office finish.

Mr. Paschke stated the minimum requirement was 149 spaces per building, and the applicant is proposing 182 per building.

Member Daire closed the public hearing at approximately 5:55 p.m.

Member Gitzen stated he will support the variance due to the reasonable and practical difficulties with the tree coverage.

Member Sparby expressed concern with the uniqueness. The applicant is creating the uniqueness because he is proposing to build a bigger building. However, the number of trees required seems excessive, there is a reasonable solution, and he supports the variance.

Chair Daire commented the layout is nice, it is going to be an attractive development, and he support the variance request.

MOTION

Member Gitzen moved, seconded by Member Sparby to approve a resolution allowing a variance to Roseville City Code, §1011.03.A.3.e (Minimum Landscape Requirement) at 2501/2503 Walnut Street to allow the installation of a minimum of 144 trees and 627 shrubs at 2501 Walnut Street, subject to the condition outline in the staff report dated January 3, 2018.

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

In response to Chair Daire, Mr. Paschke explained there is an appeal process after a variance is approve by the Variance Board. It will run for 11 days and if an appeal is not received, the variance is validated.

6. Adjournment

MOTION

Member Sparby moved, seconded by Member Gitzen to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:00 p.m.

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

Motion carried.