



PLANNING COMMISSION SYNOPSIS

Thursday, June 22, 2023

**CALL TO
ORDER**

Chairperson Rohman called the Planning Commission meeting to order in the City Council Chambers at 6:00 PM.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Paige Rohman, Aubrey Albrecht, Suado Abdi, Phil Koltan, (all in person)

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Nelly Korman, Joanna Goltzman, Jeannie McGovern

STAFF PRESENT: Glen Markegard, Mallory Rickbeil, Michael Centinario, Emily Hestbech, Thomas Ramler-Olson, Nick Johnson, Derly Navarro (all in person)

Chairperson Rohman led the attendees in the reciting of *The Pledge of Allegiance*. Markegard provided an overview of how interested parties could testify remotely for public hearing items.

**ITEM 4
6:58 p.m.**

APPLICANT: City of Bloomington

REQUEST: Discuss Potential Lyndale Avenue Rezoning from B-2 to B-4.

DISCUSSION:

Ramler-Olson provided an overview of the 28 parcels that are under consideration for rezoning within the node areas of Lyndale Avenue near both 86th Street and 98th Street. The current zoning is General Commercial (B-2), which is designed to provide a wide variety of retail and other commercial uses essential to support surrounding neighborhoods. The proposed zoning is Neighborhood Community Commercial (B-4), which is designed to provide neighborhood-scale commercial and residential mixed uses configured in a pedestrian friendly manner. The Lyndale Avenue Suburban Retrofit Plan was approved on April 5, 2021, the guiding principle was to create a compact critical mass of housing, jobs, and services within those designated nodes areas. Staff recognizes that B-2 zoning district is inconsistent with the plan's vision because it has more auto-oriented uses and standards, which is not the desired development pattern. In contrast, B-4 zoning district supports mixed use, dense housing, and walkable urban design. In addition, the city adopted the 98th Street Station Area Plan & Comprehensive Plan in 2019, which both envision more transit supportive development, mixed uses, and higher densities on parcels around the Lyndale-98th Street intersection. There were eight parcels rezoned from B-2 to B-4 at that time in furtherance of the plan. There are three land use categories guiding parcels under consideration: General Business (GB), Community Commercial (CC) and Public (PUB). If the rezoning were to be adopted, the city may want to consider regarding the transit

station parcel at Aldrich and 98th Street from Public (PUD) to something more supportive of the B-4 zoning district. Also, if the rezoning were to be adopted, five sites would become non-conforming due to use, lot characteristics, and/or building design. These legally non-conforming sites could continue to operate but they would not be able to expand their business.

The next steps would be a study session with the City Council, Planning Commission Public Hearing tentatively on August 17th, and City Council public hearing tentatively on September 11th.

Rohman asked how restrictive the legally non-conforming status on those five businesses is.

Markegard stated that Bloomington's non-conforming standard uses the term "Substantially equivalent", so you could tear a non-conforming building down and rebuild it as long as that new tenant space is substantially equivalent to what had been there previously. Expansion is not allowed.

Albrecht asked for the difference between General Business and Community Commercial.

Ramler-Olson provided the descriptions from the Comprehensive Plan. Community Commercial includes all the uses allowed in General Business but adds larger scale service and retail uses.

Abdi stated that this is a city led effort to rezone from B-2 to B-4 and asked what would happen if all property owners were against the rezoning.

Ramler-Olson stated that the rezoning is a plan recommendation that has already been established, but it decision makers would have consider raised concerns if the majority of the property owners were against the rezoning.

Rohman expressed that he believed the city rezoned property against property owner wishes in the past where it has had a clear vision. It is important that replacement is allowed if substantially equivalent, where they can keep operating their business as is.

Koktan asked for the next steps in case property owners are not in favor of this rezoning.

Ramler-Olson stated that staff started public engagement in early May and provided numerous options for the public to provide feedback and express their concerns. Staff has received one email in support of the rezoning. Also, there will be two public hearings, one in August and one in September, and anyone in the public can provide their testimony during the meeting.

Koktan asked what staff is looking from the Planning Commission tonight.

Ramler-Olson stated that staff is just looking for feedback from the Planning Commission.

Koktan expressed this rezoning is a positive step in the right direction, it seems to align with the Lyndale Avenue retrofit but he will reserve his final judgment until the Planning Commission hears from the public.

Rohman stated the city is heading in the right direction and expressed appreciation that staff visited each one of these properties to meet with occupants.

Koktan stated that globally we have done some work along this corridor for transitioning to the new transitional industrial zone and asked if there will be any more rezonings or reguiding coming.

Markegard stated that this would be the last rezoning step outlined in the Lyndale Retrofit. Along Lyndale, the City has had two rounds of B-2 to B-4 rezoning, and the recent Transitional Industrial rezoning, so while there would be other implementation steps, in terms of the proactive rezoning recommended by the plan, the B-2 to B-4 rezonings would be the last.

Koktan stated there were talks in that plan about possible changes to the physical nature of Lyndale itself, such as, the addition of bike lanes or boulevard trees, and other things and he asked where we are in the process.

Johnson stated there is staff working group that is established to continue keeping the momentum going on Lyndale. A good way to think about Lyndale is the public space vs the private space, so these rezoning actions are aligned with the private space and how we reconsider the rules or regulations. Other things that the city could be proactively doing on the private space is trying to secure funding for potentially brownfield or other environmental issues that exists on that area. On the street side, the plan includes a vision at a high level with a lot of changes to the Lyndale Avenue Corridor. The next logical step would be to do a corridor study, and that is something that staff have been working on.

Koktan expressed that he would like to include the Lyndale corridor study in the work plan for 2024. He stated that Lyndale is a priority for him and appreciated that staff is proactively trying to keep the momentum going.