

**CITY OF HANOVER  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
DECEMBER 17, 2018  
OFFICIAL MINUTES**

**Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

Stan Kolasa called the December 17, 2018, Planning Commission Meeting to order at 7:03 pm. Members present were Stan Kolasa, Jim Schendel, Michelle Armstrong, Dean Kuitunen and Mike Christenson. Also present City Planner Cindy Nash, Council Liaison Doug Hammerseng and Administrative Assistant Amy Biren. Many guests were present.

**Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION** by Schendel to approve the agenda, seconded by Christenson.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Approval of Minutes from the November 26, 2018 Regular Meeting**

**MOTION** by Kuitunen to approve the November 26, 2018, minutes, seconded by Schendel.

**Motion carried with Armstrong abstaining due to absence.**

**Citizen's Forum**

None

**Public Hearing**

**Rezoning, Planned Unit Development (PUD) and Preliminary Plat for the Development to be known as Hanover Cove**

Kolasa closed the Planning Commission meeting at 7:04 pm and opened the Public Hearing for the Rezoning, Planned Unity Development (PUD) and Preliminary Plat for the Development to be known as Hanover Cove.

Nash introduced Alan Roessler, Paxmar, and stated he would be presenting to the Board and audience. A synopsis of the presentation is included here:

- An architectural committee will be in place that will ensure very specific architectural standards are being met. The architectural standards will be greater than what is currently in the ordinance. No two abutting units would be alike.
- There will be smaller garage sizes for the units in the HOA because they will have maintained grounds and that alleviates the need for maintenance equipment being stored in the garages.
- There will be a master HOA with two sub-HOAs.
- The development aligns with the Comprehensive Plan for Hanover.
- The developer is aware of some of the common concerns expressed by community members: increased traffic, a burden on the schools, impacts on the surrounding property values, the change of perceived open space, the density level, the impact on community character, and a burden on City services.
- Roessler reviewed benefits such as the varied housing styles meeting projected demographics; the patio homes fulfilling a void in current housing; the architectural standards exceed City standards; adding to the tax base and supporting the schools through property taxes; providing a new customer base to attract more businesses; there will be an increase in demand for trade services; and will provide housing for resident throughout their entire life.

Roessler asked the Board take action tonight by approving his requests for rezoning, PUD, and preliminary plat with conditions and working with the City Planner Cindy Nash.

Nash then presented a review to the Board:

- She reviewed the process a development takes and informed the audience of what has occurred thus far. A Concept Plan in April 2018 was approved by Council and a Comprehensive Plan Amendment changing the land use of the southern portion of the Duinick Pit from Industrial to Neighborhood Residential. This was followed by an Environmental Assessment Review (EAW) in which the Council determined there was not a need to have an Environmental Impact Statement conducted.
- The next step of the process is to rezone the southern portion of the property from Limited Industrial (I-1) and General Industrial (I-2) to Single Family Residential (R-1A).
- Changes that have occurred from the presented Concept Plan to the Preliminary Plat include some of the single family homes having a lot width of 58 feet, although the majority of the lot widths are 65 feet; the removal of the pool; and the removal of additional land to Pheasant Run Park. Nash reminded the Board and audience that a Concept Plan is not a legal binding document and is allowed to change. The potential builders for the development requested that the pool be eliminated. Staff recommended that the additional land to Pheasant Run Park be removed as there is not a need to add to the park and that there were two parks within walking distance. Instead, the developer will pay Park Dedication fees.
- Nash broke down each of the lot and housing types in comparison of what is being requested in the PUD and current zoning.
- She explained that density can increase through the PUD because the density is achieved through smaller lot sizes.
- Nash indicated that Block 5 will have a variation compared to what is presented tonight in response to some of her comments.

Justin Messner, City Engineer, began his review comments. He indicated that most of his comments listed in the memo will be addressed or are currently being addressed by the developer's engineer. He stated that the road width being requested is 32 feet while the City standard road width is 36 feet. He explained that when the developments in the Crow River Heights area began, the 36 foot width became the City Standard. The smaller street width does encourage people to slow down as there is a perception of a smaller space, but it would also limit parking and access. He is working with the developer's engineer to address all of his comments.

Nash then began her review comments. Since the builders are not known and specific house plans available, she needs to make sure each lot is buildable. She needs to be able to give the Planning Commission members the information to make an informed decision and if the PUD will better the community. By not having specifics, this is difficult to do. She can make some assumptions when seeing universal designs that would appeal to different groups of buyers. She does see families moving into the community because the price points being presented are attractive and that usually a development sees about 50 percent being families. The Board needs to also consider affordability, the changing market and demographics. She stated that there is not a copy of floor plans for the narrow lot but that it is similar to what is presented in the streetscape. If looking at the narrow house from the street, someone will see a lot of garage and a door to the side. Another item to consider is what private amenities will be added by the development. She indicated that an HOA would be an amenity and what happens on the outlots could also be considered.

Nash asked Biren to read the letters and emails received at City Hall. Five area businesses sent letters of support and two residents sent emails expressing the need for less density or not developing the site at all. Copies of the letters are attached.

David Seiler, 11354 Riverview Road NE: He inquired about the lots that are abutting the proposed development along River Road and why they are not part of the development and should they

become part of the development, would they be similar in nature to what is being proposed around them. He asked about if the setbacks are from the back of the building or a deck or patio. Nash replied that the rear yard setback is from the back of the building and if a deck is attached to the house, the deck is the start of the setback measurement. A concrete patio is not considered part of the building. Seiler went on to say the density is too high and asked whether or not the CSAH 19 vehicle bridge can handle the amount of traffic generated by the development. He sees this development as a detriment to the community.

Jim Steinbrueck, 11557 Lynwood Court NE: His first concern is not having a park within the development for kids to use. He sees this as dollar signs (\$) and a land grab. People currently wait in line to access CSAH 19 and sees this development as impacting traffic even more. He would like to see more amenities that St. Michael has like a senior center and senior housing. Steinbrueck told the Board that this is your legacy and asked is this best for this town?

Claudia Pingree, 11711 Riverview Road NE: She has been looking for a place to live and is not sure she would live here. She doesn't see sidewalks and trails and is concerned about kids going to Settler's Park. She went on to say that we need to do something. She acknowledged that the traffic is going to continue to come as it is people going through Hanover to reach a destination. Pingree asked the developer to make the lots a nice place to live and the area safe for kids. She also inquired about the future of the berms and that she would like to see them remain. Pingree brought up the concern for stormwater runoff and how it drains right through her yard and she would like to see it drain to the river.

Glen Albert, 783 Meadowlark Lane N: He echoed Pingree's concerns, stating that the density really concerns him. He continued saying that the point is to be able to look around the neighborhood and enjoy the "open space". Livability and green space all enhance people's well-being.

Drake Parris, 11670 Eighth Street NE: The amount of homes proposed, 285, will generate 906 people at a minimum compressed into an area less than 1/8 of a mile with only two exits. Senior living is needed but it may be too expensive. He included some demographic statistics of 3.5 percent are 65 and older and 14 percent are 50 plus in age. He also talked to members of the Hanover Fire Department who said they would be reluctant to rush into a fire in this proposed development. Wildlife would also be uprooted. He thinks that the developer came in with a higher density number so that when it was reduced, they could claim they listened and reduced the density. He believes that the development should look like the surrounding neighborhoods. He questioned with the narrow streets, where would people park?

Amy Sefton, 11551 Lynwood Court NE: The density is too high with the narrow patio homes and not what we want for the character of the City. This development will change the character of the town.

Nash read an email just received from Melanie Gilbert in support of the development.

Sara Williams, 364 River Road: She asked that the sidewalks and trails be indicated on the map. Williams continued saying that the amenities listed do not provide a community feel and that there is no community area or green space. The number of lots cause concern of the difficulty in reacting to emergency situations. She echoed the concern about traffic and accessing River Road and CSAH 19 and there should be changes to meet this need. She stated she heard Paxmar ask for a decision tonight and was concerned about what property rights that would give them.

Dustin Stay, 821 Meadowlark Lane N: He just moved to Hanover and likes the small-town community. He would like to see a "normal" neighborhood or nothing at all. He said that he read the Traffic Study and that the number of vehicles would cause him to change his travel time to and from Hanover. He said that he enjoys the sounds of the wildlife.

Patty Yantes, 11486 Riverview Road NE: She is a business owner and it is located in the strip mall off of Fourth Street. Yantes has to go around to get to her business and get home instead of taking the most direct route because of the traffic and the ability to make a turn. There is only one restaurant in town and it is located along a main traffic route. Parking and travel is difficult through this area at peak times and she sees it as only getting worse. There are too many houses in this development. She went on to say she has lived here for 25 years and love the small town. The development will change the aesthetics of the town as well as change the property values. She realizes something needs to be done, but sees this as too many houses. She also commented that narrow roads do not feel safe to her.

Robyn Steinbrueck, 11557 Lynwood Court NE: She identified herself as an educator and challenged the Board to look at the amount of children this development will bring and the optimum class size is 22 students and under. How would this affect Hanover Elementary School and the middle schools.

Ginger Peasha, 11700 Riverview Road NE: She moved here 20 years ago. She would like the berm to stay and does not want to see the houses. She agreed with others that the traffic will be too much.

Kolasa closed the public hearing and re-opened the Planning Commission meeting at 8:35 pm.

Christenson asked if the developer has concerns about people not wanting these products. Roessler replied that this type of product has been proven and is in demand right now.

Nash stated she would respond to the questions and comments from the public hearing:

- Nash showed the audience the location of the trail stub connecting to the existing City trails and also indicated that one side of the street would have sidewalks. The sidewalks were difficult to see on the map.
- Access to parks include Settler's Park and Pheasant Run Park, both being less than 0.5 miles from the development. River Road would have to be crossed to reach Settler's Park. There is another park a further distance away, Mallard Park, but still within walking distance.
- The engineer did comment on the narrow street width, but there are reasons to consider a narrower street: studies have shown that vehicle speed is reduced; driveways that are closer together provide less street parking; there is not as much street to maintain and reconstruction tends to be less expensive; the width is not impacting the number of lots as the right of way is the same as the surrounding neighborhoods; and it doesn't affect the front yard setback because the property line starts at the edge of the right of way.
- The developer has property rights once the Council gives approval because the Planning Commission is only a recommending body.
- Regarding the traffic, any development will increase some incremental amount.
- The school district was contacted and there is actually additional space available for more students without having to add on to schools.
- It is a routine requirement to install a berm to block visibility from a mining operation. If the berm is not located on the personal property of a resident, the developer can grade up to the property line but not on the resident's property.

Nash was asked how she calculates density. She responded that density is not based on the gross area and excludes items such as the large pond and the portion of River Road that is on the property.

J. Steinbrueck asked about pets within the development. Nash said that City ordinances will apply to the development but that the HOA may have other restrictions. Those restrictions would be enforced by the HOA.

Armstrong expressed concern about the parking and was asked how many town home developments they had completed. Roessler responded that they mainly complete master plan projects such as town homes. The developments try to accommodate two spots in the garage and two additional parking spots in the driveway. They also try to have a couple of places for extra parking and snow storage.

Armstrong said that she likes the architectural looks of the development and having a committee regulating that for the neighborhood. She said there is a need for small flex houses and asked Roessler if he had a builder and price points. He said they have been in discussion with builders and that the slab on grade two bedroom patio home would start around \$200,000. As the lots become wider and larger the price increases. The variety of sizes and amounts of lots is a way to spread the infrastructure costs among more homes. Nash added that in the future when reconstruction of the infrastructure happens, assessments will be spread among more property owners.

Armstrong said that she likes the mix, but would like to see fewer of the higher density homes and more of the single family homes with larger houses especially along the north side of the development.

Roessler said he understands the apprehension but also hears that people are looking for less expensive lots and homes. The medium patio homes will range in price of \$250,000 to \$325,000. The trend is to build as much on a lot as possible.

Armstrong is concerned about the smaller setbacks as well.

Jeff Yantes, 11486 Riverview Road NE, asked why are all the trees tagged along the berm. Jason Ver Steeg, engineer for the developer, said that Hanover requires a tree inventory of anything six (6) inches or more. They did inventory some trees that were slightly outside of the borders of the property. The inventory is required for the tree removal plan and landscaping plans. Trees will be removed in the graded area.

Kuitunen said that he had been concerned about the width of the road, but now had things to think about after hearing Nash's reasons explaining why some streets benefit from being narrower. He suggested that the members think about the current ordinances and how they would be enforced within this development using the parking of recreational vehicles and having a storage shed as examples. Kuitunen also expressed concern about the lack of parking. He asked why they were not using the curb cut located north and east of Fifth Street that already exists. Messner explained that to use the existing curb cut would have more requirements such as turn lanes as well as create challenges with traffic on River Road and having the entrance directly across from Fifth Street made more sense.

Kolasa used the example of congestion on River Road near the River Inn that occurs regularly as a reason not to have a narrower street width in the development. Ver Steeg said that the Quail Pass Second Addition (Eighth Street) is a 32 foot wide street.

Messner stated that a 32 foot wide street does have two 10 foot lanes which meets the State standards. However, such a street is not desirable with parking on both sides of the street. By restricting parking to one side of the street, that adds to the parking concerns. Through streets would also present challenges by being narrower. Sidewalks will help with safety.

Christenson asked if there were any neighborhoods that Roessler had developed that the member could drive to and view. Roessler said there are examples of the flex homes in Parkside North in Blaine as well as the 50 foot wide lots. Christenson asked if multiple lots could be purchased and then a house built on the lots so that the owner had more space. Roessler replied that the purchaser could come to the City to combine the lots. Each lot will be graded and a building pad created in a strip so a larger home could be built on combined lots without having to disturb the building pad. Christenson also asked about when a house has a trash issue or is in disrepair what were the consequences. Roessler said that an HOA will have the power to take care of such issues as long as the owner had been warned and asked to come into compliance.

Armstrong asked how many builders will be in the development. Roessler replied that they have been talking to three or four builders but that the builders want to see an approved plat.

Armstrong questioned Roessler about the feasibility of the lots located in the cul de sac. He replied that they prefer to have the narrow lots and housing types all on one street.

Christenson asked if they had considered parks within the development. Roessler said they had been directed by staff that there were sufficient parks within the area.

Schendel said that he, as a former fire department member, can see the concerns on how to fight a fire within the proposed development.

Schendel said that he would like to see a minimum of 50 foot wide lots and give everyone room. He said that the narrower streets may cost less to construct, but when reconstruction happens, it actually costs more since it takes longer to complete due to the narrow width and how slow they need to go. Schendel continued with saying there are a lot of homes too close together.

Roessler said they prefer to have 12 feet between houses.

Hammerseng said there is a lot to like about the development, but that they have a way to go before it is done. He likes the idea of the architectural committee and suggest putting some teeth into it and sees it as a positive. He acknowledges that group is struggling with the traffic that has to do with density and that leads to the lot size. The boundaries of Hanover are set and are not something that can change, but the City can control the type of lots within the boundaries. He struggles with the 40 foot wide lots and the looks of the layout. Hammerseng said that he has done some homework looking into this type of development. He has viewed a development where the lots are 50 foot wide, slab on grade with six (6) foot side yard setbacks and they are gorgeous. He wonders about the flex lots and asked what are they and why are they? Continuing, he said that senior housing that is desired is not a two story home with steps. One level living is what seniors desire. He asked if they had ever considered having a 55+ development or a portion of it being such.

Roessler responded to Hammerseng's questions. The flex lots are geared toward first-time home buyers or single people. There is an opportunity to pin it down to one housing type. If the narrower lots are a concern, there is a possibility to making 50 foot wide lots, but then the narrow lots which are more affordable will be gone. Roessler said that they have never done an age restrictive development.

Kolasa gave the example of the Cottages townhomes in St. Michael having a waitlist. He did say that these were attached townhomes. Ver Steeg said that is usually the case.

Nash said that restricted 55+ housing is not usually included as part of a larger neighborhood.

Roessler said that a benefit of an HOA may be the alleviation of residents calling the City with concerns or issues with neighbors.

Pingree said let's do it right and not rush to complete it. She asked the developer to please work with the people living here.

Armstrong said that the garage size of 440 square feet gives her concerns. People still want to be able to store items in the garage. Nash pointed out that even the 50 foot wide lots are requesting the 440 square foot garage size. Roessler said that this give people a choice from a number of garage sizes.

Armstrong asked if all of the patio homes are slab on grade. Roessler replied that was correct but a full basement may be possible if the land and grade would allow it. He went on to say that a tornado room—a reinforced area of the home—would be mandated in the slab on grade homes.

Nash said the Board needs to give the developer specific directions in order for them to bring back plans. The Board spoke about:

- Keep the garage size as stated in the current ordinance.
- Less density.
- Wider lots.
- Have parking spots/areas or wider streets.
- The width of the streets may be okay.
- Provide details for the architectural requirements.
- Look into the possibility of a 55+ section or community.

Messner said that attached townhomes will have a required amount of parking spaces, but with separate townhomes there are no such requirements as they are seen as individual homes and similar to other neighborhoods.

Ver Steeg said that it will a lot of work to change everything for something like a 0.5 foot difference in side yard setbacks in order to increase it to an eight (8) foot side yard setback.

Messner recommended a 36 foot wide street as it is the City Standard even though narrower ones are functional and do work. There is less stormwater runoff with narrower streets.

Nash showed a neighborhood in Carver where the side yard setbacks are 7.5 feet.

Christenson asked about the setbacks when there is a deck or porch. Ver Steeg said that a deck or porch are outside of the setback areas and would not interfere with the setbacks. He directed members to look at the maps where a deck or patio are indicated by a square by the house.

Roessler asked that if the narrower and flex lots are eliminated the rest of the suggestions are incorporated, will the Board support this development and act on it tonight.

Kuitunen and Christenson both replied that they need to see the actual changes to the plat before being able to recommend approval.

Jessica Roessler, Paxmar, said that this development has been designed based on the demographics and the future. The Board needs to look at where the people who the flex or narrow lot is intended for would be able to purchase a home.

Hammerseng replied that Hanover cannot be everything to everyone.

Nash said that she is not comfortable with approving the changes without seeing new plans. She needs to be certain that the housing types will really work on the lots.

Armstrong said that if the flex and narrow lot numbers would be reduced by 18 units, would it be worth it. Hammerseng said yes, it would be worth it. Armstrong continued that with 18 units that may not be enough to make a difference in the density.

Nash said that the Board needs to provide direction to the developer and be comfortable with the redesign.

Armstrong proposed getting rid of the flex lots and replace them with single family lots. Then take the line of narrow patio homes northeast of the cul de sac homes and change them into medium patio homes. Keep a small section of narrow homes around the cul de sac. The five narrow lots on the south side and the three at the intersection would need to become medium or large patio homes.

Christenson said he doesn't like it because of the look of all garage with a side door.

Kuitunen said that it makes sense since Armstrong knows the market, but there are still too many houses.

Roessler said he could support that and would need to take a look at it.

Christenson asked if a wider house could be put on any of these lots. Roessler said that they want to make sure each lot is buildable so that they are not coming back in the future to ask for variances.

Kuitunen, Christenson and Schendel all said they would need to see new plans before making a decision. Nash added that changes recommended by Messner and herself still needed to be addressed as well.

Kuitunen said that the Board is not the only ones that needed to see the new plans, but the public as well. He is not comfortable recommending this without solid data.

**MOTION** by Armstrong to table all three applications—for rezoning, the planned unit development, and preliminary plat—for Hanover Cove in order to address the comments of the City engineer and planner along with changing the flex lots to medium single family homes; changing the narrow patio home lots north of the cul de sac intersection to the intersection at Fifth Street into medium patio home lots; changing lots 29-33 into medium or large patio home lots; keeping the streets at a 32 foot width; providing additional details on the architectural review committee; and having no deviation on garage size, seconded by Kuitunen.

**Motion carried with Christenson dissenting.**

#### **Unfinished Business**

None

#### **New Business**

##### **2019 Meeting Dates and Application Deadlines**

Biren showed the Board the list of meeting dates for 2019 and indicated they needed to decide on a meeting date for May as the regularly scheduled meeting falls on Memorial Day. The Board decided on May 22, 2019. The application deadline will be determined and the list posted on the City website.

#### **Reports**

Please stop in to City Hall to sign time cards for the year.

#### **Adjournment**

**MOTION** by Christenson to adjourn, seconded by Kuitunen.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:41 pm.

#### **ATTEST:**

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Amy L. Biren  
Administrative Assistant