WAYZATA PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 24, 2025

AGENDA ITEM 1. Call to Order

Chair Cameron called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chair Cameron read a prepared statement that outlined multiple options for joining remotely or submitting comments and questions.

Chair Cameron acknowledged City Manager Jeffrey Dahl and invited him to address the Commission.

City Manager Dahl stated that the City would be saying goodbye later this week to City Planner Quarles, as she moved on to a position with another community, and introduced the City's new Community Development Director, Alex Sharpe.

There was a round of applause to welcome Community Development Director Sharpe.

AGENDA ITEM 2. Roll Call

Chair Cameron asked City Planner Quarles to take roll call.

Present at roll call were Commissioners: Plantan, Schwalbe, Severson, Elg, Cameron, VanLoy, and Ankeny. Community Development Director Alex Sharpe, City Planner Valerie Quarles, Planning Consultant Eric Zweber, and City Attorney David Schelzel were also present.

AGENDA ITEM 3. Approval of Agenda

Chair Cameron asked for a motion to approve the agenda for the meeting.

Commissioner Severson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Schwalbe, to approve the March 24, 2025, agenda as presented.

The motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 4. Consent Agenda

a.) Approval of the March 10, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
b.) Adoption of Report and Recommendation of Approval for Fence Variance at 330/355 Waycliffe South and Private Street

Chair Cameron read the items on the consent agenda and asked if any Commissioner wished to pull an item for further discussion.

Hearing no such request, Chair Cameron asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Commissioner Elg made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Schwalbe, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

The motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 5. Public Hearing Items

a) Consider Development Application for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) Concept and General Plans, a PUD Zoning District Amendment, a Shoreland Residential PUD/Conditional Use Permit (CUP), a Shoreland Impact Plan (SIP), and Design Review for 200 Lake Street E

Community Development Director Sharpe gave an overview of the Application, including the zoning map, 2040 Comprehensive Plan land use guidance, and existing conditions for 200 Lake Street East.

City Planner Quarles gave an overview of the details of the project and the development application requests for approval of Planned Unit Development (PUD) Concept and General Plans, a PUD Zoning District Amendment, a Shoreland Residential PUD/Conditional Use Permit (CUP), a Shoreland Impact Plan (SIP), and Design Standards deviations for 200 Lake Street E. She reviewed the proposed site and floor plans, renderings, elevations, open space, refurbishment of East Mini-Park, West Green Space, building height, housing density, parking, loading/deliveries, interior parking, tree preservation, and highlighted details within each request what things the Commission should consider in making a recommendation. She reviewed the notification process to the public, and explained that no public comments had been received prior to the publishing of the meeting packet, though the City had received a few since then. She noted that the applicant had held a neighborhood meeting which had 15 people in attendance.

At the conclusion of staff's presentation, Chair Cameron asked if the Commission had any questions for Staff.

Commissioner Elg asked why the massing break area between cores A1 and A2 would not have a view of the lake.

Ms. Quarles stated that her understanding was that it was due to a combination of the grading in that area and the Boatworks building.

Planning Consultant Zweber stated that was correct, and noted that the height of the railroad berm prevents any views from the street at that point.

Commissioner Elg stated that the views must be measured from the street, which meant that it did not take into consideration anyone who may be across Lake Street, for example, living on the second floor of a building.

Mr. Zweber explained that was not how the code reads.

Commissioner Schwalbe stated that she could understand people who previously had a view to continue to have a view with the massing breaks, but if it was only the first floor that was open, there were other things to take into consideration. She stated that for the people on the other side of the street, there were also sky views, sunrise, sunset, stars, and all of that which would be lost if there was only a small opening. She asked if Planning Consultant Zweber was saying that the Planning Commission should not take those things into consideration.

Mr. Zweber clarified that was not what he was saying, and explained that the measurement for the required massing break was from the street, not multiple stories up across the street. He stated that all the things mentioned by Commissioner Schwalbe were contemplated in the figure that was in the Design Guidelines, which shows the opening where there is a view being complete through the entire building.

Commissioner Schwalbe stated that if someone had property across the street, but not a place that had a view of the water, they cannot take into consideration that there would now be no sky view or other things that come along with sky watching.

Mr. Zweber stated that the City Code is what says the view for massing breaks was measured from the street level.

Commissioner Schwalbe asked if the Planning Commission could take those things into consideration, if they wanted to.

Mr. Zweber explained that at the current meeting, they could not, because the view from the street is the way the City Code is worded today. He noted that at a future meeting, they could bring those things up if they wanted to make some code amendments, but reiterated that they were working with the City Code as it existed today.

Commissioner Severson asked about the unit counts for the adjacent properties, such as Ventana, Wayzata Blu, and Meyer Place.

Mr. Zweber stated that he would have to look up that information for exact numbers but believed that Ventana was in the upper 20s. He noted that the adjacent properties were configured differently, and noted that the subject property went the entire distance from Ferndale to Berry.

Chair Cameron asked about the total façade length of the proposed structure.

Mr. Zweber stated that the total building footprint was about 760 feet long, but on the first floor, where there were pedestrian connections, none of the cores are wider than 150 feet each.

Chair Cameron asked if all the plaza/walkways were 25 feet wide or wider.

Mr. Zweber stated that he believed the one between cores 5 and 6, which has 2-way parking, may be a little wider, but the others are exactly 25 feet wide.

Ms. Quarles noted that the proposed site and floor plans slide had been mislabeled, and should read 1, 2, 3, and not grade-level, first floor, and second floor.

Commissioner Severson stated that the slide that said grade-level floor, was actually the first level.

Ms. Quarles stated that was correct.

Commissioner Severson noted that on the far west depiction it stated surface parking lot, and asked if that meant that there was no building structure in that location.

Mr. Zweber stated that basically, the exterior walls are there, but there was not heated or temperature-controlled space. From the façade, the first floor would look like the other first floors.

Commissioner Severson asked if that parking was intended for the commercial property.

Mr. Zweber confirmed that was the intent, and explained that the applicant was talking about doing secure residential parking in the lower level. He stated that this surface level parking was from listening to the feedback on the last application for this parcel, because people may get confused that they had to go to the underground parking, and this gives them another opportunity.

Commissioner Severson noted that the east end has the entrance for the underground parking.

Mr. Zweber stated that was correct and stated that within the first core, there was a storefront, so when you were on the sidewalk in front of A1, there would be a door to enter that core and explained that the two levels intermingled.

Commissioner Ankeny referenced the massing breaks, and asked if the applicant was asking for a deviation from the City Code.

Mr. Zweber noted that, technically, the applicant does not believe that they need a deviation for the massing break because they felt that they met the applicable City Code standard, but staff does not believe that they met that City Code standard.

There being no further questions for staff, Chair Cameron invited the applicant to address the Commission.

Curt Fretham, Lakewest Development, 14525 Highway 7, Minnetonka, thanked the City for considering their request for this development, and introduced Kelsey Thompson and Cody Dietrich from Lakewest Development to walk through details of their application.

Kelsey Thompson, Lakewest Development, stated that she had worked with the City over the last 5 years, listening to feedback from the Commission, City Council, and the community. She stated that they feel now is the right time to develop this site. She outlined some of the benefits of their plans, including improving the safety of the site and the community. She shared photos of some of the vandalism that had taken place inside the building, which has left it unrepairable. She explained that Lakewest Development felt that the solution to this issue was to revitalize a neglected space in the City and work to create a new landmark. She shared renderings of their plans and explained that it was designed to be an extension of Wayzata lifestyle which thoughtfully compliments and enhances the experiences that the residents of the community cherish. She noted that another benefit to their plans was the environmental clean-up that would take place with their redevelopment due to the past use of the property as a lumber yard and for oil tank storage. She stated that they felt another benefit of the project was the charming architecture and design that they had planned, and referenced the second floor setbacks and the rotunda. She gave an overview of some examples of the walkability and connectivity of their proposed plans. She reviewed details of the new public parks and open green space that were planned on each end of the development, and gave an overview of the opportunity for interactive public art within the development. She shared some features of the parking that exceeded the City's parking requirements, which would allow for flexibility in the future. She explained that more details of the project were available at www.wayzatalandmark.com.

Cody Dietrich, Lakewest Development, referenced a point raised by Commissioner Severson, and stated that the same street frontage along Lake Street on the north side would have about 102 units with 60,000 square feet of commercial. He noted that the last iteration of their plans was close, and outlined some of the design deviations and how they planned to address some of the requests and concerns that were raised last time. He shared details about the street trees, the lake views through massing breaks, compared the site lines from the existing views and their proposed massing breaks. He explained that their plans do not require rezoning, and noted that they felt that they had fulfilled all the ancillary requests made by the City for things like collaboration with the railroad, shortening the building, and providing more open space.

At the conclusion of the applicant's presentation, Chair Cameron asked if the Commission had any questions for the applicant.

Commissioner Elg commended the applicants for taking the feedback they had received from past applications and addressing in the new application many of the issues that were raised. He stated that he felt their passion for getting this project going, and shared that he found their design attractive. He noted however that the last plan they had presented had massing breaks between every building core that was proposed above street level, and now they were only proposing them on the first floor. He asked if they could share the rationale for that choice because he felt the massing breaks on the last version of the plans were beautiful. He stated that he felt the choice to leave them out with this application reduced some of the attractiveness of the project because it now looks massive, where he felt it looked more quaint and appropriate for the Wayzata streetscape in the previous version. He noted that he felt it looked like a big, long building, particularly from the lakeside, which he felt was not attractive.

Mr. Fretham stated that there was a lot of push and take, and balance in the project. He stated that they whacked a big chunk of the Core A1 off on the east end to provide the semi-truck turnaround space, as well as views to the neighbors across the street as a way to attempt to be neighborly, which meant they gave up about $10 million in revenue. He stated that the changes referred to by Commissioner Elg were how they attempted to get some of that revenue back. He noted that they had also cut the first floor out of the 6th building on the east end, so they looked at ways that the proposed massing breaks could be available for year-round use. He explained that it was a combination of those things that resulted in the changes to the proposed massing breaks.

Ms. Thompson stated that the design of the viewing plazas is recessed, so when you look down the street you wouldn't even know they were there. She noted that the City's Design Standards do a good job of designing a building that doesn't look as massive. She stated that their year-round massing break spaces would be available for the public, which they felt would be unique and special for the City.

Commissioner Severson asked the applicant to elaborate on the number of curb cuts and drive lanes.

Mr. Dietrich explained that currently there are 4 curb cuts and accesses to the property that, with their plans, would be reduced to 3.

Commissioner Severson stated that right now there was a sidewalk immediately in front of the building and the bike lane/mixed use lane, and asked if they would both stay.

Mr. Dietrich stated that their goal was for both the sidewalks and bike lanes to remain in front.

Commissioner Schwalbe asked to see a rendering of what this building would look like from the water. She stated that from the water, with just the short one-story massing breaks, it looks like one very long white building. She explained that her concern was that it did not really feel like a small town or charming to her. She stated that she felt that if the massing breaks went all the way through the three stories, it would look less like a large block of one thing after another. She emphasized that how this building looked from the water was important. She clarified that if at least 2 or 3 of the massing breaks were open all the way up through the building she felt it would be more charming and less industrial looking.

Mr. Dietrich suggested that Commissioner Schwalbe focus on the rendering above the one she referenced, that included some trees.

Chair Cameron asked if there would be a public walkway along the backside of the entire building.

Mr. Dietrich stated that there would be a public walkway along portions of the backside of the building, for example, patio spaces for the commercial spaces, but noted that the residential spaces would be private patios.

Commissioner Severson stated that meant that there would not be a public walkway for the whole way.

Mr. Fretham stated that it will depend on the commercial users because if they had an office use, they may not want someone coming and knocking on their door looking for directions, and may also want to utilize that space as part of their business.

Chair Cameron clarified that someone would not be able to walk all the way from the east end to the west end ono the back of the building.

Mr. Fretham confirmed that was not what they were planning.

Commissioner Schwalbe stated that the applicant had made some of the space that was commercial space in the previous application into condos on the first floor, and asked if more would go on the 2nd and 3rd floors where the massing breaks used to be located.

Mr. Fretham answered that they had removed condos on the east end because they shortened the building, but was not sure of the actual breakdown of exactly where those units ended up going.

Mr. Dietrich stated that the commercial space was also cut in half.

Commissioner Schwalbe asked how many units had been added there.

Mr. Dietrich stated that it was 4 in each core, which meant 8 units on each floor.

Commissioner VanLoy stated that, as Commissioner Schwalbe shared, he also felt that from the water, it looked like a singular white building. He stated that he realized that the applicant was not bound by the City's front façade design standards on that side because it wasn't facing the City street but asked if they had considered them in order to make it look and feel like Wayzata from the water as well as the street.

Mr. Fretham stated that their proposal met the City's design standards on all sides, and noted that they spent a lot on the front because you really don't see the backside. He clarified that it was important that the backside look good, but they did not design it to meet the City's design standards for public rights-of-way.

Commissioner Ankeny asked for the length of the new building being proposed, versus the existing building that cannot be seen from the lake.

Mr. Fretham stated that he believed it was 760 feet long.

Mr. Dietrich stated that the existing building was somewhere between 270-300 feet long.

Mr. Fretham stated that someone had asked earlier about the density across the street and noted that in the same stretch across the street, there were 102 residential units and 60,000 square feet of commercial space. He stated that their plans are half of that with 50 resident units and 20,000 square feet of commercial space, which was one-third of the intensity across the street.

Commissioner VanLoy stated that he walked his dog by the building and has seen it falling apart, and has also seen how treacherous the sidewalk can be during the winter months. He stated that he was concerned that a building with a 2nd and 3rd story would block more of the sunlight, and meant that the sidewalk there would continue to be treacherous. He asked if the applicant had given consideration to the sidewalk maintenance issue in order to better serve the public.

Mr. Fretham stated that they have considered that, and that the sun on the street side would be the same on the north or the south. He stated that from a shadow standpoint, there would not be much effect.

Commissioner VanLoy stated that there would be shadows toward the north, which was why people wanted to have southern facing homes and driveways, and noted that he felt it would definitely be effected by the 2nd and 3rd stories.

Mr. Dietrich explained that they would have a full snow chloride management plan in place in order to handle the salting.

Commissioner Elg asked to see the image that showed the massing breaks, and noted that he appreciated the rationale the applicant had provided related to their choice to eliminate the massing breaks on the 2nd and 3rd floors. He referenced the image within the Design Standards that depicted the massing break that was clearly shown to be through the entire build and not just one level. He asked how the applicant had read through this information and come to the conclusion that what they were requesting would not be considered a deviation and was in alignment with the Design Standards. He stated that when he read this section, he felt it was pretty clear that the requirement was for significant massing breaks through the entire building that respond to the small-scale character of the City. He felt a big long massive thing did not give the appearance of small-scale character. He explained that he understood the economics that had been mentioned by the applicant, but did not understand their conclusions when it came to the Design Standards requirements.

Mr. Fretham stated that from a scale standpoint, it can be measured in a lot of ways, such as density, open space, or the number of parking stalls. He stated that their proposal had more parking stalls and are proposing 50% open space rather than 30%, so he felt that they checked many of those boxes. He noted that staff had stated that 3 of the massing breaks meet the City's criteria, and the 2 that are called out on page 6 of the staff report were because they were seeking a deviation for not providing a view to the lake. He stated that they were providing a view to the lake, and that it was basic math because the eye level is at 945 and the lake is at 928m, meaning there was 20 feet of elevation difference. He stated that they felt that their plans met the intent of the ordinance. He noted that if the Commission was asking for a view of the sky, he would remind them that this was not what the ordinance stated.

Commissioner VanLoy stated that the 2 massing breaks he was referencing show the view once you are inside the covered viewing plaza, and asked if they had renderings of what it would look like from the sidewalk in those locations.

Mr. Dietrich stated that they had included one in their presentation and acknowledged that they could have done a better job of sharing that in advance with staff. He explained that there were 2 ways to have a significant massing break, the mid-block connection or a massing void and noted that from that standpoint, the code supports their proposal because they are mid-block connections.

Mr. Fretham asked the City to tell them how they were not providing a view of the lake with what they were proposing.

There being no additional questions from the Commission for the applicant, Chair Cameron opened the public hearing on the application at 7:48 pm.

Darren Knight, 201 Lake St. E., explained that he was a lawyer and a real estate broker in Wayzata and had come before the Commission in the past on behalf of his client, the Zitzloff family. He noted that their Westway LLC was the condominium development immediately across the street from this property. He stated that they have a lot of respect for Mr. Fretham and his group, and believe that they should be able to develop something in this location, but this was a very large building. He stated that they believe that there should be massing breaks from the street level to the sky, which was the depiction pointed out earlier within the City Code. He stated that they believe that all 5 massing breaks of the proposed building should be that way, and noted that he disagreed with the City staff because he felt that the lake could probably be seen from all of those spots. He reiterated that they believe that there should be 5 openings from the street level to the sky which was their main disagreement with what was being proposed. He acknowledged that the applicant had put in a lot of hard work, but they also believed the massing breaks were crucial for the public at large, in addition to their building. He stated that he felt that they should also have more setbacks, and would ask that the same rules to apply to this applicant as had applied to their building across the street. He noted that they did not feel that it was an undue burden on the developer to include the 5 massing breaks all the way to the sky. He explained that they may have to slightly reduce the size of the condos, but he felt that they would still come out okay monetarily. He noted that if they did a proper setback on the west side of the building, they would also be able to add more trees, even though this was a narrow parcel.

Jeff Zitzloff, 201 Lake St. E. stated that overall they were supportive of the plans and felt that they had done a great job capturing the charm aspect of Wayzata. He stated that they were not against the project but shared concerns about the view, especially if they were higher than the street view.

Mr. Knight noted that he had sent a detailed letter to the City that he assumed they had seen, and reiterated that what they were proposing was a massive building and the massing breaks would be very important. He stated that if the City allowed this, there will be a dark, colder side of the street.

Kevin Sullivan, introduced Michelle White and explained that he represented the Sons of the American Revolution, and Ms. White represented the Daughters of the American Revolution. He noted that they, in conjunction with the Children of the American Revolution, are the ones who put on the Flying Pancake Breakfast. He explained that the reason they were here today was that in 2026, it will be the 250th anniversary of the United States of America and the signing of the Declaration of Independence. He stated that their groups, on a national level, were looking to put in beautification pieces within each State, and their groups have decided that the best place to do

it in the entire State was in Wayzata because of the support the City had given them with their Flying Pancake Breakfast. He stated that they have been working with City Manager Dahl on possibly having something at the Union Depot spot, and Mr. Dahl had also indicated that there was a new and exciting development that was being planned. He stated that they have some ideas for beautification, for example, 250 commemorative benches, or a flat pole with a bicentennial Betsy Ross flag on it, or some pavers. He stated that he felt that incorporating those elements within the green space of this project would be fantastic for the City. He noted that they were here to express their support of the project, the community, and hoped that the discussion would move this project ahead so they could work out a way to incorporate their beautification efforts into the green space.

Ms. White stated that their chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution was headquartered in Wayzata. She explained that they were a women's service organization and focuses on education, historic preservation, and patriotism. She stated that the annual Flying Pancake Breakfast was always a big draw to the community and noted that last year they had over 1,000 people. She noted that their interest was in the east side of this development, with the park area and stated that they felt that they would be able to put something meaningful in that location. She explained that their goal would be to place this there by July 4, 2026, and noted that they would love to work with the City's new Commission related to public art.

Chair Cameron asked staff if there were any persons online wishing to speak. Mr. Sharpe stated that there were no people who called in to the meeting that have asked to speak at the public hearing.

There being no one else wishing to provide additional comment on the application, Chair Cameron closed the public hearing at 8:59 pm.

Chair Cameron asked the Commission to share their questions and feedback on the application.

Commissioner VanLoy reiterated that he was trying to get a view from the street for the 2 massing breaks that have been discussed. He stated that all of the views he recalls seeing were shown from inside the viewing plaza and not from the street. He noted that there appeared to be ramps to be able to go up into the viewing plazas and explained that he was trying to understand if, from the street, there would be much of a view, or if they would have to go up the ramps in order to get the view.

Ms. Thompson referenced a slide from their presentation that showed the view from the street that they pulled from the architect's 3D model.

Commissioner VanLoy asked which cores were represented in the renderings.

Ms. Thompson stated that she believed it was between cores 3 and 4. She noted that they also have the same rendering for the break between cores 2 and 3 as well, but it was not put into the presentation.

Commissioner Plantan asked about the height of the ceiling of the plaza.

Ms. Thompson stated that it was 25 feet wide and 10 feet tall.

Commissioner Schwalbe stated that it appeared that there was a difference of opinion regarding the Design Standards and how they applied to the massing breaks.

Mr. Zweber referenced the document submitted by Lowell Zitzloff that provided the text of this particular section. He noted that in this text, there are A.1. and A.2., which meant that there were two sections of the code. He explained that A.1. applies anywhere in the City and they have the choice of either a massing void with a maximum width of 25 feet above the ground floor extending through the depth of the building, which was what the Zitzloff had done for 201 Lake Street E, or a publicly accessible mid-block pedestrian connection through the building with a clear view, which is what the applicant was proposing. He stated that the City agreed that the applicant had provided a mid-block connection. Mr. Zweber then explained that A.2 applies to development between Lake Street and the shoreline, which requires a significant massing break to provide views of the Lake. He explained that the applicants were arguing that A.1. can be A.2. He referenced the City's Design Guidelines, where it illustrates the intent with an image that indicates Lake Minnetonka views of the lake. He clarified that the image shown was an image of what the intent was for the A.2. standard, and the applicant was arguing that they could do something else. He stated that a normal human view involves looking up and down, and the applicant was essentially providing a view that is like looking through binoculars because it limits what would naturally be the human view. He explained that the image he referenced earlier would match the human view. He stated that staff felt that the applicants were interpreting the City Code differently than City staff was. He clarified that City staff felt the City Code says that the massing break should be open the entire height of the building, but noted that would only be where there were views of the Lake.

Commissioner Elg suggested that he felt the other areas may not have a view from the street level, but they would certainly have a view from across the street on the 2nd floor. He noted that it did not say in A.2. that it must provide a lake view at street level.

Mr. Zweber stated that the handbook does say that, and noted that they had updated the City Code to match the handbook.

City Attorney Schelzel stated that he appreciated the discussion that the Commission had about the different interpretations of the Code, but his advice for tonight was to apply City staff's interpretation because that was the City's position.

Commissioner Schwalbe stated that, all in all, the building was huge, but also gorgeous, and she felt it was an improvement over what was currently there. She stated that she felt their proposal had a lot of positive things and if they could somehow come to an agreement that just those two massing breaks have to be three stories tall, she thinks that would be a wonderful solution. She reiterated that what they were proposing was quite pretty, but having those breaks would help break up the building from the lake side.

Commissioner Elg stated that he would agree, and a building of this length that has one façade from end to end doesn't really fit with the Design Standards, which talks about a façade that

responds to the small scale character of Wayzata. He stated that he felt what was proposed did not meet that criteria without having those massing breaks, and noted that it also says that it should be a minimum width of 25 feet located above the ground floor and questioned if 'above' meant for 10 feet or as far as the eye can see. He stated that he agreed with Mr. Zweber that people don't just look at whatever the 97-degree radius would be. He noted that he also agreed with the point raised by Commissioner VanLoy about the sidewalk concerns because there wouldn't be any sun breaking through the building during the winter months, and expressed concern that this would make the area almost cavernous for a long stretch. He clarified that he felt staff was correct in their assessment of the two massing breaks, and he felt it would be a reasonable compromise to incorporate them into the design. He stated that like the other developer had stated during the public hearing, he also felt that all 5 massing breaks should be all the way through because of how people look at things, which was not just straight ahead, and noted that he did not believe it was just about the view of the lake.

Chair Cameron suggested that the Commission review the 'questions to consider' that were put together by Ms. Quarles.

Commissioner Plantan stated that when the Commission reviews a PUD, they need to consider that well-planned PUDs can attract investment and new residents because those things contribute to the growth and vitality of the community. She stated that she felt this project met the requirements for the PUD and zoning amendment. She stated that the plan was compliant with the Comprehensive Plan and meets performance standards, but she stated that she does have concerns about the lakeside façade because it was one long, continuous building. She stated that she would have loved to have seen the attention to detail that was put on the Lake Street façade also used on the lakeside.

Commissioner Severson stated that she had a question about the back of the building, and noted that her understanding was that what was presented was in compliance and asked if the Commission could even consider it.

Mr. Schelzel stated that the back of the building was compliant with the Design Standards that are applicable to the building, but whether the building met other criteria that would fall under a PUD approval request would be something the Commission could weigh and consider.

Chair Cameron stated that they've talked about small-town, charming, and having character, and the back of this building, when viewed from the lake in its entirety, lacks some of those features. He stated that what the applicant is proposing is a giant building, especially when viewed from the lake. He stated that he agreed with the comments shared by Commissioners Elg and Plantan regarding the view from the front, and that the ground to sky massing breaks would be more of a portal, which would help break things up a bit from both the front and the back of the building. He added that it would also give the building a bit more charm and not make it feel like 'big city' development.

Commissioner Severson noted that she did like the idea of some of the spaces being covered, and felt what they had proposed was creative for yearlong use.

Chair Cameron noted that considerations of the PUD concept plan and the general plan would end up being fairly similar, and he asked if the Commission had any comments on those approval requests.

Commissioner Schwalbe stated that she felt it hit all the points and was creative, had high standards, had a beautiful design, but it was large. She noted that she felt that this would definitely make that end of town a more desirable place to be, to walk, and to spend time.

Commissioner Plantan stated that she agreed, and noted that this was a creative use of land with mixed use versus a strict application that they may have if it were traditional zoning and not a PUD. She reiterated that she felt this was in harmony with the Comprehensive Plan, and also exceeded the open and public space requirements.

Chair Cameron stated that he also loved the creative use of the land, and felt the applicant had done a nice job of maximizing the footprint of what they have.

Commissioner VanLoy reiterated his concern about the possible detrimental effects of this project on the sidewalk with shadows and a lack of sunshine. He stated that he felt it would be very treacherous and would like to see the developer heat the sidewalk. He noted that he agreed with the points that had already been made and felt, besides the sidewalk concerns he had, this was a very thoughtful and gorgeous view. He stated that the considerations around the massing breaks are all in line in terms of the proposed structure as it was laid out in point 3. He noted that he felt the applicant had done a great job addressing stormwater runoff in comparison to what is there today.

Chair Cameron stated that there had not been any concerns raised about the stormwater plans and shoreland requests, and felt that their impervious surfaces plans were in line with other things in the area. He suggested that the Commission move on to consider their request for massing break deviations, and noted that they have discussed this item quite a bit already. He moved the discussion onto the request for a deviation for street tree spacing. He explained that he appreciated the applicant's approach, and felt that it was much better not to have trees on the west end because if they did, he felt it was inevitable that someone would end up running into a tree with their bike. He noted that he felt having trees on the west end may end up becoming more of a hazard than a benefit.

Commissioner Severson stated that she agreed because there is such a tight space between the sidewalk and the building, but believed that would be more than made up for with the 2 parks on the ends as well as the other trees on the property. She clarified that she would rather not have a line of trees right along the sidewalk there.

Commissioner VanLoy stated that, as was mentioned during the public hearing by the other developer, it could get shrunk down in order to make room, but was not sure that was something the City needed to ask them to do with all the other concessions. He explained that he would be fine with the requested tree spacing deviation, given all the other greenspace work that the applicant had done.

Commissioner Severson asked if the applicant had asked for a setback deviation.

Ms. Quarles stated that the applicant was not asking for a setback deviation.

Chair Cameron asked staff if they wanted them to make recommendations on each request individually or with one overall motion.

Mr. Schelzel stated that staff would prefer the Commission ended up with one overall motion and noted that through their discussion, he heard the most concerns raised about the design deviation for the massing breaks. He suggested that they may want to have additional discussions on that item before moving ahead with a motion.

Commissioner Severson asked if the Commission could recommend approval with removal of the massing break deviation, or if staff felt that the Commission should recommend denial based on their concerns related to the massing breaks.

Mr. Schelzel stated that in one respect, the way the applicant handled the massing breaks for which they needed the deviation makes them baked into the PUD concept plan and the PUD general plan. He noted, however, that the Commission's job was to make a recommendation to the City Council on all of the requests in the application. He stated that the Council would be well-served if the Commission were to point out to them that they liked the PUD concept, and the general plan, and felt that it met the criteria and standards of approval, with the exception of the massing break deviation that they have requested. He stated that the Commission could go ahead and recommend approval of those items if the plans were modified to be compliant with the massing breaks.

Chair Cameron stated that he felt that was the direction that the Commission had been leaning.

Commissioner Severson stated that the only issue she saw with their proposal was the massing break deviation request because she felt everything else was lovely.

Commissioner Schwalbe noted that they were only talking about 2 of the massing breaks becoming 3 stories high.

Chair Cameron stated that he felt the Commission could include conditions in their recommendation.

Commissioner Schwalbe asked if Commissioner Plantan wanted full massing breaks for all 5.

Commissioner Plantan stated that she would just recommend denial of the design deviation for the massing breaks.

Commissioner Severson stated that she felt that was an interesting point, and asked if they were talking about just 2 of the massing breaks or all 5 of them.

Commissioner Elg stated that he was ready to make a motion that excluded the massing break design deviation between A2 and A3 and A3 and A4.

Commissioner Severson asked if that meant Commissioner Elg was okay with the other 3 massing breaks as they have been proposed.

Commissioner Elg stated that was correct.

Commissioner Schwalbe stated that she liked that motion.

There being no further discussion, Chair Cameron asked for a motion on the application.

Commissioner Elg made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Schwalbe, to direct staff to prepare a draft Planning Commission Report and Recommendation with appropriate findings reflecting a recommending approval of the requests for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) Concept and General Plans, a PUD Zoning District Amendment, a Shoreland Residential PUD/Conditional Use Permit (CUP), a Shoreland Impact Plan (SIP), and Design Deviations for 200 Lake Street E, excluding the massing break design deviation between A2 and A3 and A3 and A4, for review and adoption at the next Planning Commission meeting.

Mr. Schelzel offered a friendly amendment that the motion be that their recommendation of approval for the PUD concept and general plans, and rezoning be conditional on the massing break portion of the plans and the proposed amendment becoming fully compliant with the Design Standards.

Commissioners Elg and Schwalbe accepted the friendly amendment as offered by Mr. Schelzel.

Chair Cameron asked for discussion of the motion.

The Commission discussed the possibility of requiring 3-story massing breaks for all 5, and the concern over lack of small-town charm.

Mr. Schelzel noted that concerns about small-town charm would go to the factors considered with the PUD and whether it was compliant with the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that was a legislative decision they have on whether or not to recommend approval of the PUD requests. He reminded the Commission that there was a motion on the table so they could call the question and vote on it, which meant if it passed, that would be the end of the discussion. He stated that they could also withdraw the current motion and entertain a different motion that had a different recommendation. He suggested that the Commission take a roll call vote on this motion first, and allow the members to explain the rationale behind their votes, if so desired.

Following a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Cameron noted that the motion had passed, and the draft Planning Report and Recommendation on the application would be on the consent agenda at the Commission's next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 6. Other Items:

a) Review of Development Activities

Mr. Zweber stated that the Wells Fargo project was still moving along. He noted that equipment had also arrived at 150 Broadway and had installed about one-half of the foundation and walls should start being installed soon. He stated that the City was still working with the Carisch family on the former Caribou location on issuing a building permit.

b) Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Mr. Zweber stated that the next meeting would be on April 7, 2025, where they will consider a private communications tower for Xcel Energy, and on April 21, 2025, a CUP amendment and design deviation from The Retreat for removal and reconstruction on a wing of their facility.

Commissioner Schwalbe noted that she would be unable to attend the meeting on April 7, 2025.

Commissioner Severson asked if staff had any updates on the cannabis distributor issue.

Mr. Zweber stated that the City has gotten inquiries from 2 different people, but they were in the process of actually trying to find a space to lease.

Chair Cameron stated that he wanted to take a moment before they adjourn to publicly recognize Ms. Quarles for her contributions to the City, and all the work she had done on their behalf. He stated that it had truly been a pleasure working with her, and wanted her to know that he wished her the best of luck on her move to the City of St. Paul.

Ms. Quarles thanked Chair Cameron and stated that the Planning Commission had been a great group to work with over the years.

There was a round of applause for Ms. Quarles.

AGENDA ITEM 7. Adjournment.

There being no further business on the agenda, Chair Cameron asked for a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Severson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Schwalbe, to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting.

The motion carried unanimously.

The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kayla Atkins Rokosz
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.