

BRAINERD PLANNING COMMISSION

Wednesday, November 13, 2013

6:00 p.m.

City Hall Council Chambers

1. Call to Order
2. Approval/Amendment of Agenda
3. Approval of minutes of the regular meeting of October 9, 2013
4. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Trail Planning
5. OLD BUSINESS
 - a. Small House and Infill Development
 - b. Methadone Clinics
 - c. Community Centers
6. Commissioners' Questions/Comments
7. City Planner Report
8. Adjournment

Any individual needing special accommodations please call 218/828-2309

PLANNING COMMISSION
Wednesday, October 9, 2013

Chairman Mike Jay called the meeting of the Brainerd Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Noted present were Commissioners Pritschet, Plantenberg, Hayden, Jay, Lambert, Norwood, and Cole. No one was noted absent. Also present was City Planner Ostgarden.

#2 Approval/Amendment of Agenda

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS LAMBERT AND PLANTENBERG, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

#3 Approve minutes of the regular meeting and workshop of September 11, 2013

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS NORWOOD AND HAYDEN, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2013.

#4 NEW BUSINESS

a. Public Hearing – Text Amendment – Add to the Zoning Ordinance: “Community Center” Definition and Community Center as a Conditional Use Permit in Residential Zoning Districts

City Planner Ostgarden presented a brief overview of permitted uses, interim uses, and conditional uses in residential districts, the amendment procedures for amending the zoning ordinance, and the conditional use permit process with the requirements for submittal and approval process.

City Planner Ostgarden reminded everyone this discussion is focused on community centers around the City and is not specific to Whittier. He understands there are people here to speak about Whittier, but this discussion is to add the community center definition to the Zoning Ordinance along with added a community center as a conditional use in residential zoning districts.

The Public Hearing was opened at 6:20 p.m.

Commissioner Jay noted there have been letters and emails received regarding community centers and the Whittier building.

Mr. Dirk VanDerwerker, 604 North 5th Street, stated he has submitted a letter to the Commission regarding the Whittier building and would like to state that the Commission’s charge shall be to consider possible adverse effects to any amendments, so your job is to look at adverse effects that changes to the zoning ordinance will make. He stated this community center will have tremendous impacts on residential districts throughout the city. He feels it will have negative impact, possibly lower property values, and destroy ones enjoyment of one’s home.

The Public Hearing was closed at 6:24 p.m.

City Planner Ostgarden stated in the response to the email/statement from Mr. VanDerwerker specially his statement on looking at the adverse effects, in the discussions the Commission has had there has been considerable discussion on the adverse effects community centers could possibly have.

The Commission held discussion on the community center definition, the adverse effects on residential districts, and the possible need to make some changes to the definition.

Commissioner Jay stated the Commission agreed on this definition at the September meeting and to move forward with the public hearing. He stated the specifics and conditions for each community center will be done when conditional use permit applications are brought forth and shouldn't be done through the definition.

MOTION AND SECONDED BY PLANTENBERG AND HAYDEN, DULY CARRIED, TO RECOMMEND AMENDING SECTION 515-2-2: DEFINITIONS OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO ADD "COMMUNITY CENTER".

City Planner Ostgarden noted community centers are being added to the list of conditional uses in residential zones. He stated this does not need to be done to commercial districts as community centers are already allowed in commercial districts.

The public hearing was reopened at 6:50 p.m.

Ms. Elizabeth Steward, 317 Bluff Avenue, stated she has a concern if there are locations already available in commercial districts for community centers (where they are allowed) why it is necessary to add them to residential districts. She stated she feels it is too broad and could potentially be putting residential districts at risk.

Mr. Dirk VanDerwerker, 604 North 5th Street, submitted some additional comments from residents to the Commission. He stated he also had concerns with the hours listed. He stated he has concerns that any residential structure could become a community center or several single family structures could be torn down to build a community center. He stated within a B-1 District, sales are not allowed, but this language will allow sales in a residential district. He stated it is important for the Commission to understand the purpose of a public hearing is to hear the voices and concerns of the public and to use those in your deliberations and not to consider those comments.

Ms. Margaret Tiplady, 509 Holly Street, stated she is concerned with additional traffic. She stated Brainerd has problems already with deteriorating property values.

Ms. Kathleen Hermerding, 116 Juniper Street, stated she also has concerns with the hours and noted there is a curfew of 10:00 p.m. during the week and 11:00 p.m. on the weekends. She would recommend a change with that along with the other comments she submitted via email.

City Planner Ostgarden noted letters were received from Glenn and Diane Resch opposing the amendment and Charles and Mary Benson also opposed to the amendment.

The public hearing was closed at 6:59 p.m.

Discussion was held regarding hours and potential changes.

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS PRITSCHET AND NORWOOD, DULY CARRIED, TO AMEND THE PUBLIC HOURS TO 7:00 A.M. TO 10:00 P.M. THAT COMMUNITY CENTERS ARE SUBJECT TO A CONDITIONAL USE.

Commissioner Plantenberg stated she would like to see 9:00 p.m. on weeknights and 10:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.

Commissioner Hayden stated she agreed with a different time for weekdays versus weekends.

Commissioner Cole stated the hours should be 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. all week and there should be allowance for specific events to request a variance from those hours.

Commissioner Norwood stated he has concerns with merchandise sales within residential districts and what defines merchandise sales.

Commissioner Jay stated this was discussed at length previously and the majority of the Commission agreed to allow merchandise sales.

Commissioner Cole asked if there should be differences in any of the activities between the residential districts.

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER NORWOOD TO REMOVE MERCHANDISE SALES FROM THE CONDITIONAL USE FOR COMMUNITY CENTERS. MOTION FAILED DUE TO LACK OF A SECOND.

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS PLANTENBERG AND PRITSCHET TO ACCEPT THE FOUR ITEMS A COMMUNITY CENTER WOULD BE SUBJECT TO WITHIN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS. COMMISSIONER NORWOOD OPPOSED.

City Planner Ostgarden stated in the Comprehensive Plan, one of the goals and strategies to be met is Land Use Goal #5 - support the development that enhances community character and identity, item #4 – support the redevelopment of vacant and abandoned sites within the urban core. He stated that is what has been adopted as one of the policies and guiding principles. We have an abandoned site and a proposed reuse of the abandoned site.

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS HAYDEN AND PLANTENBERG TO RECOMMEND AMENDING SECTIONS 515-54-5, 515-55-5, 515-56-5, 515-57-5: CONDITIONAL USES, TO ALLOW COMMUNITY CENTERS IN THESE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS SUBJECT AS A CONDITIONAL USE TO THE FOLLOWING: 1) NO INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATION OR ACTIVITY EXTERIOR ENTRANCES, 2) PUBLIC HOURS ARE LIMITED TO 7:00 A.M. TO 10:00 P.M., 3) NO EXTERIOR ORGANIZATION OR ACTIVITY SIGNS, 4) MERCHANDISE SALES PERMITTED FOR NON-PROFIT AND/OR NOT-FOR-PROFIT AGENCIES. COMMISSIONER NORWOOD OPPOSED.

Commissioner Plantenberg stated as a community anytime we can have something brings us together and gives us a chance to know each other and partake in things together that is a good thing. We've talked about different buildings not being used and I think demolishing any building that is in good shape I think that's sad to see it just destroyed because people don't like

it. I do think that a community center within a residential district as long as there are conditions and restrictions on what they can and can't do is a great fit.

Commissioner Pritschet stated it is a very controversial issue, you're talking about homes in your neighborhoods and any time there is change in your neighborhoods there's fear and rightfully so in a lot of cases. I feel with the conditions set out I think we have enough safe guards in there to eliminate a lot of the harms that could possibly happen, the negatives. I think we have looked at the possible adverse effects. He stated he agrees that something that brings a community together is going to be a benefit, it's going to strengthen the community, I believe. The Whittier neighborhood is already a strong neighborhood and I believe it will continue to be a strong neighborhood. When you look at the other possibilities of community centers in other neighborhoods with the conditions we've set on them, I think they will be beneficial.

Commissioner Cole stated we have churches, schools, a hospital, a grocery store, salons, private businesses within residential districts. The negatives they bring are traffic and noise, but they also bring a lot of positives. I see a community center and the definition we have for it with the conditional uses and restrictions to be really little different as other buildings and churches and businesses that are going on in residential areas.

Commissioner Norwood stated I love community centers and community within the general sense of the term and any opportunity to build community and relationships between individuals throughout a neighborhood I strongly encourage and like to see. I like to see community centers grow and be used within Brainerd proper. As a definition I believe it describes something very acceptable.

Commissioner Lambert stated she also believes a community center will be beneficial for our community. I think we have an advantage, a strong building, a unique building and its history of that neighborhood I think we should keep it around and shouldn't be demolished. I too think we have enough safe guards in place to protect the neighborhood. The northside neighborhood is unique and that will force the owners of the community center to be as good as the neighborhood around it.

Commissioner Hayden stated I believe strongly in community centers in general and they have a very important use and one of many possible uses to keep our communities vibrant. Given the safe guards that we're considering, community centers can be an important part of that. She stated the worst thing you can have is a big empty building in the middle of a neighborhood. This will allow for more flexibility in utilizes our neighborhoods and community and she feels that is important.

b. Public Hearing – Variance at 606 South 8th Street – Capital Investments LLC

City Planner Ostgarden stated the property at 606 South 8th Street is a single family dwelling, the main portion of the dwelling and the vestibule are encroaching into the front yard setback. He stated the owner is requesting to cover the steps and porch with a roof and support posts that would extend out no further than the steps. In order to cover the porch with a roof a variance is needed. He stated the five (5) foot porch will not be enclosed. He stated the building to the north is constructed to the property line so there are other nonconformities in the neighborhood.

The public hearing was opened at 7:35 p.m.

The public hearing was closed 7:36 p.m.

Commissioner Plantenberg read the findings-of-fact into the record as follows: 1. The property is a nonconforming building located in an R-2 (Medium Density Residential) District; 2. It is nonconforming in that a portion of the dwelling and the entire vestibule are located within the required front yard setback; 3. The porch steps are currently not covered and the new roof and supports will not extend out further nor be wider than the porch steps; 4. The covered porch and steps will be in character with the houses located south along South 8th St; 5. The property to the north is constructed to the front and side street property lines; 6. The variance will support the Strategic Plan Focus Area of investing in neighborhoods.

The Commission added the following findings-of-fact: 7. The porch is currently and proposed to be open.

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS HAYDEN AND PLANTENBERG, DULY CARRIED, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF VARIANCE 380 TO ALLOW CONSTRUCTION OF A COVERED PORCH ONTO THE FRONT VESTIBULE AT 606 SOUTH 8TH STREET WITH THE SEVEN (7) FINDINGS-OF-FACT.

The Commission agreed to include a condition that the porch cannot be enclosed.

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS HAYDEN AND PLANTENBERG, DULY CARRIED, TO AMEND THE MOTION TO INCLUDE THE ONE (1) CONDITION.

c. Public Hearing – Variance at 602 South 8th Street – Capidal Investments LLC

City Planner Ostgarden stated the property is located at the southwest corner of South 8th Street and Oak Street. The brick portion (a former grocery store) of the building has been there for many, many years and the remainder of the building was added onto it. He stated the brick structure goes up to both the South 8th Street and Oak Street property lines. He noted the flat roof structure is deteriorating. The property owner plans to make this duplex a single family dwelling and to remove the flat roof structure and put a gabled pitched roof over the brick portion for more livable space. Because the building is nonconforming and the addition of livable space is in the required setback, a variance is needed.

City Planner Ostgarden stated a letter was received from a property owner in the neighborhood opposing the proposal stating the structure is too close to Oak Street and South 8th Street to have work done to it and the visibility has always been bad.

City Planner Ostgarden stated the property will be greatly improved and will make this a better looking property. He stated the Commission must decide if the additional roof pitch will conform to the neighborhood and if additional living space is appropriate at this location.

The public hearing was opened at 7:45 p.m.

Mr. Matt Davis, CEO of Fortress Homes, and representing Capidal Investments LLC/Shanna Perez, stated they have owned the property to the south for three years and have been improving that property. They purchased this property to improve it and create a more desirable looking structure. He stated the plan is to stucco the entire exterior to make it look like one building. There will also be other improvements done to the roof, new windows and doors, and will

change it from a duplex to a single family dwelling. He stated they have also purchased the neighboring property to the west on Oak Street. He stated there currently is no garage on this property but there are two garages on the property to the south. The plan is to request to amend the property lines for these three properties which will give this property one of those garages. He stated there will be a change of approximately three feet to the height of the roof pitch.

Commissioner Plantenberg asked if there will be a change to the small area (the stairs) on the southeast corner. Mr. Davis stated it will become a straight wall coming up and will all line up together.

Commissioner Hayden asked if the roof line on the other roof pitch. Mr. Davis stated it will be a stepped gable look but the existing pitched roof will remain the same.

The public hearing was closed at 7:53 p.m.

Commissioner Lambert stated she is excited to see reinvestment into an older area of town and agrees to grant the variance. She stated it is also positive that this is being changed to single family.

Commissioner Pritschet stated this variance meets almost all the requirements and will fit well into the neighborhood.

Commissioner Plantenberg stated she thinks this is a very positive change for the neighborhood.

Commissioner Jay stated he does have concerns with eight (8) foot walls and the 6/12 roof pitch. He stated six (6) foot walls meet code requirements on slant walls and will reduce the height of the roof pitch.

Commissioner Hayden stated she would not be in favor of making six (6) foot walls a requirement.

Commissioner Lambert read the finding-of-fact into the record as follows: 1. The property is a nonconforming building located in an R-2 (Medium Density Residential) District; 2. The variance is to add living space onto that portion of the building located at the front and side street yard property lines; 3. The lot is 50' x 75' (3,750 sf) and there is no area on the property to permit a larger building footprint; 4. The building is currently a duplex and it will be rehabilitated to a single family dwelling; 5. The addition will eliminate a flat roof that leaks, is rotted and needs significant repair; 6. Because the addition is a second story it will not affect driver and pedestrian vision at the corner of South 8th St and Oak Street; 7. The addition should have no negative impact on the church located north across Oak Street and the School District educational services building located east across South 8th Street; 8. The subject building and the dwelling to the south are separated by approximately fifty (50) feet. This separation will permit adequate light, air and visibility for the adjacent residential property to the south; 9. The variance will support the Strategic Plan Focus Area of investing in neighborhoods.

The Commission added the following findings-of-fact: 10. One person spoke in favor and a letter was received speaking against.

The Commission agreed to amend finding-of-fact two (2) to read “The variance is to add living space onto the second level of the building located at the front and side street yard property lines”.

MOTION AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS LAMBERT AND PRITSCHET, DULY CARRIED, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF VARIANCE 381 TO PERMIT LIVING SPACE EXPANSION OF A NONCONFORMING BUILDING AT 602 SOUTH 8TH STREET WITH THE TEN (10) FINDINGS-OF-FACT.

#5 OLD BUSINESS

a. Small House and Infill Development

City Planner Ostgarden stated letters were sent out to twenty-five contractors and nineteen (19) realtors regarding small houses and infill development idea/concept. He stated he has not received a single comment.

Commissioner Lambert stated she wonders if there is possibly lack of understanding about what the concept is about.

Commissioner Norwood stated this may be something to put in the paper as a guest column to get some feedback from the public.

City Planner Ostgarden asked if Commissioner Jay would like to do a guest column as the chair of the Commission.

Commissioner Plantenberg stated maybe there wasn't feedback because the contractors and realtors are ready for these changes.

City Planner Ostgarden stated there will still be comments/concerns once this is approved.

Gary Scheeler, 923 Lakeview Lane, stated he is opposed to this for many reasons. He stated he has had concerns with home being so close together and he has purposely purchased the vacant lots next to lots he's purchased to give a buffer and extra land. He stated this may be done to get more tax base, but it will devalue existing properties which will decrease the tax base. He noted there will storage issues. He stated he feels you will see more rentals.

City Planner Ostgarden stated the Commission had inquired about vacant lots and the ownership of those vacant lots. He provided the Commission with a spreadsheet showing which vacant lots are owned by adjacent property owners.

City Planner Ostgarden stated the Commission had developed language regarding small houses and infill development and asked if the Commission would like to proceed with a public hearing to add that language to the Zoning Ordinance.

Discussion was held regarding how to proceed. The Commission agreed to hold additional discussion at the November hearing with a possible public hearing in December.

b. Methadone Clinics

Commissioner Jay stated he met with the City Planner, City Attorney, and Police Chief today and noted it is a big concern for everyone. He stated the clinics license is coming due in December and everyone will gather information about the review process and how complaints can be filed. He stated one of the concerns was that many clinics across the country is creating living facilities next to the clinic and now that the Brainerd Hotel is going out of business that could potentially be something that could happen. He stated we need to have businesses come forward about issues they have had regarding the clinic and their clientele. He stated we cannot say that we cannot have methadone clinics but with community concerns we feel they should be connected to a medical facility. He stated we cannot stop what is going on, but we can say they must conform and would have to be part of an emergency room.

Discussion was held regarding requiring it to be part of an emergency room or a medical facility.

Commissioner Jay stated there needs to be an avenue of control on these facilities. We need to rethink how we classify these and what we do with these types of facilities as far as zoning is concerned. He stated he would like to research and present more information at a workshop.

City Planner Ostgarden stated he will get more information and get back to the Commission about scheduling a workshop.

#6 Commissioners' Questions/Comments

None

#7 City Planner's Report

City Planner Ostgarden stated the City Council has completed its strategic planning process with one of the areas being a walkable/bikeable community. The City Council has appointed nine (9) people to the Walkable/Bikeable Committee, which the Committee would then be working with the Planning Commission and then through to the City Council. He stated he recommended a member of the Planning Commission be part of that Committee. He asked the Commission to consider becoming a member of that Committee. The focus of the Committee is how to become a more walkable/bikeable community.

#8 Adjournment

As there was no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Ostgarden AICP
City Planner

/lt

MEMO

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Mark Ostgarden, City Planner



DATE: November 8, 2013

RE: Community Multi Use Trail and On Street Bike Route Development

Chairman Jay has requested that the Planning Commission begin dialogue about the status and future of our community trail network. Because of the trail development in the past year this is an opportunity for us to review what we have and our priorities in the coming years.

Attached is a map of the existing trails in the community. The Planning Commission has developed a Trail Master Plan Route Map. A copy of this map will be available at the November meeting.

A bonding request to extend utilities to the airport has been submitted to the legislature. Part of that request is funding to complete the Cuyuna Lakes State Trail from northeast Brainerd to the airport.

Recently with a grant from Region V the City of Brainerd funded the purchase and installation of green colored "Bike Route" markers along streets in the community. They provide a wayfinding system for bicyclists and aid in creating motorist awareness of bicycle use on the street. The existing trails map identifies the marked bike routes.

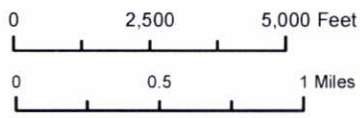
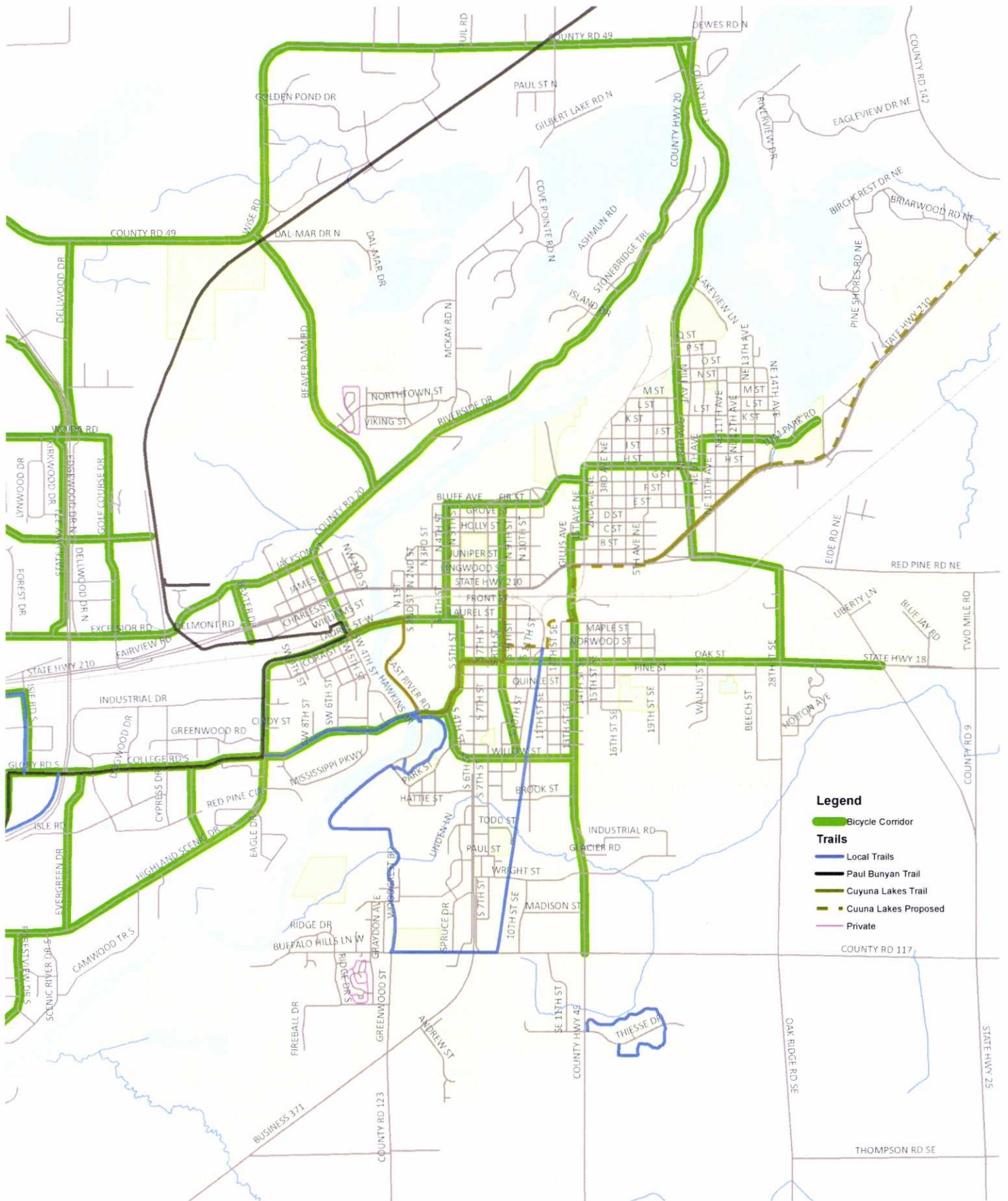
Following is the Comprehensive Plan Goal and Strategies that addresses alternative transportation:

Transportation Goal #4: *Promote alternative transportation such as bicycling, walking, transit and rail.*

Strategies

1. Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure when planning changes, additions, or maintenance to roads, sidewalks, bridges, paths or other public facilities.
2. Integrate bike safety standards into planned transportation improvements.

3. Continue to maintain and seek ways to expand the existing network of bicycle and pedestrian trails throughout the city.
4. Encourage sidewalks and separated pathways along all arterial and collector streets in developing residential and commercial areas through the city's subdivision regulations.
5. Promote the connectivity of alternative transportation systems and have such transportation systems connect efficiently to community and recreational facilities.
6. Design local streets to discourage driving at unsafe speeds and promote pedestrian and bicycle use.
7. Continue to work with the Brainerd and Crow Wing County transit system to provide safe, efficient public transit.
8. Continue to work with the Brainerd Lakes Regional Airport to provide air travel services.
9. Work with the appropriate agencies if and when commuter rail is discussed.



MEMO

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Mark Ostgarden, City Planner



DATE: November 6, 2013

RE: Final Draft - Zoning Text Amendment to Permit Small House and Infill Development Design Requirements

Attached is a final draft of the R-1 (Single Family Residential) District that adds small house and infill development design requirements to this district. The amendment also affects R-1A, R-2 and R-3 zoning districts. Following is some additional information about these issues.

Realtor and Contractor Response

The Planning Department reported that the letters sent to realtors and contractor did not provide any information for the Planning Commission to consider. The Planning Department followed up with a 2nd inquiry which generated only minimal response. Attached are the e-mail responses that have been received. The Greater Lakes Area Realtor Association (GLAR) has placed the information in its weekly e-mail burst to members.

Additional Text Amendments Needed

In reviewing both the final draft and the Zoning Ordinance I discovered we specify two (2) minimum dwelling sizes. In the residential district, language we specify:

Minimum floor area per dwelling unit: Seven hundred fifty (750) feet.

In Section 17 GENERAL BUILDING, USE AND DESIGN PROVISIONS we specify:

Dwellings constructed after the effective date of this Ordinance shall have a minimum finished habitable floor area of one thousand (1,000) square feet.

It is suggested that this be corrected to identify one or the other minimum square footage whichever minimum the Planning Commission thinks appropriate. An example of a text amendment using seven hundred fifty (750) square feet is provided.

There has been some discussion about accessory buildings associated with small houses. Concern being that a small house could have a significantly larger accessory

building. To address this concern a draft amendment is provided that limits accessory building square footage for small dwellings.

Infill Definition

At its October meeting the Planning Commission agreed to the following "infill" definition:

"Any vacant lot or parcel which meets all of the following: 1) served by public sewers, 2) fronts an existing public street, 3) bounded on one or more sides by lots one acre in size or smaller with residential structures in an otherwise built-up area."

Home Extended Business

At the October meeting the Planning Commission agreed to remove home extended businesses as an Interim Use in dwellings less than seven hundred fifty (750) square feet. Following is a draft amendment for the change:

515-54-4: Interim Uses.

- A. Home Extended Businesses IN A DWELLING GREATER THAN SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTY (750) SQUARE FEET as regulated by Section 26 of this Ordinance.

This amendment would apply to R-1, R-1A, and R-2, and R-3 Districts.

Mark Ostgarden

From: Matten, Dolly <DollyMatten@edinarealty.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2013 12:45 PM
To: Mark Ostgarden
Subject: Small Houses, Infill, Tiny Homes

Good Afternoon Mr. Ostgarden,

I received a copy of your letter you mailed out September 18, 2013 to several contractors and realtors. I am a bit surprised you didn't receive a response; however, I realize that there is probably a tremendous amount of other information that you may have discussed already that most would feel a need to read prior to offering an opinion. I did take the liberty of forwarding your letter to the staff at Edina Realty and would be happy to send it over to the GLAR office for distribution to ALL agents in the community.

Understanding this has been a topic of discussion for months, I am sure that I have missed out on much of the Q&A but I do have a few concerns that I would like to express myself.

1.) Understanding that the small house/infill will provide add'l tax base for the city.....I would have to ask if that tax base will out-weigh the effects it will have on surrounding properties? IE - if allowing a small house (min 350 sq) to be built in a neighborhood of 950-1500 sq/ft homes(because that is where the lot is located) decreases the value of the surrounding properties.....where is the benefit to the city or the surrounding neighbors? Furthermore, the city is already receiving tax base for the land so we are really just looking at tax base from "improvements" only.

2.) The concept of small homes is to reduce waste, inputs, outputs, and our overall footprint on this earth. Accessory buildings/structures seems to defeat this purpose of storing our "things". Will there be a maximum sq/ft requirement on accessory structures and their overall appearance to the small home/surrounding neighborhood? Labeling it a shed/accessory structure might overtake the size of the small home itself.

3.) Is there a requirement for these homes to be a primary residence? Allowing this size structure to be built for the sake of "rentals" would seem to be the primary push for this allowance.

4.) Most banks will not finance homes smaller than 400 sq/ft.

5.) Most of what I read about small homes suggest that there should be a minimum sq/ft requirement per person living in the home. ie - 5 people in a small home should ultimately require a minimum sq/ft of 1000 sq/ft. What parameters would the city place on small homes as far as maximum occupancy per structure? (I guess I'm looking at resale requirements.) If a 350 sq/ft home was built for a one owner and spouse - but not recommended for occupancy of more than 2 - how will this impact future use of this structure? At some point, will we see these homes sitting vacant due to lack of resale interest, conditions, or occupancy requirements?

6.) If allowed to be rentals, would public assistance be made available? Running water, heat source, electricity, legal building code conditions met?

7.) I assume that these small home situations are meant to address the 90+ vacant lots situated within the Brainerd City limits and not meant to encourage future splits of lots to allow for these small homes?

8.) Having seen some of these "small homes" some are built on wheels. Is that something permissible to the city?

Just a few questions. I have more but ultimately, my biggest concern is the impact it would have on depreciating values of surrounding homes.

Dolly Matten, Realtor

Edina Realty, Inc.

218-851-4292 (Cell)

218-825-3646 (Direct)

Mark Ostgarden

From: tad@brainerdhandyman.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 22, 2013 6:22 PM
To: Mark Ostgarden
Subject: RE: September 18, 2013 Letter Regarding Brainerd Planning Commission Issues

Hi Mark.

I don't do new construction, so the changes wouldn't affect me. In General, I think it sounds okay if the surrounding property owners don't "strongly" object.

Thanks,
Tad Hoskins

218-838-7617

----- Original Message -----

Subject: September 18, 2013 Letter Regarding Brainerd Planning Commission Issues
From: Mark Ostgarden <mostgarden@ci.brainerd.mn.us>
Date: Tue, October 22, 2013 2:53 pm
To: "marko@brainerd.net" <marko@brainerd.net>

Dear Contractor,

Several week ago you received a letter from the Brainerd Planning Department (on behalf of the Planning Commission) seeking your input on two concepts the Planning Commission has been reviewing. One being the option of small house construction and the other being standards for infill development. The letter was sent to 25 contractors and 19 realtors. The Planning Commission did not receive any responses.

Your days are busy with other more important matters so I can understand how the request may not have reached the top of your "to do" list. Therefore I am following up to see if it is possible that you could help the Planning Commission and provide your thoughts on the two issues.

If you have any questions about either issue, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I've attached a copy of the letter that was sent to you.

Thank you!

Mark Ostgarden AICP
City Planner

Mark Ostgarden

From: allenvl7262@gmail.com on behalf of Allen VanLandschoot <allenvl@brainerd.net>
Sent: Sunday, October 20, 2013 6:46 PM
To: Mark Ostgarden
Subject: Re: September 18, 2013 Letter Regarding Brainerd Planning Commission Issues

Mark,

....my apologies for not responding, so far. I have intended to do so. In the next couple of days I will. I have been around the housing industry all my life. Little interest, up until the last several years, have I seen for intelligent housing suitable for our economic times that can flex to the landscape. " Bigger is better " has been a housing standard for several decades. Going small is unique to a bad economy, I think. Infill housing is usually hurt by variances needed to overcome deficient lots with setback issues, garage accommodations, impervious surface issues, etc. and so on. Little incentive for profit do Contractors see in building small.

Our recent long-term economic slump did little to sustain those Contractors who were building homes to satisfy middle income housing. I recently looked at a nice platted subdivision in Pequot Lakes where a developer went belly up. It has some 46 small lots, but the sac and wac fees are close to \$9500 per lot. Without momentum in the market and the potential to build and sell maybe 4 homes a year in that market, it's clear that the risk is too great for a Buyer to take a run at that project.

Cluster housing was a nice idea many years ago. It has not worked very well, either.

I had a client ahead of Pagel and Swanson for that Northtown development, but it did not seem viable to my clients, at that time based upon the volume of housing needed to sell to support the costs for the dirt and utilities. They backed off and I am still working with them, thankfully. I helped P & S out at Oak Hollow and realized some lack of anticipation for what a real estate market projects. Profit and success should be sustained by doing the right thing. The opposite seems true, as well.

If Brainerd can offer cheap lots with little or nothing for utility fees, you may be able to get some traction with the right Contractor. That Contractor will need incentive, bottom line.

It's a dangerous occupation to develop land. And, I do not think the city should be in that business, either. When a municipality looks at developers like they're a meal ticket to support growth, there's something a little amiss with that. That's where Baxter really hurt itself. It's still hurting.

Mark, I think that infill housing should be a genuine focus and if Brainerd is serious about the idea, things will need to change a little.

Some 30 years ago I was involved with a housing project in St. Paul. We tore down a whole city block. We had Federal and city grants for potential Buyers. We built beautiful homes and sold them for some \$60,000 less than the cost of construction! Would you believe, I sold each home 4 times over. The public did not have a clue. Exasperating as it was, it was a great idea and a nice looking project. I did all sales exclusively at a 3% commission.

So, from my perspective, there are many good reasons to do the obvious, infill housing. However, without economic incentive to motivate its growth, how can it be done. Privately, it likely will not happen without some

generous input from larger entities. (just a few spontaneous thoughts!)

best regards,

On Fri, Oct 18, 2013 at 1:56 PM, Mark Ostgarden <mostgarden@ci.brainerd.mn.us> wrote:

Dear Contractor,

Several week ago you received a letter from the Brainerd Planning Department (on behalf of the Planning Commission) seeking your input on two concepts the Planning Commission has been reviewing. One being the option of small house construction and the other being standards for infill development. The letter was sent to 25 contractors and 19 realtors. The Planning Commission did not receive any responses.

Your days are busy with other more important matters so I can understand how the request may not have reached the top of your "to do" list. Therefore I am following up to see if it is possible that you could help the Planning Commission and provide your thoughts on the two issues.

If you have any questions about either issue, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I've attached a copy of the letter that was sent to you.

Thank you!

Mark Ostgarden AICP

City Planner

828-2309

--
Allen VanLandschoot
Realtor
Century 21 Brainerd Realty
218.821.6890

Mark Ostgarden

From: Kevin Goedker <kevin@goedker.com>
Sent: Friday, October 18, 2013 2:10 PM
To: Mark Ostgarden
Subject: RE: September 18, 2013 Letter Regarding Brainerd Planning Commission Issues

Mark,

Thank you for your e-mail reminder. By the way, the file you had just attached had no data in it. I did read the portion about small house construction. My initial reaction was good, that it provided another option for a smaller house on lots that may be virtually "undevelopable." However, In my personal opinion I do not see a demand for this. Maybe you are seeing more requests for better options at City Hall. I am just not seeing it, so I do not think it will attract any potential "buyers" of the concept. That doesn't mean it won't work, just that I don't see it. I will try to provide more information as time permits. I just wanted to let you know your requests are not falling on deaf ears! Thanks for all you and the Planning Commission do!

Kevin Goedker, ABR, e-PRO, GRI
REALTOR / Broker-Owner
(218) 839-9122
kevin@goedker.com

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(218) 828-0903 Fax
www.BrainerdAreaRealEstate.com



From: Mark Ostgarden [<mailto:mostgarden@ci.brainerd.mn.us>]
Sent: Friday, October 18, 2013 1:57 PM
To: Mark Ostgarden
Subject: September 18, 2013 Letter Regarding Brainerd Planning Commission Issues

Dear Contractor,

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Your days are busy with other more important matters so I can understand how the request may not have reached the top of your "to do" list. Therefore I am following up to see if it is possible that you could help the Planning Commission and provide your thoughts on the two issues.

If you have any questions about either issue, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I've attached a copy of the letter that was sent to you.

Thank you!

Mark Ostgarden AICP
City Planner
828-2309

SECTION 54
R-1, SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

SMALL HOUSE AND INFILL DRAFT

Section:

- 515-54-1: Purpose and Intent
- 515-54-2: Permitted Uses
- 515-54-3: Accessory Uses
- 515-54-4: Interim Uses
- 515-54-5: Conditional Uses
- 515-54-6: Uses by Administrative Permit
- 515-54-7: Lot Area and Setback Requirements
- 515-54-8: Building Height
- 515-54-9: Building Performance Standards
- 515-54-10: Lot Coverage

515-54-1: Purpose and Intent. This district is established to allow and preserve areas in the City of quiet neighborhoods of one and two family homes, free from other uses except those which are compatible with residents of such a district.

515-54-2: Permitted Uses.

- A. Detached single family dwellings.
- B. Public recreation areas and related accessory buildings and structures.
- C. Residential facilities serving six (6) or fewer persons in a single family detached dwelling.
- D. Essential services as regulated by Section 36 of this Ordinance.

515-54-3: Accessory Uses.

- A. Garages and open off-street parking for private residential use subject to the provisions of Section 17.
- B. Fences as regulated by Section 19 of this Ordinance.
- C. Storage of recreational vehicles and equipment for private use as regulated by Section 24 of this Ordinance.
- D. Solar energy systems and structures.

- E. Home Businesses as regulated by Section 26 of this Ordinance.
- F. Tool houses and sheds and other such buildings for the storage of domestic tools, supplies and equipment subject to the provisions of Section 17 of this Ordinance.
- G. Private recreational facilities for the enjoyment of the residents of the principal building and their occasional guests.
- H. In home day care serving fourteen (14) or fewer persons in a single family detached dwelling.
- I. Radio and television receiving antennas, satellite dishes, TV Receive Only (TVRO) three (3) meters or less in diameter, short-wave radio dispatching antennas, or those necessary for the operation of electronic equipment including radio receivers, ham radio transmitters and television receivers as regulated by Section 35 of this Ordinance.

515-54-4: Interim Uses.

- A. Home Extended Businesses as regulated by Section 26 of this Ordinance.
- B. Temporary buildings associated with a public or private principal school building and used for classrooms.

515-54-5: Conditional Uses.

- A. Off-premise surface parking lots and parking ramps subject to provisions of Section 22 of this Ordinance.
- B. Bed and breakfast subject to provisions of Section 31 of this Ordinance.
- C. Non-profit and not-for-profit offices located in buildings owned by the Brainerd Independent School District, not used for classroom education and subject to the following minimum requirements:
 - 1. One (1) off-street parking space for each three hundred (300) square feet of office space.
 - 2. No individual exterior entrances.
 - 3. Business hours are limited from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
 - 4. No exterior business signs.
- D. Planned Unit Developments as regulated by Section 11 of this Ordinance.

- E. Government and public regulated utility buildings and structures necessary for the health, safety and general welfare of the community provided that when abutting a residential use in a residential use district, the property is screened and landscaped in accordance with Section 20 of this Ordinance.
- F. Public and private schools provided that:
1. The site accesses a major collector.
 2. The site is landscaped in accordance with Section 20 of this Ordinance.
 3. Off-street parking is provided in accordance with Section 22 of this Ordinance.
 4. Off-street loading and service entrances are provided as regulated by Section 23 of this Ordinance.
 5. Emergency vehicle access is provided to and within the site.
- G. Hospitals provided that:
1. Side yards are double the minimum requirements established for this district and are screened in compliance with Section 20 of this Ordinance.
 2. The site shall be served by an arterial or collector street of sufficient capacity to accommodate traffic which will be generated.
 3. All State Statutes and regulations governing such use are strictly adhered to and all required operating permits are secured.
- H. Places of worship and related buildings provided that:
1. Side yards shall be thirty (30) feet.
 2. Adequate screening from abutting residential uses and landscaping is provided in compliance with Section 20 of this Ordinance.
 3. Adequate off-street parking and access is provided on the site or on lots directly abutting or directly across a public street or alley to the principal use in compliance with Section 22 of this Ordinance and that such parking is adequately screened and landscaped from surrounding and abutting residential uses in compliance with Section 20 of this Ordinance.
 4. Adequate off-street loading and service entrances are provided and regulated where applicable by Section 23 of this Ordinance.

I.

515-54-6: Uses by Administrative Permit.

- A. Personal wireless service antennas as regulated by Section 35 of this Ordinance.

515-54-7: Minimum Lot Area and Setback Requirements.

A. Lot Area Requirements:

1. Lot size: Seven thousand (7,000) square feet
2. Lot Width: Fifty (50) feet
3. Lot Depth: Lot depth shall not exceed three (3) times the lot width for the buildable area of the lot

B. Principal Building Setbacks:

1. Front Yard: Twenty (20) feet
2. Side Yard: Five (5) feet
3. Side Yard (corner): Twenty (20) feet, fifteen (15) feet for an attached garage
4. Rear Yard: Twenty-five (25) feet

C. Accessory Building and Structure Setbacks:

1. Front Yard: Twenty (20) feet
2. Side Yard: Three (3) feet
3. Side Yard (corner): Fifteen (15) feet, twenty (20) feet if garage faces street
4. Rear Yard: Five (5) feet

515-54-8: Building Height.

- A. Dwellings shall not exceed thirty-five (35) feet in height. Permitted non-residential uses and conditional uses taller than thirty-five (35) feet shall require a Conditional Use Permit.
- B. Accessory building and structure height shall be governed by Section 17 of this Ordinance.

515-54-9: Building Performance Standards.

- A. Minimum floor area per dwelling unit: Seven hundred fifty (750) feet. DWELLINGS GREATER THAN THREE HUNDRED SQUARE FEET (350) AND LESS THAN

SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTY (750) SQUARE FEET ARE PERMITTED BY CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND SUBJECT TO 515-54-11: INFILL DESIGN STANDARDS.

- B. Minimum width/length of dwelling unit: Twenty-two (22) feet. DWELLINGS LESS THAN TWENTY-TWO (22) FEET WIDE ARE PERMITTED BY CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND SUBJECT TO 515-54-11: INFILL DESIGN STANDARDS.
- C. Each dwelling unit shall be located on a permanent foundation with a perimeter curtain wall in accordance with the Brainerd and Minnesota Building Code.

515-54-10: Lot Coverage.

- A. Residential Uses. Impervious surface lot coverage shall not exceed sixty (60) percent of the total lot area.
- B. Non-residential Uses. Impervious surface lot coverage shall not exceed fifty (50) percent of the total lot area unless otherwise allowed by a grading and drainage plan approved by the City Engineer.

515-54-11: DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

ALL RESIDENTIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT AND NEW DWELLINGS LESS THAN SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTY (750) SQUARE FEET IN AREA AND/OR DWELLINGS LESS THAN TWENTY-TWO (22) FEET WIDE SHALL ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING DESIGN REQUIREMENTS. WHILE CREATIVITY AND VARIATION IN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN IS ENCOURAGED, THE PURPOSE OF THESE REQUIREMENTS IS TO ENSURE COMPATIBILITY OF INFILL DEVELOPMENT WITH THE CHARACTER OF NEARBY EXISTING RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES.

RESIDENTIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT SHALL MEET THE FOLLOWING DESIGN CRITERIA, AS DEFINED BY THE PREDOMINANT CHARACTER OF THE EXISTING RESIDENTIAL BLOCK FRONT. THE BLOCK FRONT SHALL CONSIST OF ALL RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES ALONG BOTH SIDES OF THE PUBLIC OR PRIVATE RIGHT-OF-WAY ON WHICH THE DEVELOPMENT FRONTS. THE BLOCK FRONT SHALL BE MEASURED FROM INTERSECTION TO INTERSECTION, TO THE ROAD END, OR 200 FEET IN EITHER DIRECTION FROM THE DEVELOPMENT SITE, WHICHEVER IS NEAREST.

1. BUILDING ORIENTATION ON INFILL LOTS SHALL MATCH THE PREDOMINANT ORIENTATION OF OTHER BUILDINGS ALONG THE BLOCK FRONT.
2. ACCESS AND LOCATION OF OFF-STREET PARKING ON INFILL LOTS SHALL BE SIMILAR TO THE PREDOMINANT CHARACTER FOR EXISTING DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE BLOCK FRONT. PRIMARY VEHICULAR ACCESS SHALL BE THROUGH REAR ALLEYS WHERE SUCH RIGHTS-OF-WAY EXIST, AND ON-SITE PARKING SHALL BE LOCATED TO THE REAR OF PROPOSED STRUCTURES, INsofar AS THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH THE PREDOMINANT CHARACTER OF THE BLOCK FRONT.
3. ROOFS ON PROPOSED INFILL RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES SHALL BE SIMILAR IN SLOPE AND STYLE TO EXISTING DEVELOPMENT AND SHALL INCORPORATE ANY OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING FEATURES, INsofar AS SUCH FEATURES ARE COMPATIBLE WITH EXISTING DEVELOPMENT ON THE BLOCK FRONT:
 - A. DORMERS;
 - B. GABLED OR HIPPED ROOFS;
 - C. PITCHED ROOFS;
 - D. PARAPETS OR CORNICES.
4. UNLESS IT IS THE PREDOMINANT EXISTING STYLE ON THE BLOCK FRONT, FLAT ROOFS SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED.
5. HORIZONTAL FACADES LONGER THAN 25 FEET SHALL BE TREATED TO REDUCE BUILDINGS MASS AND VISUAL BULK USING AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TECHNIQUES. THE APPLICANT SHALL DEMONSTRATE THAT THE SELECTED TECHNIQUES ARE EITHER CURRENTLY PRESENT ON THE BLOCK FRONT OR ARE NOT SUBSTANTIALLY INCOMPATIBLE WITH EXISTING DEVELOPMENT.

- A. BAYS OR RECESSES (MINIMUM DEPTH OF 18 INCHES);
- B. WINDOW PATTERNS;
- C. CONTRASTING MATERIALS OR COLORS;
- D. UPPER STORY SETBACKS;
- E. BALCONIES.

MEMO

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Mark Ostgarden, City Planner



DATE: November 7, 2013

RE: Methadone Clinics – Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

At its October meeting, the Planning Commission had a discussion about methadone clinics and the need to provide additional regulations for locations of such facilities. Chairman Jay described the meeting that he had with City Attorney Tom Fitzpatrick, Police Chief Corky McQuiston and me. Following the Planning Commission's discussion the Planning Department suggested that it might be helpful to contact other communities to determine how methadone clinics are addressed. Several cities were contacted and those that responded have no regulations specific to methadone clinics. Copies of the responses are provided.

Following is the general land use category that includes clinics. This language is included as permitted by right in all business zoning districts:

Office Businesses-Clinic. Out-patient health services limited to general medical clinics, mental health providers, physical therapy, chiropractors, dentists, orthodontia, oral surgeons, and opticians.

One method to address this issue would be to add the following language to this class of land use:

*Office Businesses-Clinic. Out-patient health services limited to general medical clinics, **SUBSTANCE ABUSE OUTPATIENT TREATMENT WITHIN GENERAL MEDICAL CLINICS**, mental health providers, physical therapy, chiropractors, dentists, orthodontia, oral surgeons, and opticians.*

Should this method be preferred it should be pointed out that this class of use reads as follows in the B-3 and B-4 district:

*Office business – clinic such as general medical clinics, medical labs, mental health providers, chiropractors, dentists, orthodontia, oral surgeons, opticians, physical therapy and **other out-patient treatment**.*

Other outpatient treatment is highlighted as this clause would seem to permit all substance abuse treatment including methadone. A suggested amendment to limit this class could be:

*Office business – clinic such as general medical clinics, medical labs, mental health providers, chiropractors, dentists, orthodontia, oral surgeons, opticians, physical therapy and other out-patient treatment **WITHOUT DRUG DISPENSION.***

Another method would be to include substance abuse treatment centers with hospitals allowed as conditional uses in R-1, R-2 and B-4 districts. An amendment could read:

R-1 and R-2 Conditional Uses:

- A. Off-premise surface parking lots and parking ramps...
- B. Bed and breakfast...
- C. Non-profit and not-for-profit offices...
- D. Planned Unit Developments...
- E. Government and public regulated utility buildings and structures...
- F. Public and private schools...
- G. Hospitals **WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE OUTPATIENT TREATMENT** provided that...

Yet another option to consider would be to permit methadone clinics as a conditional use in industrial districts.

I-1 (Light Industry) Conditional Uses:

- A. Outdoor sales lot...
- B. Bulk liquid storage provided that...
- C. Planned Unit Developments (PUD) as regulated by Section 11 of this Ordinance.
- D. Placement and operation of outdoor wood burning furnaces...
- E. Animal hospital, clinic, kennels and shelters provided that...
- F. Trade/specialty schools.
- G. Mini self storage facilities provided that...
- H. **SUBSTANCE ABUSE OUTPATIENT TREATMENT CLINICS AND CENTERS**

Hopefully the scenarios described will provide a basis for additional discussion. Adding language to regulate methadone clinics is not difficult, the difficult part is the affect an amendment would have on language in other zoning districts. Should the Planning Commission agree to a method of amendment the Zoning Ordinance will need to be reviewed to address any consequential language amendments that might be needed.

North American Standard Industrial Classification - Clinics

1. 541940 Veterinary **clinics**
2. 621111 Surgical pathologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
3. 621111 Walk-in physicians' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
4. 621111 Urologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
5. 621111 Surgeons' (except dental) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
6. 621111 Radiologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
7. 621111 Pulmonary specialists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
8. 621111 Proctologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
9. 621111 Plastic surgeons' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
10. 621111 Physicians' (except mental health) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
11. 621111 Pediatricians' (except mental health) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
12. 621111 Pathologists', surgical, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
13. 621111 Oncologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
14. 621111 Ophthalmologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
15. 621111 Pathologists', neuropathological, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
16. 621111 Pathologists', forensic, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
17. 621111 Pathologists' (except oral, speech, voice) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
18. 621111 Otolaryngologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
19. 621111 Osteopathic physicians' (except mental health) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
20. 621111 Orthopedic surgeons' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
21. 621111 Orthopedic physicians' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
22. 621111 Obstetricians' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
23. 621111 Immunologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
24. 621111 Acupuncturists' (MDs or DOs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
25. 621111 Neuropathologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
26. 621111 Neurologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
27. 621111 Medical doctors' (MDs, except mental health) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
28. 621111 MDs' (medical doctors, except mental health) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
29. 621111 Internists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
30. 621111 Gynecologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
31. 621111 Gastroenterologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
32. 621111 Family physicians' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
33. 621111 DOs' (doctors of osteopathy, except mental health) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)

34. 621111 Doctors of osteopathy (DOs, except mental health) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
35. 621111 Dermatologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
36. 621111 Clinical pathologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
37. 621111 Cardiologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
38. 621111 Anesthesiologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
39. 621111 Allergists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
40. 621112 Psychotherapists' (MDs or DOs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
41. 621112 Psychoanalysts' (MDs or DOs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
42. 621112 Psychiatrists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
43. 621112 Physicians', mental health, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
44. 621112 MDs' (medical doctors), mental health, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
45. 621112 Pediatricians', mental health, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
46. 621112 Mental health physicians' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
47. 621112 Medical doctors' (MDs), mental health, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
48. 621112 DOs' (doctors of osteopathy), mental health, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
49. 621112 Doctors of osteopathy (DOs), mental health, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
50. 621210 Surgeons', dental, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
51. 621210 Prosthodontists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
52. 621210 Periodontists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
53. 621210 Pathologists', oral, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
54. 621210 Orthodontists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
55. 621210 Oral pathologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
56. 621210 Oral and maxillofacial surgeons' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
57. 621210 Family dentists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
58. 621210 Endodontists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
59. 621210 Doctors of dental surgery (DDSs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
60. 621210 Doctors of dental medicine (DMDs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
61. 621210 DMDs' (doctors of dental medicine) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
62. 621210 Dentists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
63. 621210 Dental surgeons' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
64. 621210 DDSs' (doctors of dental surgery) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
65. 621310 Doctors of chiropractic (DCs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
66. 621310 DCs' (doctors of chiropractic) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
67. 621310 Chiropractors' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
68. 621320 Optometrists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)

69. 621320 ODs' (doctors of optometry) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
70. 621320 Doctors of optometry (ODs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
71. 621330 Social workers' , mental health, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
72. 621330 Psychotherapists' (except MDs or DOs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
73. 621330 Psychoanalysts' (except MDs or DOs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
74. 621330 Psychologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**), clinical
75. 621330 Doctors of psychology offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
76. 621330 Clinical psychologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
77. 621340 Sports physical therapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
78. 621340 Voice pathologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
79. 621340 Speech therapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
80. 621340 Speech defect **clinics**
81. 621340 Speech pathologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
82. 621340 Speech clinicians' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
83. 621340 Physiotherapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
84. 621340 Recreational (e.g., art, dance, music) therapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
85. 621340 Physical therapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
86. 621340 Physical therapy offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
87. 621340 Physical-integration practitioners' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
88. 621340 Physical equestrian therapist offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
89. 621340 Pathologists', speech or voice, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
90. 621340 Occupational therapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
91. 621340 Music therapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
92. 621340 Industrial therapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
93. 621340 Exercise physiologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
94. 621340 Dance therapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
95. 621340 Audiologists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
96. 621340 Art therapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
97. 621391 Popopediatricians' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
98. 621391 Foot specialists' (podiatry) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
99. 621391 Podiatrists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
100. 621391 DPs' (doctors of podiatry) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
101. 621391 Doctors of podiatry (DPs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
102. 621399 RNs' (registered nurses) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
103. 621399 Respiratory therapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)

- 104.621399 Registered nurses' (RNs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 105.621399 Practical nurses' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**), licensed
- 106.621399 Prosthetists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 107.621399 Physicians' assistants' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 108.621399 Paramedics' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 109.621399 Podiatrists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 110.621399 Nurses', licensed practical or registered, offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 111.621399 Nutritionists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 112.621399 Naturopaths' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 113.621399 Midwives' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 114.621399 LPNs' (licensed practical nurses) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 115.621399 Manual-arts therapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 116.621399 Licensed practical nurses' (LPNs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 117.621399 Inhalation therapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 118.621399 Hypnotherapists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 119.621399 Homeopaths' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 120.621399 Herbalists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 121.621399 Dietitians' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 122.621399 Denturists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 123.621399 Clinical pharmacists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 124.621399 Acupuncturists' (except MDs or DOs) offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 125.621399 Dental hygienists' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 126.621399 Christian Science practitioners' offices (e.g., centers, **clinics**)
- 127.621410 Fertility **clinics**
- 128.621410 Birth control **clinics**
- 129.621410 Abortion **clinics**
- 130.621420 Substance abuse treatment centers and **clinics** (except hospitals), outpatient
- 131.621420 Outpatient treatment centers and **clinics** for drug addiction
- 132.621420 Psychiatric centers and **clinics** (except hospitals), outpatient
- 133.621420 Outpatient treatment centers and **clinics** for alcoholism
- 134.621420 Mental health centers and **clinics** (except hospitals), outpatient
- 135.621420 Outpatient treatment centers and **clinics** (except hospitals) for substance abuse (i.e., alcoholism, drug addiction)
- 136.621420 Outpatient mental health centers and **clinics** (except hospitals)
- 137.621420 Detoxification centers and **clinics** (except hospitals), outpatient

- 138.621420 Drug addiction treatment centers and **clinics** (except hospitals), outpatient
- 139.621420 Alcoholism treatment centers and **clinics** (except hospitals), outpatient
- 140.621491 HMO (health maintenance organization) medical centers and **clinics**
- 141.621491 Health maintenance organization (HMO) medical centers and **clinics**
- 142.621492 Kidney dialysis centers and **clinics**
- 143.621492 Renal dialysis centers and **clinics**
- 144.621492 Dialysis centers and **clinics**
- 145.621492 Hemodialysis centers and **clinics**
- 146.621493 Urgent medical care centers and **clinics** (except hospitals), freestanding
- 147.621493 Freestanding ambulatory surgical centers and **clinics**
- 148.621493 Freestanding emergency medical centers and **clinics**
- 149.621493 Emergency medical centers and **clinics**, freestanding
- 150.621493 Ambulatory surgical centers and **clinics**, freestanding
- 151.621498 Pain therapy centers and **clinics**, outpatient
- 152.621498 Sleep disorder centers and **clinics**, outpatient
- 153.621498 Community health centers and **clinics**, outpatient
- 154.621498 Infusion therapy centers and **clinics**, outpatient
- 155.621498 Clinics/centers of health practitioners with multi-industry degrees
- 156.621498 Clinics/centers of health practitioners from more than one industry practicing within the same establishment
- 157.621498 Biofeedback centers and **clinics**, outpatient
- 158.621999 Stop smoking **clinics**

Mark Ostgarden

From: Curt Hauser <Curt.Hauser@cityvadnaisheights.com>
Sent: Friday, October 25, 2013 10:17 AM
To: Mark Ostgarden
Subject: Methadone clinics

At the current time we have no methadone clinics .

Curt Hauser
Building Official
651-204-6025
curt.hauser@cityvadnaisheights.com

Mark Ostgarden

From: Russ Wille <russw@saintpetermn.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 17, 2013 8:08 AM
To: Mark Ostgarden
Subject: FW: Methadone Clinics

From: Russ Wille
Sent: Thursday, October 17, 2013 8:02 AM
To: 'mostgarden@ci.brainerd.mn.us'
Subject: FW: Methadone Clinics

Mark,

We have no methadone clinics in St. Peter. I wouldn't begin to imagine how they may be regulated.

Best of luck.

Russ Wille
Community Development Director
City of Saint Peter
227 South Front Street
Saint Peter, Minnesota 56082
507-934-0661
507-934-4917 (fax)

***PLEASE NOTE....email correspondence to and from the City of Saint Peter may be considered public data under the Minnesota Data Practices Act and/or may be disclosed to third parties.

-----Original Message-----

From: Mark Ostgarden [<mailto:mostgarden@ci.brainerd.mn.us>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2013 3:45 PM
To: Cindy Moulton
Subject: Methadone Clinics

St. Peter Planning Department, we have a methadone clinic in our city and we permit it like any other clinic. We are interested in creating special standards to allow such clinics. How does your community permit methadone clinics? Do you require any special standards for this type of use?

Thank you for any information you have?

Mark Ostgarden AICP
City Planner

Mark Ostgarden

From: D. DANIEL LICHT <ddl@planningco.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2013 5:57 PM
To: Mark Ostgarden
Subject: RE: Methadone Clinics

Mr. Ostgarden:

This office serves as the City Planner for the City of Otsego. Otsego does not have any regulations specific to methadone clinics.

Sincerely,

D. Daniel Licht, AICP
THE PLANNING COMPANY LLC
3601 Thurston Avenue N, Suite 100
Anoka, MN 55303
Phone: 763.231.5840
Direct: 763.231.5841
Facsimile: 763.427.0520
DDL@PlanningCo.com

From: Mark Ostgarden [<mailto:mostgarden@ci.brainerd.mn.us>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2013 3:43 PM
To: ddl@PlanningCo.com
Subject: Methadone Clinics

Dear Otsego City Administrator, we have a methadone clinic in our city and we permit it like any other clinic. We are interested in creating special standards to allow such clinics. How does your community permit methadone clinics? Do you require any special standards for this type of use?

Thank you for any information you have?

Mark Ostgarden AICP
City Planner

Mark Ostgarden

From: Susan Arntz <sarntz@waconia.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2013 4:59 PM
To: Mark Ostgarden
Subject: RE: Methadone Clinics

We don't have a methadone clinic and do not permit other clinics in any special way. We allow medical facilities in our B1 and B4 zoning districts, but do not have specific standards for those types of clinics or uses.

Susan MH Arntz, ICMA-CM
City Administrator
City of Waconia
201 South Vine Street
Waconia, MN 55387
Office: 952-442-2184
Direct: 952-442-3100
www.waconia.org

From: Mark Ostgarden [<mailto:mostgarden@ci.brainerd.mn.us>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2013 3:54 PM
To: Susan Arntz
Subject: Methadone Clinics

Dear City of Waconia, we have a methadone clinic in our city and we permit it like any other clinic. We are interested in creating special standards to allow such clinics. How does your community permit methadone clinics? Do you require any special standards for this type of use?

Thank you for any information you have.

Mark Ostgarden AICP
City Planner

Mark Ostgarden

From: Glenn Olson <Glenn.Olson@marshallmn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2013 4:46 PM
To: Mark Ostgarden
Subject: RE: Methadone Clinics

Mark,
None in our city nor in any of a dozen we have researched.
Glenn

From: Mark Ostgarden [<mailto:mostgarden@ci.brainerd.mn.us>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2013 3:40 PM
To: Glenn Olson
Subject: Methadone Clinics

Mr. Olson, we have a methadone clinic in our city and we permit it like any other clinic. We are interested in creating special standards to allow such clinics. How does your community permit methadone clinics? Do you require any special standards for this type of use?

Thank you for any information you have?

Mark Ostgarden AICP
City Planner

Mark Ostgarden

From: Dawnette Shimek <DShimek@ci.ham-lake.mn.us>
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2013 3:41 PM
To: Mark Ostgarden
Subject: RE: Methadone Clinics

We do not have such standards for methadone clinics. I believe we would handle the application like any medical, dental or health clinic and issue them a Certificate of Occupancy. The licensing I believe would be handled through the State and County offices.

Thanks,
Dawnette Shimek
Zoning Official/Building Clerk

City of Ham Lake
15544 Central Avenue NE
Ham Lake, MN 55304
Phone 763-235-1673
Fax 763-235-1697
dshimek@ci.ham-lake.mn.us

From: Mark Ostgarden [<mailto:mostgarden@ci.brainerd.mn.us>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 16, 2013 3:39 PM
To: Dawnette Shimek
Subject: Methadone Clinics

Ms. Shimek, we have a methadone clinic in our city and we permit it like any other clinic. We are interested in creating special standards to allow such clinics. How does your community permit methadone clinics? Do you require any special standards for this type of use?

Thank you for any information you have?

Mark Ostgarden AICP
City Planner

REALTOR® LEADS EFFORTS TO REVITALIZE A MAIN STREET

The pieces fall in place to rejuvenate Seville, Ohio



Seville, Ohio



Photo by TourismOhio, www.DiscoverOhio.com

By Christine Jordan Sexton

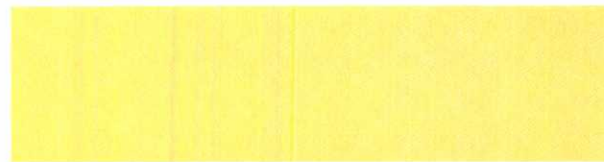
Rick Stallard is a self described “believer.”

A convert, no less.

A REALTOR® for 24 years, Stallard was feeling a little uneasy last year at the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR) Washington, D.C. meeting when he was advised to consider working with The National Trust Main Street Center on a plan to revitalize his hometown of Seville.

The village of Seville — which will celebrate its bicentennial anniversary in 2016 — is 2.6 square miles and has a population of just under 3,000 people. Reflective of its near 200-year history, the village of Seville has architecturally significant buildings throughout the downtown area and has residential neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the commercial area.

The village of Seville was in danger of becoming another blighted downtown.



It is the typical downtown in Small Town USA. And from Stallard’s perspective, it was in danger of becoming another blighted downtown.

After hearing the advice at the NAR meeting to work with the National Trust Main Street Center (NTMSC), the process conjured up certain images in Stallard’s head, he confesses. His first thoughts were of restrictive review boards, oversight committees and property owners having to fight for their rights.

Medina County Board of REALTORS® received a \$15,000 NAR Smart Growth Grant.

To him, it seemed contrary to what he had advocated over the years in his capacity as a REALTOR® and member of the Medina County Board of REALTORS®, Ohio Association of REALTORS® and, most recently, as a village of Seville Councilman. In those roles, Stallard said, he has been an advocate of private property rights.

Nonetheless, he considered the advice sage and wanted to pursue the process and available funding that would help the village of Seville remain an economically viable community well into the 21st century.

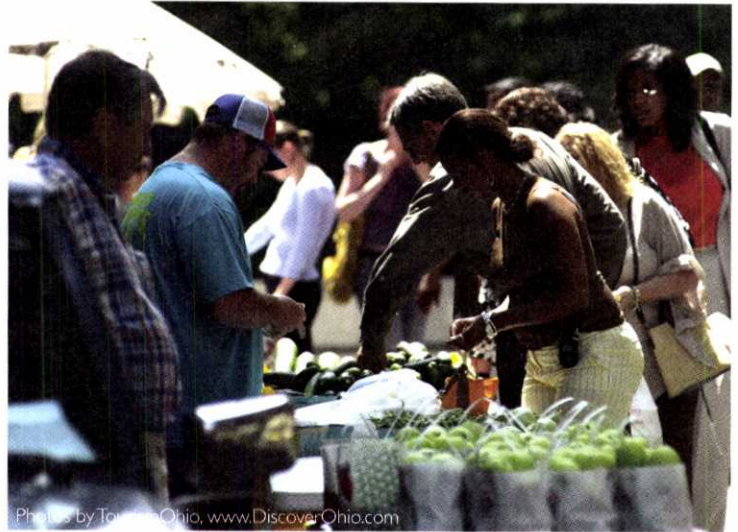
So Stallard left the NAR meeting in Washington and returned to Ohio to work with the Medina County Board of REALTORS® to apply for an NAR Smart Growth Grant. The Medina County Board of REALTORS®, which represents 618 REALTORS® in north eastern Ohio, requested and received a \$15,000 grant.

The grant money was supplemented by the Seville Chamber of Commerce, which committed another \$2,500 for the assessment and strategies to implement NTMSC's Main Street Four Point Approach®.

"I am now a believer," said Stallard who on October 8 through 10 met with two members of a National Trust Main Street Center assessment team — independent urban planner and owner of Washington-D.C.-based Civic Strategies Group Doug Loescher and National Trust Main Street Center senior program officer Teresa Lynch.

NAR Managing Director of Community and Political Affairs Joseph Molinaro also joined the assessment team which, met with Stallard, school officials, downtown businesses, residents and any party that had an interest in revitalization efforts.

Loescher said that Stallard's initial parade-of-horrors reaction is not unlike many others'.



Photos by Tourism Ohio, www.DiscoverOhio.com



Photos provided by
Joseph R. Molinaro

An old garage waiting for
a brownfield designation in
downtown Seville



Seville's closed elementary school has the potential to be developed into
a mixed-use project.



Main Street, Seville, Ohio
Photos provided by Joseph R. Molinaro

An attractive residential neighborhood immediately adjacent to downtown Seville



“The perception that preservation and preservation groups are going to hinder development is very common and widespread,” said Loescher, who added, “I feel one of my jobs is often to go in and try to dispel some of the apprehensions.”

The negative reaction usually stems from a local experience, he said, adding the more local the preservation movement, usually the more restrictive the ordinances and rules.

“The national preservation movement typically is more of education and technical assistance programs,” said Loescher.

Specific to the village of Seville the NTMSC assessment team was asked to look at three particular areas of worry for the city: two brownfields at the edge of downtown; high vacancy rates for downtown ground retail; and the closing of a 68,000-square-foot school built in 1916. It issued a 36-page analysis complete with dozens of recommendations.

In the five months since following these recommendations, which Stallard describes as a blueprint, improvements in all three areas have been made.

“They gave us the blueprint in how to go forward. We have been following those steps, implementing them one at a time, and it’s really starting to pay off,” he said. “There’s a resurgence and things are going in the right direction again.”

What Stallard calls a blueprint, The National Trust Main Street Center calls the Main Street Four Point Approach®. The methodology has been applied in 45 states, has helped funnel \$53.6 billion to 1,200 Main Street commercial districts, and nearly 230,000 buildings have been rehabilitated since the program was launched in 1980. The efforts also have helped create nearly 105,000 new businesses, according to the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The national preservation movement typically is more of education and technical assistance programs.

In short, the approach stresses four points for long term commercial revitalization: Design; Promotion; Economic Restructuring and Organization. The Main Street Four Point Approach® also includes eight overarching values that apply to the four core principles — including involving the public and the private sectors in decision making and taking an incremental approach that begins with small projects.

A key recommendation, said Stallard, was something that no one in Seville had previously considered, despite its near 200-year history: apply for and establish a National Register Historic District for downtown.

It is key, Stallard said, because the city can fully leverage potential funding, tax credits and other incentives. Additionally, the honorific designation can lessen the burden on property owners interested in making property improvements because they won't be required to meet the building code requirements that apply to new construction.

That's been a draw, Stallard said, to property owners and tenants willing to locate the businesses downtown.

"The more lax building requirements have helped people feel safe about investing, going forward and locating their businesses here," he said.

Perhaps the thorniest issue for Seville and the biggest impediment for redevelopment were the brownfields, both of which were the sites of two former gas stations. While the assessment report notes that the gas stations are an eyesore to some, the assessment team found that the gas stations — built in the 1920s and 1930s during the Art Deco era — have "architectural details which could enhance their potential for redevelopment."

The properties are in foreclosure and in need of remediation. National Trust Main Street Center recommended that Seville contact the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency for guidance on the process to be followed and potential funding available. The NTMSC also noted that neither gas station was listed in Ohio as a brownfield.

Medina County has received Environmental Protection Agency grants that can be used for brownfield evaluations and Stallard said the village of Seville will



Photos provided by
Joseph R. Molinaro





apply for \$4,000 in grant opportunities to have the two gas stations' tanks assessed. The evaluation will determine the status of underground gas tanks and whether any hazardous substances have been released into the environment. The assessments will give the two gas stations brownfield status, meaning they will be entered into a statewide database. That will trigger correspondence with property owners who will be notified of compliance requirements.

When Stallard originally requested assistance from the National Trust Main Street Center, downtown Seville's vacancy rate for ground floor retail in an eight-block commercial area had spiked to 33 percent. Helping drive those numbers was the shuttering of the large multi-storefront property which once served as the town's general hardware store, the requisite business for a downtown in rural America.

Along with a hardware store, other staples of the traditional downtown are grocery stores and schools but those, too, closed down in Seville. In 2012 the village closed the 68,000-square-foot Seville-Guildford school. While there was fear the vacant school could be a white elephant because of its size, it was recently sold at auction for \$42,000 to an investor who has

bought several vacant schools in Ohio with the aim of redeveloping them.

"He likes the idea of revamping them, fixing them up and repurposing them," said Stallard, who is working with the developer on a potential mixed-use project for the building.

"I don't know if it was just a perfect storm that we got this grant to do this and then the synergy picked up downtown and the economy started coming back. But you know, I'll take lucky any day of the week."

Today, Stallard said, there are just two vacancies. The recommendation by the NTMSC that the existing cluster of antique and local craft stores be expanded is working and that the new businesses that have filled the downtown storefronts fit the bill. ●

Christine Jordan Sexton is a Tallahassee-based freelance reporter who has done correspondent work for the Associated Press, the New York Times, Florida Medical Business and a variety of trade magazines, including Florida Lawyer and National Underwriter.

TRIBAL HOUSING

Is Improving Around the Country



By Brian E. Clark

It's been nearly two decades since the federal government gave tribes the right to determine and deal with their own housing needs.

Though much remains to be done on some reservations, there has been significant improvement in American Indian housing in tribal communities — thanks to passage of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Assistance (NAHASDA) act in 1996.

In many cases, homes, apartment projects and other community structures are now greener and culturally more significant to tribes and their members.

Prior to NAHASDA, a federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program, many of the tribal dwellings built since World War II were spec-style subdivision homes, said New Mexico architect Jamie Blosser.

“While they were a well-intentioned attempt by HUD to address housing needs, they ultimately had nothing to do with the fabric of those communities,” added Blosser. She is founder of the Sustainable Native Communities

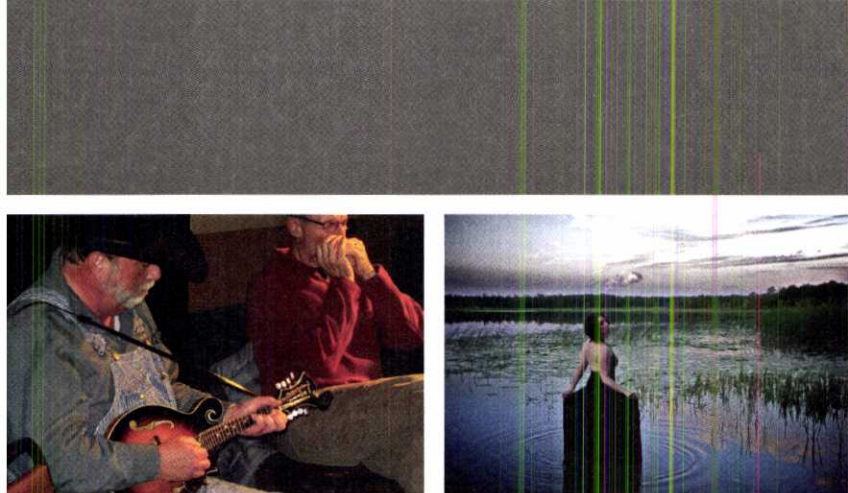
Every Native American community had its own traditional way of settling.

Collaborative (SNCC), a multi-year effort dedicated to improving the quality and sustainability of affordable housing in Native American communities.

“In fact, you see the same HUD homes around the country — no matter the climate or the culture,” Blosser said. “Unfortunately, a lot of the housing helped to create a sense of disconnect from traditional, more-focused settlement patterns.

“Every Native American community had its own traditional way of settling. In the Southwest, for example, the Pueblo Indians had a multi-family mixed-use, mixed-income, highly clustered way of life around plazas. Then the HUD housing came in with its suburban-style homes. And because of that investment, you start to see a disinvestment in traditional cores.”

Blosser said the SNCC collaborative provides solutions for culturally appropriate, green and affordable



CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Crafting Vibrant,
Rural Places
Through Art

By John Van Gieson

When Elisa Korenne moved from New York City to New York Mills, Minn., population 1,195, for an artists' residency program, she wanted the full Minnesota experience, including the canoe camping she read about in a guidebook.

Local outdoorsman Chris Klein, who arranged the trip, suggested they either call it off or cut back to a day trip when other participants cancelled, but Korenne insisted on a real canoe camping expedition, including sleeping in a tent under the stars.

Now, six years later, Korenne is happily married to Klein and is a proud resident of rural Otter Tail County, Minnesota — a far cry from Brooklyn. A singer-songwriter, Korenne is writing a memoir about her experiences titled *100 Miles from Nowhere*.

Among the shows she performs in Minnesota and North Dakota is one called "Oy Vey is Jewish for Uff Da,"



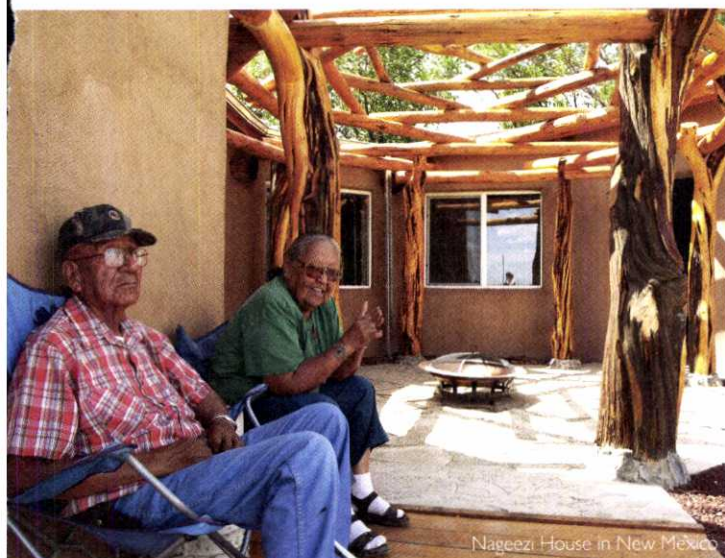
Paradise Garden in Summerville, Ga.

Rural communities all over the country are turning to the arts to revitalize declining areas.

a term conveying disappointment that was brought to the Upper Midwest by Norwegian immigrants. Her experience, however, has been anything but "uff da."

"The ironic thing is that my career is better than ever," Korenne said. "I have opportunities in rural Minnesota that I never would have had in New York City. I have a wonderful husband, I have a really wonderful career and a wonderful lifestyle."

Rural communities all over the country are turning to the arts to revitalize declining areas that have lost jobs and population, and in some cases, been devastated by natural disasters. The goal is economic development, creating



He said the consortium worked closely with Scott Moore of the Kansas City based BNIM Architects "because most of us had very little or no experience with regional planning."

The effort began by bringing together representatives from a myriad of organizations ranging from the tribal president's office to the housing authority to the tribal environmental protection department to HUD, as well as private-sector representatives.

"We said, 'here's the opportunity, what do you want for the future of Pine Ridge?'" explained Tilsen, who said the reservation covers more than 3 million acres.

"That was a question that for the most part had never been asked to our people. So we began collecting data and opinions to create a vision statement. Hundreds of people participated in the process."

The tribe also discussed the role the reservation plays in the greater region, the fact that it has no shopping center, and how to leverage its economic power.

If we are going to solve our housing and economic development problems, we have to create bigger strategies, bring in new money and partner with the private sector.

The tribe created a consortium of 13 organizations that received a major HUD Sustainable Communities grant.

Tilsen said the planning process is now complete and was recently approved as the official sustainable development plan for the Oglala tribe.

"This is the first time in our history that our government has something like this," he said.

"The most positive thing the grant gave us was the resources to convene our people," he said, noting that the next step is to create a regional tribal planning office.

"That will be the glue that holds this all together," he continued. "Much of what ended up in the plan is what many of the organizations were already considering."

The housing authority soon will begin work on 18 houses in what he described as the first energy efficient and live/work community development on the reservation.

Though the tribe has massive funding needs of at least \$750 million to provide adequate housing, the regional plan is a step in the right direction.

"If we are going to solve our housing and economic development problems, we have to create bigger strategies, bring in new money and partner with the private sector," he said. "That may take some doing, especially with the federal budget tightening.

"Nonetheless, this whole process helped us have discussions about the future of our nation, which we've never had here. So in that sense, it's been a very positive experience." ●

Brian E. Clark is a Wisconsin-based journalist and a former staff writer on the business desk of The San Diego Union-Tribune. He is a contributor to the Los Angeles Times, Chicago Sun-Times, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Dallas Morning News and other publications.

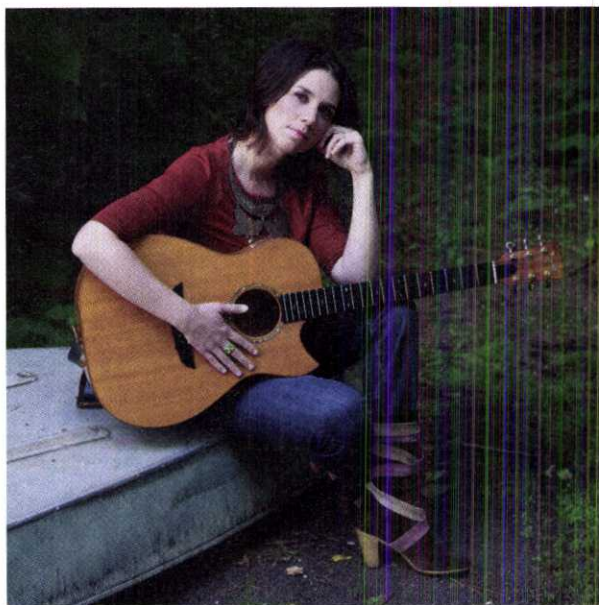
The arts can advance public agendas from job creation and transit-oriented development to cultural preservation and regional competitiveness.

vigorous communities that attract jobs, new residents and tourists. Leading advocates call the movement “creative placemaking.”

Community Support for the Arts

“Leaders across disciplines are recognizing that the arts can advance public agendas from job creation and transit-oriented development to cultural preservation and regional competitiveness,” said Kelley Lindquist, president of Artspace, a Minneapolis organization that develops arts facilities around the country. “I travel probably 26 weeks a year, and wherever I go, people are ready to talk about arts-led community transformation under the umbrella of ‘creative placemaking,’ and they are ready to have a complex, nuanced exchange.”

Artspace is developing a showcase project in Minot, N.D., which was devastated by a flood in 2011 and faces a severe shortage of affordable housing because of an oil boom. The \$9.4 million Minot Artspace Lofts development, which is expected to open in the fall, will feature



Elisa Korenne, an artist originally from Brooklyn, N.Y., moved to New York Mills, Minn., after obtaining a rural arts grant.



The Kaddatz Gallery in downtown Fergus Falls, Minn. The building was under threat of demolition until ArtSpace bought it in 2001. In addition to the gallery, the upstairs has affordable artist live/work spaces.

34 work/live units that will be rented to artists at below-market rates. It's the first new building in downtown Minot in 30 years.

The project will feature a gallery dedicated to the Turtle Mountain Tribal Arts Association, which represents members of five tribes in the Dakotas. Backers hope the focus on Native American artists will turn Minot into the “Santa Fe of the North.”

Michele Anderson, rural project director for Springboard for the Arts in Fergus Falls, Minn., said mobilizing community support is essential to the success of rural arts projects.

“I think the key to getting started is getting people from all sectors of the community, not just artists, but business folks, nonprofits and city council people to come together,” she said.

Springboard for the Arts is working on an Artist Resource Center in Fergus Falls, population 13,000, and a Rural Arts and Culture Summit at the University of Minnesota, Morris. Arts advocates have renovated an old Fergus Falls hotel as a work/live space for artists and are restoring an old theater for performing artists.

The rural arts, or creative placemaking, movement took root in the late 1980s and has accelerated in recent years, encompassing many diverse art forms. There are painters, sculptors, wood workers, glass blowers, musicians, actors, weavers, writers — even artisans who make herbal tinctures in the mountains of Western North Carolina.

Our mission is to grow economies through crafts.

"Our mission is to grow economies through crafts," said Gwynne Rukenbrod, executive director of HandMade in America. Based in Asheville, HandMade in America supports economic development through the arts in 13 small towns in western North Carolina.

A 1995 study reported that crafts artists had a \$120 million economic impact on the 25 counties in the North Carolina mountains — four times greater than tobacco, the No. 1 agricultural crop at the time, Rukenbrod said. By 2006, she said, that figure had increased to \$206.5 million.

John Davis, a guru of the rural arts movement, reported similar economic benefits in two Minnesota communities, New York Mills and Lanesboro, where he led revitalization efforts. Davis is an artist who moved to New York Mills in 1987 after living in Minneapolis and New York.

"It wasn't with the idea of bringing arts into a small town," he said. "I went there to get away from Minneapolis. I just painted barns and houses in New York Mills to survive."

Davis said he became interested in expanding access to the arts in small towns and got the idea the arts could

promote economic development. He initiated the New York Mills artist residency program that changed Korenne's life.

Before the program started, Davis said, a survey indicated 60 percent of respondents said it was a bad idea and they would not support public funding. Town officials contributed \$35,000 anyway, he said, and a year later 68 percent said they supported the arts program and annual funding by the town.

Five years after he launched the program, Davis said, 17 new businesses had moved to New York Mills, creating more than 200 new jobs, a 40 percent increase.

In 2000, Davis left New York Mills to direct a new rural arts program in Lanesboro, population 754, in an area of Southeastern Minnesota known for biking trails and canoeing and kayaking on the Root River.

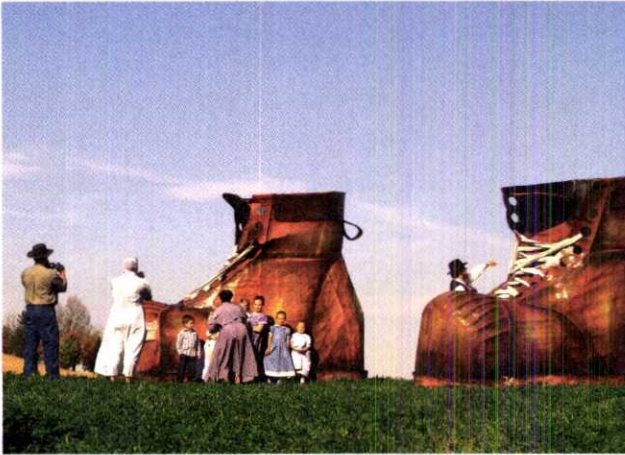
Davis is taking a unique approach in Lanesboro. Instead of housing arts facilities in a single building, he wants to turn the whole town into an art center. "We're shifting the paradigm so that every part of a small town becomes an art center," he said.

(Below) A big crowd for the Exhibit Opening Reception for the "Cutting Edge" Stained Glass show by internationally acclaimed Lanesboro artist Barbara Benson Keith.

(Right) Downtown Lanesboro, Minn.



We're shifting the paradigm so that every part of a small town becomes an art center.



The Farm Art Dtour Fermentation Festival near Reedsburg, Wis.

The mission is to integrate culture and agriculture to build rural communities.

One of his ideas is to turn the municipal parking lot into a “poetry parking lot” where poems written by local, regional and nationally known poets would be posted on signs.

Davis is seeking a grant from Artspace which recently named Lanesboro one of America’s Top Small Town Art-places. Lanesboro is in heady company as the list includes famous art resorts such as Taos, N.M., and Marfa, Texas, and art-oriented ski or summer resorts such as Stowe, Vt., and Highlands, N.C.

There are as many approaches to rural arts development as there are communities seeking revitalization through the arts. Some examples:

- **Wormfarm Institute** in Reedsburg, Wis., which is located on a working farm, requires artists in residence to work in the garden. It displays large, temporary art works in farm fields during its annual Fermentation Fest.
- **Paradise Gardens** in Summerville, Ga., features the work of the late folk artist Howard Finster, a preacher who created more than 46,000 works of art.



Courtesy of HandMade in America

- **HandMade in America** taps methane from an old land-fill to fuel kilns for ceramic artists, furnaces for glass blowers and a greenhouse at its Energy Exchange program near Bakersville, N.C.

Co-founder Donna Neuwirth said Wormfarm Institute’s mission is to “integrate culture and agriculture to build rural communities. It’s a living laboratory of arts and ecology and fertile ground for creative work.”

Neuwirth and her partner Jay Salinas are former Chicagoans who founded the Institute in 2000 on a 40-acre farm in rural Wisconsin, naming it after Charles Darwin’s quote: “Every fertile grain of soil has passed at least once through the gut of an earthworm.” Salinas coined the term “cultureshed” to describe their community.

A cultureshed is: “1.) A geographic region irrigated by streams of local talent and fed by deep pools of human and natural history; 2.) An area nourished by what is cultivated locally; and 3.) The efforts of writers, performers, visual artists, scholars, farmers and chefs who contribute to a vital and diverse local culture.”



(Above) Culture stands sell produce on some days and other days feature puppet shows at the Wormfarm Institute. (Right) Paradise Garden in Summerville, Ga.

Last year, an artists-in-residence program in Wisconsin brought in well over \$1 million in direct spending.

Neuwirth said the Institute selects two to four artists at a time for residencies ranging from three weeks to six months. Unlike most residencies that serve as a “retreat,” theirs is an engagement in the life of a working farm.

The artists build multi-purpose roadside “culture stands” that can be used one day for selling produce and the next for cultural events such as puppet shows, she said.

Wormfarm holds an annual 10-day Fermentation Fest in October, featuring agricultural products that ferment, from grain to beer, milk to cheese and cabbage to sauerkraut, Neuwirth said. The main event is the Farm/Art DTour that takes place along a 50-mile drive through scenic farmland from Reedsburg through three other small towns. The landscape is punctuated with large, attention-getting art installations and roadside culture stands in farm fields along the route.

Neuwirth said the Fermentation Fest attracts 8,000 to 10,000 visitors. A University of Wisconsin–Extension

study reported that each agricultural tourist in the state spends an average of \$137 in the communities where agritourism events are held, she said.

“Based on that number, last year we brought in well over \$1 million in direct spending and that doesn’t include indirect,” she said.

Maintaining a Visionary’s Legacy

Chattooga County, home of Summerville in Northwest Georgia, “was the most depressed county in Appalachian Georgia” about three years ago, said Jordan Poole, executive director of the Paradise Gardens Foundation.

“Everyone who is connected with this project realized we were not going to allow our town to die,” Poole said. “We were going to enhance our town. We have a lot of local crafts that have been handed down from generation to generation, and we’re able to give these people a showcase.”



A Center for the Arts is fixing up a theater in Fergus Falls, Minn., to use as artist studio spaces.

The centerpiece of the revitalization project was the restoration of famed folk artist Howard Finster's Paradise Gardens. Finster was a local preacher who said he was called at the age of 59 to devote the rest of his life to celebrating God through folk art creations. When he died in 2001 at the age of 81, Finster left behind a huge body of work at his Paradise Garden near Summerville.

In 2011, Chattooga County purchased the deteriorating site, and the Paradise Garden Foundation was created to restore it.

"Paradise Garden is a maze of buildings, sculptures and displays," the Foundation's website says. "The Gardens were built from found objects and recycled materials ranging from bottles, bathtubs and toilets to bicycle frames and cast-off jewelry."

Poole said the restored Garden has brought an estimated \$500,000 into the community since the Foundation launched the restoration project.

A Critical Mass of Crafts Artists

Rukenbrod, a glass artist, said the HandMade in America program grew out of a meeting that Asheville Chamber

Rural arts programs are both personally rewarding and enrich the participating communities.

of Commerce officials had in New York on an economic development mission in the mid 1990s.

"They got into a conversation about asset-based economic development," she said. "Continuing the process, they discovered that one of the biggest unknown and uncelebrated assets of our area was crafts artists."

More than 4,000 crafts artists live in the 25-county mountain region in Western North Carolina, she said.

HandMade in America offers those artists entrepreneurial training and works with them to develop markets for their works, Rukenbrod said. The program works with local officials to revitalize their communities, some of which offer artist residency programs, through the arts.

HandMade in America has leveraged \$10 million in public funding over the past 15 years with \$40 million in private grants and donations, Rukenbrod said.

She said the Energy Exchange near Bakersville offers three-year residencies to two glass artists and four ceramicists at a time.

"We create business incubator opportunities for artists to be exposed to different markets," she said. "We teach them how to enter the wholesale market place and do booths at a wholesale trade show. We feel like our approach is a holistic approach where we teach crafts artists how to be more successful."

HandMade in America also works with 650 fiber artists and farmers who raise the animals and grow the plants the artists need to create their products, Rukenbrod said.

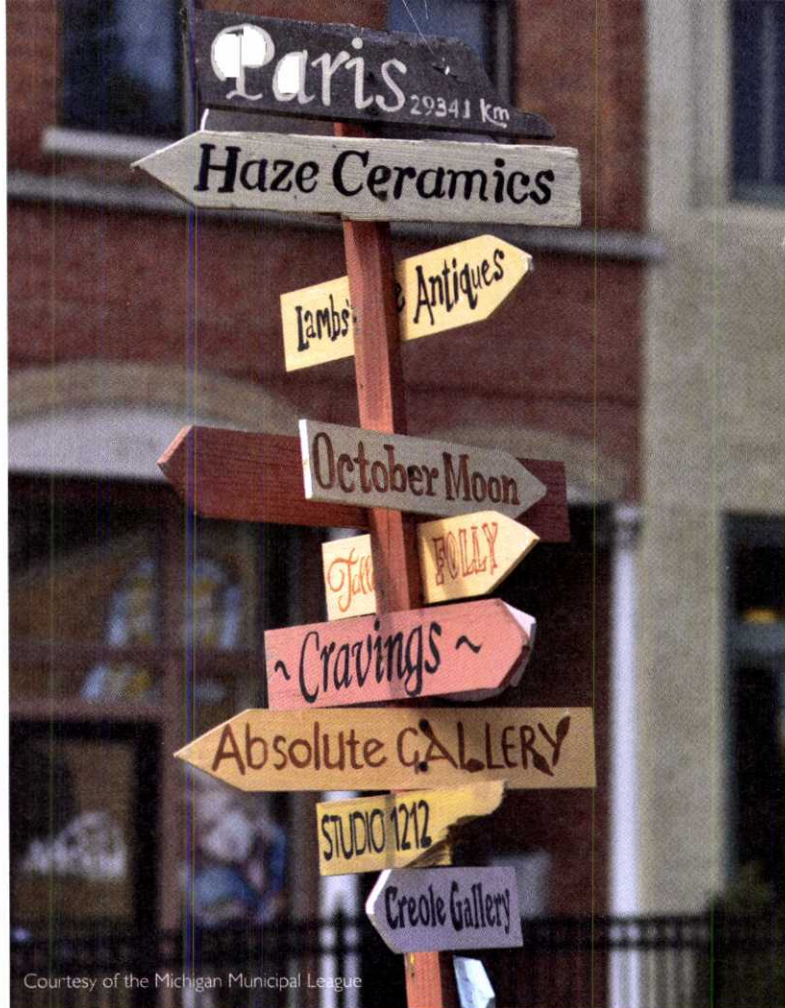
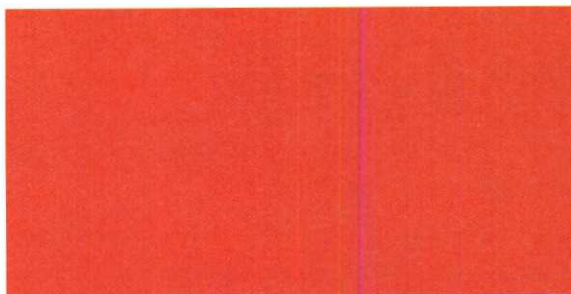
From an artist's perspective, said Minnesota singer-songwriter Korenne, rural arts programs are both personally rewarding and enrich the participating communities.

"I and many artists like myself make life here more rich, more interesting," she said. "It really makes the area a much more diverse, engaged, community-oriented place." ●

John Van Gieson is a freelance writer based in Tallahassee, Fla. He owns and runs Van Gieson Media Relations, Inc.

A Case for Place

By creating places that attract people, Michigan is using the concept to boost communities.



Courtesy of the Michigan Municipal League

By Tracey C. Velt

When you think of Michigan, it's natural that you think of automobiles. "We're the auto-centric capital of the world," says Gilbert M. White, a REALTOR® and placemaking consultant in Haslett, Mich. "We [the state of Michigan] were good at producing sprawl and now we want to build people habitat," he says.

"Michigan remains a state with some small industries that revolve around manufacturing. That won't change," says James Tischler, community development division director for the Michigan State Housing Development Authority in Lansing, Mich. "But we need to diversify now that the recession is over. The current administration has established a high priority for re-establishing prosperity in the state."

They'll do that through placemaking, a growing international movement that capitalizes "on a local community's assets, inspiration and potential, ultimately creating good public space that promotes people's health, happiness and well being," according to the Project for Public Spaces.

In the Beginning

"Out of the recession came a governor who readily embraced this movement," says Tischler. So, the state started benchmarking, not just economic policies, but talent, as well.

"The data was startling. When you research where the millennials and entrepreneurs were migrating, they were moving to a number of metros. Where in those metros they were going, got us to recognize place," he says. "They're not going to the suburbs, and that's a national trend."

In fact, the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR) and the Michigan Association of REALTORS® (MAR) confirmed that trend in recent studies. All of this led to creating places in Michigan cities and

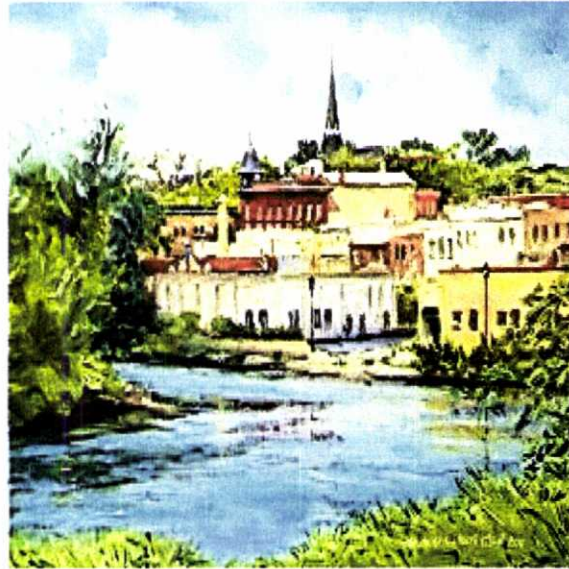
Placemaking is a growing international movement that capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration and potential.

PL

Northfield's Riverwalk Market Fair begins its fourth year along the Cannon

By Kate Fridley

Successful walk



The Riverwalk Market Fair begins Saturday and runs 21 weeks. Now in its fourth year, Riverwalk attracts artists, farmers and food vendors alike to Bridge Square along the Cannon River. (News file photo)

Riverwalk Market Fair's 21-Saturday season kicks off on Saturday.

Now in it's fourth year, Riverwalk is located in Northfield's historic downtown on Bridge Square along the scenic Cannon River. Hours are 9 am to 1 pm, rain or shine.

Produce from local farmers, artisan foods, art and fine craft

Local farmers will be on hand with fresh-picked early salad greens, radishes, a variety of bedding plants, eggs and flowers.

Artisan foods include fresh-baked breads, local honey, and delicious pastries, tarts and quiches from Martha's Eats and Treats. The Fossum Family Farm returns with Alpaca yarn as well.

Watercolors, prints, mixed-media paintings, ceramics, photography, glass art, and jewelry are among the art and fine crafts for sale on opening day.

Several of Riverwalk Market Fair's favorite artists are back, including Geralyn Thelen with her colorful fused glass plates, vases, and whimsical garden decorations, ceramist Barbara Zavaruha with her functional stoneware, and fine-art photographer Dennis McClintock.

Saturday's Featured Farmer

Kathy Zeman of Nerstrand owns and operates Simple Harvest Farm Organics (www.simpleharvestfarm.com). Her farm uses sustainable farming practices to produce a wide range of products including, vegetables, goats, goat milk soap, cheese, poultry, pork, lamb, Lopi wool yarn and fleeces, and (with her brother, Nick) eggs.

As a special opening day treat, Kathy will feature her popular Rhubarb Fruit Rollups. Kathy has been a vendor at Riverwalk Market Fair since its beginning in 2010 and serves on the Board of Directors of Riverwalk Market Fair.

Saturday's Featured Artist

Kathy Miller, one of Riverwalk Market Fair's most popular artists, will return with her latest floral and landscape watercolor paintings. Her "White Peonies" won the prestigious "Best of Show" award at the Minnesota Watercolor Society's 2013 Juried Spring Show. Kathy opens a new show at the Northfield Arts Guild on June 14. (www.kmillerwatercolors.com)

Saturday's live music and kid's activity

Acclaimed hammered dulcimer artist and singer Kathleen Johnson (www.kathleen-johnson.com) returns to Riverwalk Market Fair with selections from France, Scotland, early America and the Irish music revival of the 20th Century. Suzuki violin students from Northfield will offer a 30-minute concert at 10 a.m.

Monica Irwin of Budding Farmers, a new project that connects children with healthy food at farmers markets and through community supported agriculture, will host an interactive activity for young people designed to encourage the love of farming. (www.buddingfarmers.com).

— *Riverwalk Market Fair*

In June 2010, Geralyn Thelen pitched a small tent over her arrangement of fused glass artwork, sat back and waited. It was the beginning of a long summer selling her delicate pieces in downtown Northfield.

Thelen is one of a many local vendors to grace Northfield's annual Riverwalk Market Fair. Founded in 2010 by local artists and entrepreneurs with the support of the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, the open-air market offers a variety of live music and special events, artisan foods and local artwork.

Riverwalk will run in Northfield's Bridge Square every Saturday from June 1 until Oct. 26, except on Sept. 7, which is during Defeat of Jesse James Days weekend. New hours are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

After a long winter, the fair provides an opportunity for fun and celebration of Northfield culture. Thelen embraces that notion.

"People like my work because it is so colorful and makes them feel good Thelen said. "People come into my booth and say they can feel the joy, which is important when times are tough and gloomy."

While Riverwalk's wares are of a local flavor, its influence extends beyond its mother city. According to a 2012 economic impact survey, 31 percent of the 2012 Riverwalk visitors came from outside of Northfield. The fair draws tourists from areas including the Twin Cities, Owatonna, Albert Lea, Red Wing, Rochester and the five-state area.

For Thelen, the benefits of incoming tourism have already come to fruition.

"My pieces have been taken all over the world," she said, noting that people who travel internationally often bring her glass art with them as housewarming gifts. "I have some in Australia, Italy, Spain, Sweden."

Riverwalk's regional influences have brought increased prosperity to Northfield's economy. Since its 2010 debut, Riverwalk vendors have made over \$422,500 in revenue, and the same economic impact survey determined that 2012 visitors spent \$136,000 at local businesses.

To bolster the fair's ongoing success, the Economic Development Authority (EDA) of the City of Northfield recently approved an \$18,000 budget for the staffing and promotion of the 2013 Riverwalk Market Fair.

"EDA support of the Riverwalk Market Fair will help make Northfield a magnet regional center for the arts, which is part of the city's plan for economic development," EDA president Jack Hoschouer said in a press release. Many local artists were born and grew as a result of the Fair's resources and connection opportunities.

Marsha Kitchel, a painter of portraits and Southeast Minnesota landscapes, is considered a Riverwalk success story. Riverwalk turned painting from a passionate hobby into a vocation and a business after a job loss for Marsha Kitchel. She was at Riverwalk Market Fair every Saturday the first year.

After selling her first painting for more than \$900 at the 2010 Riverwalk, she has since "graduated" the fair. Her pieces appear, among other places, at the Northfield Arts Guild and the Northfield Senior Center.

"Riverwalk changed my life, kick-started a career from what had been a hobby, and put me in touch with thousands of people," Kitchel said.

Another Riverwalk success story is Jennifer Wolcott.

Wrestling steel is a daily part of the job for Wolcott. Her father, an art professor at Carleton College, taught her to weld while doing farm equipment repairs when she was 12. Wolcott calls his style "artistic farm welding" because for her dad "machine repair was more art than science.

An established artist, Wolcott uses Riverwalk Market Fair to fill in her summer between bigger regional shows.

"It's my hometown and a receptive audience," she said in a release. "Riverwalk is easy, quick and I can turn up when I am available."

Wolcott feels Riverwalk can serve a role for a larger number of established and successful artists, while improving the quality and variety of Riverwalk's offerings each week.

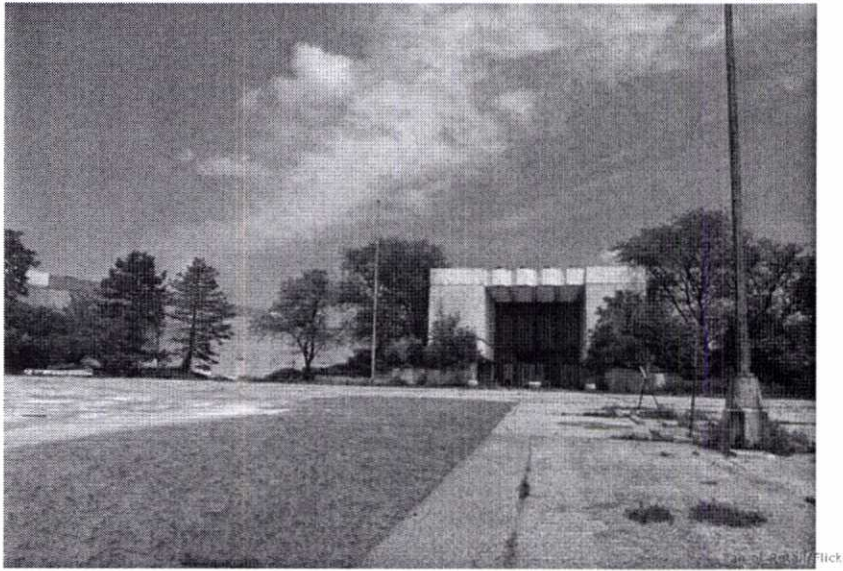
Reach Northfield News intern Kate Fridley at 507-645-1106.

PC



Even Teenagers Don't Want to Go to Malls Anymore

KATID BENFIELD 12:05 PM ET COMMENTS



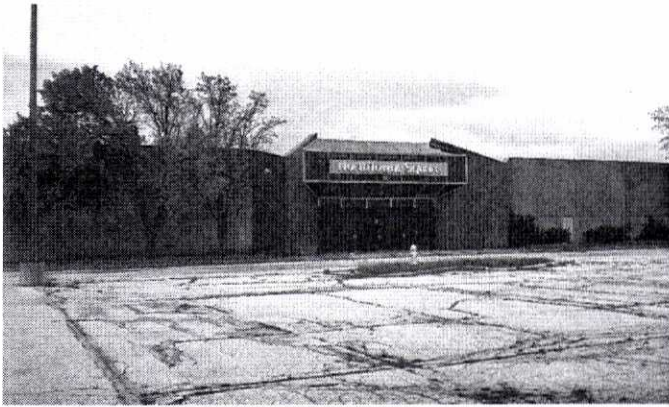
Hanging out on social media is beginning to replace hanging out in shopping malls for many American teenagers, long a major sector of the customer base for enclosed malls and big-box stores. In addition, according to an article written by Adrienne Pasquarelli for *Crain's New York Business*, the teen population is contracting, having dropped two percent between 2008 and 2011.

Pasquarelli sums up the trend:

Malls have been on the wane for years, as shoppers turn to e-commerce, which is easier, and outlets, which are cheaper. But retailers that cater to teens are especially vulnerable since their customers surf social media websites more than they hang out in malls.

Enclosed mall shopping was down in 2012 compared to 2011 despite the gradual strengthening of the economy. Some well-known retailers are suffering the consequences: Aéropostale, for example, saw its stock price decline nearly 40 percent over the course of a year. "The company is trimming its fleet, closing about 100 stores, or 10 percent of its base, and was forced into heavy markdowns last quarter," writes Pasquarelli, whose article was published in April.

The implications for land use are significant, as abandoned retail outlets and dead malls become signs of community decay, in many cases exacerbating the problems associated with suburban sprawl as they and their parking lots take up unproductive space and force customers to drive elsewhere for shopping.



Abandoned mall Northtowne Square. Image courtesy of Flickr user Michael Meiser

Among older properties losing their original functions, there's a distinction to be made between strip malls, large enclosed malls, and big-box "power centers." Strip malls typically have smaller storefronts aligned close together and facing the parking lot and street, which in many cases have allowed them to find new adaptations for small businesses, including those run by immigrant populations that have settled in inner suburbs. Vacant large enclosed malls typically have a mixture of large "anchors" and smaller retail venues, but the smaller spaces generally are not visible from the outside, making them less attractive to new businesses that need retail traffic, even if the rents for them are becoming more affordable. Big boxes are more visible, at least from roadways, but the spaces are too large for small tenants.

The good news is that there have been success stories of adaptations of these larger retail venues, and rethinking their functions has produced some very good templates for adaptive reuse and redevelopment. Galina Tachieva, June Williamson, and Ellen Dunham-Jones are among urbanist thought leaders who have produced very good books on the subject.

But the fact remains that, in most markets across the country, demand for adaptive reuse has been slow to build. In a meticulously written and documented article for the *University of Colorado Law Review*, Sarah Schindler summarized some of the grim, on-the-ground facts:

Although turnover and short-term vacancy is normal in a retail landscape, the vacancy rate for big boxes is unprecedented. One source estimated the national retail shopping center vacancy rate to be 11 percent after the first quarter of 2010. This rate has increased since 2008, when the national retail vacancy average was 8.4 percent and 2000, when average retail vacancy was at a low of 6 percent.

Not only are these stores going dark, but they are staying that way. A study in Texas in 2005 found that the thirty empty former Wal-Marts in the state remained unoccupied for approximately three years on average. A few of the stores remained empty for a decade; one stayed dark for seventeen years. Similarly, a former Kmart in Hastings, Nebraska was vacated in 1992 and sat empty for a decade.

Schindler is an associate professor at the University of Maine School of Law.



Former Super Kmart in New Philadelphia, Ohio. Image courtesy of Flickr user Fan of Retail

She nails the consequences for communities:

These empty stores impose numerous negative externalities on the communities in which they are located, including blight, reduced property values, loss of tax revenue, environmental problems, and a decrease in social capital.

Schindler's article, which is well worth a read for those who want to dig deep into the topic, proposes that municipalities use their zoning authority to alleviate the harms associated with abandoned retail properties, including code changes that "incentivize redevelopment or reuse and disincentivize new greenfield development."

Neal Peirce, writing on his *Citiwire* website, suggests that performance bonds, covering all reasonable property recovery costs, be required of all industrial or commercial owners whose properties might constitute a future blight. An alternative, Big box But and cited in Peirce's column, would be to require landowners to secure an insurance policy that at least provides for the removal of an abandoned structure. The insurance policy and subsequent premium would cover the cost of dismantling, removal, and restoration of a site. (Peirce's and LaMore's articles address abandoned industrial properties and brownfields as well as abandoned commercial sites.)



Former Circuit City/Bottom Dollar in Garfield Heights, Ohio. Image courtesy of Flickr user Fan of Retail

Peirce, whose article does not mince words, reminds us that parking lots are also a big part of the problem:

Thousands of abandoned facilities – once-active steel and auto plants, gas stations, supermarkets, convenience store blocks, Walmarts, Kmarts and other retailers' failed big boxes – litter the landscape from sea to shining sea.

And it's not just the buildings – it's the parking lots. Contaminated with brake fluid, hydraulic fluid, gas and crankcase oil – everything that drips out of cars – acres of parking space generate runoff that must be treated and hauled off in an environmentally responsible way . . .

The basic big box form – a single-use structure surrounded by a sea of parking space, isolated from town and community centers, rarely connected to public transit – is emblematic of the sprawl and waste that plagues urban development in America.

So, with more and more evidence that the late-20th century suburban retail model is on the decline, those interested in smarter land use have both good news and bad news. The good news is that we may have less new retail sprawl being built. The bad news is that we may also have *more* old retail sprawl to deal with.

Top image: Former Super Kmart in New Philadelphia, Ohio. Image courtesy of Flickr user Fan of Retail.

This post originally appeared on the NRDC's Switchboard blog, an Atlantic partner site.

Keywords: Malls, Big Box Stores, Infrastructure, Zoing, Parking Lots, Retail



Kaid Benfield is the director of the Sustainable Communities program at the Natural Resources Defense Council, an adjunct professor at the George Washington University School of Law, co-founder of the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system, and co-founder of Smart Growth America coalition, and author of several books on cities, smart growth and sprawl. Watch for Kaid's forthcoming book, . All

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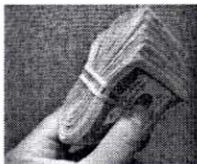
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What Happens When a Town Puts People Before Cars?

SARAH GOODYEAR 12:18 PM ET COMMENTS



Nearly three years ago, a Minnesota man named Charles Marohn published a piece called "Confessions of a Recovering Engineer" on the blog of his not-for-profit organization, Strong Towns. In it, he describes the priorities that he learned in his training as an engineer: first comes speed; then traffic volume; then safety; then cost.

Following those principles, Marohn was designing wider, faster roads to cut through the hearts of American towns. He discovered that the people in those towns often pushed back, asking why trees and sidewalk space had to be sacrificed in order to widen the road, and how their children could possibly be safer with cars whizzing by at top speed.

Armed with the prestige of his chosen profession and a pile of studies and guidelines that explained why bigger was always better, Marohn would explain that "these standards have been shown to work across the world," and that people who objected to the loss of trees and yard space and peace for their families were simply wrong.

Then, unlike many engineers, he started thinking about the human consequences of what he was doing:

In retrospect I understand that this was utter insanity. Wider, faster, treeless roads not only ruin our public places, they kill people. Taking highway standards and applying them to urban and suburban streets, and even county roads, costs us thousands of lives every year. There is no earthly reason why an engineer would ever design a fourteen foot lane for a city block, yet we do it continuously. Why?

The answer is utterly shameful: Because that is the standard.

Marohn, as the title of his piece implies, has rejected the standards he learned in school. He now travels the country spreading the word that things can be done differently – that America's towns and cities can build streets that are safe and operate at a human scale, the old-fashioned way, and that they can save money and bolster their economies in the process.

That's exactly what the village of Hamburg, in upstate New York, has done. According to an article in the *New York Times*, the leaders of this community of 10,000 rejected the proposed widening of U.S. Route 62, the local main street, back in 2001. After consulting with Dan Burden, a nationally known advocate for walkable communities, village residents approved an alternative plan by a vote of four to one.



Main Street. Image courtesy of Gurney, Becker and Bourne Real Estate.

Main Street was rebuilt not as a high-speed funnel for cars, but instead as a pleasant shopping street with narrower traffic lanes, trees, and ample sidewalks. Roundabouts replaced intersections, and in the two years after construction was completed in 2009, crashes were down by 66 percent and injuries fell by 60 percent. "Accidents in [the roundabouts] need a tow truck, not an ambulance," a transportation department official told the *Times*.

Property values in the once-fading downtown have doubled and local business owners are investing millions in new projects. New residents have been attracted by the appeal of a village center where a simple walk up and down Main Street is a pleasure rather than something to be endured. Hamburg was, like many American towns and cities in the Rust Belt, in decline. Now it is thriving.

The improved quality of life and revived economic health of Hamburg echo the experience of Poynton in the United Kingdom, where a traffic-calming "shared streets" plan has resuscitated a formerly traffic-choked village center.

The 20th-century model of traffic engineering is not only outdated, but is also downright hazardous to public health and economic development. Every year, communities around the world are demonstrating that there is another way. Treating a community's streets like a sewage system that flushes cars through quickly and efficiently has been a disastrous experiment. How many more towns and cities will be gutted before the standards that Marohn learned in engineering school are scrapped?

Top image: Main Street. Images Courtesy of Western New York Heritage Press.

Keywords: Pedestrian Infrastructure, Roundabouts, Main Street, Walkability, Upstate New York, Traffic Engineering



Sarah Goodyear has written about cities for a variety of publications, including *Grist* and *Streetsblog*. She lives in Brooklyn. All posts »

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