

# *City of Afton*

## **Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee (NRGC)**

**Agenda  
Tuesday, March 7, 2017  
5:00 PM**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Approval of Agenda**
- 4. Approval of Minutes**
  - A. Meeting Minutes from February 7, 2017
- 5. Business**
  - A. Will Carlson Sketch Plan Application for a Preservation and Land Conservation Development (PLCD) Subdivision of 218 acres on 60<sup>th</sup> Street West of Trading Post Trail
  - B. Development of a Template for the Committee's Review of Future Major Subdivisions and Particularly PLCD's
  - C. What Afton Residents Can Do to Advance Environmental Causes such as Clean Water
  - D. Well Testing Update
  - E. Update on Council and Planning Commission Business – Council Member Palmquist
  - F. Natural Resources and Groundwater Management Organizations Updates
- 6. Adjourn**

## Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee (NRGC)

February 7, 2017 unapproved minutes

Taken by Susan Winsor

- **Call to order**
- **Roll call:** Present were May Bend, Perry Eggers, Mark Have, Keith Hoffmann, Jack Kollmer, Susan Winsor, City Administrator Ron Moore, and City Council liaison Bill Palmquist. Annie Perkins was absent.
- **Agenda additions:**
  - Susan suggested we identify who will replace Jill Chezik in attending South Washington County Watershed meetings (the watershed where the Carlson PLCD lies).
  - Jack Kollmer suggested we discuss a 2/5/2017 Pioneer Press article about how citizens can adopt a drain/how citizens can help environmental and drainage causes. (<http://www.adopt-a-drain.org>) and (<http://bit.ly/2loVkJi>). This ended up being added to next month's agenda due to lack of time—what the individual Aftonite can do to advance environmental causes like clean water.
  - Neighborhood letter about proposed PLCD concerns (also moved to next month's agenda).
- **December and January NRGC minutes approval:**
  - December 2016 minute amendments: Ken Ostlie is the correct spelling of the Minnesota Land Trust contact, Jack Kollmer is the correct spelling of the NRGC committee member, and 218 acres is the correct size of the Carlson PLCD.
  - January 2017 minute amendments: None
- **May Bend** was elected NRGC committee chair.
- **Carlson proposed PLCD Review:**
  - **Joe Bush updated** attendees on new developments: He's collaborating with S. Washington County Watershed technical person Andy Shilling on appropriate vegetation plantings to reduce erosion and water runoff, especially where specific concerns have been raised (lots 1, 2, 13, 14, northern boundary of conservation easement). These planting provisos will be incorporated into development covenants and homeowners assn., he said. Lot #3 was deleted since last plat, and lots 1&2 were moved further back from the creek. The Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) will be completed mid-February. Bush says this will address many of the concerns raised about runoff, steep slopes, etc. Bush has added two additional access rights of way, between lots 4&5, and between lots 8&9, to maintain related plantings and the Conservation Easement.
  - **Afton Parks Committee** is working on public access options to conservation easement. Liaison Bill Palmquist says there are creek flooding boundaries affecting where a public trail could possibly go; not sure whether public crossing the creek is doable or advisable; best to wait till spring to walk the property and make informed decision. Public access will be settled sometime between preliminary and final plat, Bush says.
  - **Park dedication fee** determination: According to Ron Moore, the park dedication fee is calculated as follows:

- In lieu of land dedication shall be equivalent to 7.5 % of the predevelopment land value to be subdivided, subject to a minimum fee of \$5,000 per dwelling unit and a maximum fee of \$10,000 per dwelling unit.
  - May asked what the **distance is between closest lot line and the creek**, along lots 1, 2 and creek (western edge). Bush not sure due to scale of map on reduced plat copy. He says 75 ft. is required from ordinary high water mark.
  - **Community members submitted a letter of PLCD** concerns which was distributed at the meeting. Kollmer suggested we table that until the next NRG meeting to provide adequate time to review it. Ron Moorse will give Bush a copy of the letter also.
  - Winsor asked that the **Conservancy Overlay District and Shoreland Management District be clearly overlaid** on the next plat, as requested at the December meeting. Bush said it's hard to identify specifically where they lie, but he will do that.
  - Although lot 3 has been removed, Winsor has continued concerns about the steep slopes (above 18%) on what are now lots 2, 4, 13, 14, and related soil erosion and water runoff, as earmarked in Shoreland Management districts and less specifically in Conservancy overlay districts, in which these lots lie. Bush replies that each lot has the requisite 2.5 acres of buildable more level space.
- **Discussion of PLCD future checklist** to streamline this process in the future and make it more consistent, as proposed by Keith Hoffmann:
  - **Committee agreed to have a subcommittee of three** to begin drafting this (Keith, Mark and Annie, if she agrees.) over the next 30 days. (This would not be a quorum because the NRG committee will number nine people next month after the addition of Bake Baker to the NRG.) They will query Barr Engineering, the watershed, St. Croix River Assn., and other organizations; also Susan and Annie's documents from December NRG meeting, for potential checklists that may streamline this process.
- **Other input** committee members have on the PLCD. Perry, a longtime neighbor of proposed PLCD and hunter on that parcel, does not agree with the PLCD increasing the statutory density of 3 per 40 acres stipulated for ag land.
- **New Agreement between the State of MN and the USDA** for Water Quality discussion, based on article at (<http://bit.ly/2kqKOLh>). (40% of Minnesota's waters are impaired, the article reports.) How can Afton access some of the \$50 million potentially on this new collaboration targeting 60,000 western and southern MN acres, as reported in news article? Jack Kollmer suggests that we collaborate with the newly forming Grants committee to make some of these topics (above) a top priority for grants to be written.
- **Septic Upgrade Program discussion**, as reported in news article. "201" cluster sewage treatment installations on River Road/Old Village would seem to be reaching the end of their 20-year useful lifespan, according to 1983 news report. (the downtown Village Improvement Project will replace these systems with a small scale community wastewater collection and treatment system.)
- **Well testing update:** We have Afton well testing data in hand from 2002, 2015, 2016 and 2017, but the county is not available to map the results, Keith and Mark report. Bill Palmquist says that his experience confirms that this is technically challenging to do.

Winsor suggests that Excel graphics capabilities may be helpful, if we have someone who's good with Excel....

- **May suggested that the committee have a standing** column in the City of Afton newsletter to report on appropriate environmental items in the news such as things discussed at this meeting. The committee nominated Mark to write these and he agreed.
- **Update on City Council courtesy of liaison** Bill Palmquist: The Afton City Council moved to add to MIDS language: that if any current or future ordinances are more strict than MIDS language, the stricter Afton language will prevail.
- **Meeting attendance policy:** The committee agreed to have a 10-day notice cutoff of not being able to attend the scheduled NRGC meetings, to avoid not having a quorum and wasting time. Keith, Mark and Perry will likely not be able to attend the March 7 meeting. Jack will miss the May meeting.
- **NRGC management organization updates**, abbreviated due to time constraints:

- Winsor reported that the Washington Conservation District (WCD) reimbursed Afton landowners \$70,000 recently for erosion-control projects. In 2017, WCD will distribute \$2 million to various Washington County conservation-related causes this coming year, including: – \$100,000 will go to Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment to collect, digitize and review historical septic system permit records from 1972-2004. The county will also conduct a risk analysis to identify problem areas where failing systems could be polluting surface and groundwater resources. (Would this digitization will partially help to map the Afton well testing results?)

The Minnesota Department of Health will provide Washington County with \$20,000 to more than 20 landowners seal abandoned and unused wells in targeted areas, near public wells and areas of contamination (100% cost-share up to \$2000). In other parts of the county, the existing 50% cost share program will remain in place (wells that are part of a current property transfer or sale are not eligible).

\$81,000 will be used to expand the existing Master Water Stewards program into Washington and southern Chisago Counties. In partnership with the Freshwater Society, the WCD will recruit and train 20 citizen stewards to implement clean water projects in priority areas of the Brown's Creek, Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix, Comfort Lake – Forest Lake, Middle St. Croix, and South Washington Watersheds. Stewards will complete a total of ten water quality improvement projects in addition to providing support for education and civic engagement activities.

- **May must withdraw from the Master Water Stewards** program due to professional and health concerns.
- **Adjourn:** May made a motion to adjourn at 6:40, Keith seconded it.

# West Lakeland twp.

# Denmark twp.

## Afton

Afton State Park

18

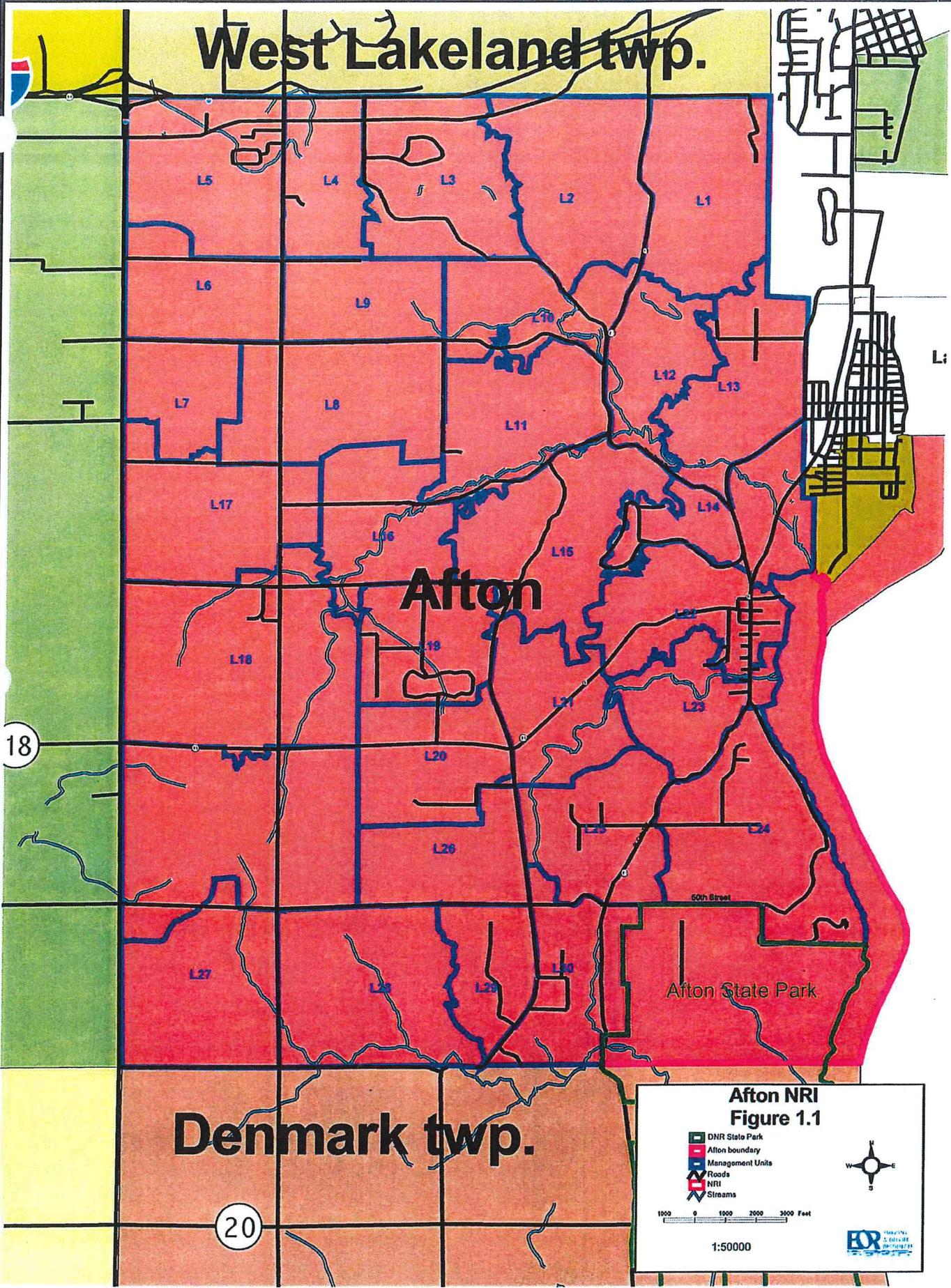
20

**Afton NRI**  
**Figure 1.1**

- DNR State Park
- Afton boundary
- Management Units
- Roads
- NRI
- Streams

1000 0 1000 2000 3000 Feet

1:50000



## Carlson PLCD feedback from Susan Winsor, NRGW committee

### Concerns:

**\*Fragility:** A large share of proposed lots lie in Conservancy Overlay District (see Sec. 12-137) and Shoreland Management Areas. Afton Sec 12-137 says “*..the Conservancy overlay district’s purpose is to manage areas unsuitable for development due to wet soils, steep slopes, ..unique areas of natural and biological characteristics...scenic views and other physical features of unique natural and biological characteristics in need of proper land use management. Such areas shall include the following:*

*\*Elements of local hydrologic system in need of protection and preservation.”* (My concerns are the steep slopes and the trout stream).

**\*Water quality:** Lake St. Croix (St Croix River) is listed on the Federal Impaired Waters List for excess phosphorus. (See <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-iw6-04e.pdf>). The Mn PCA calls for a 27% reduction in phosphorus contributions (loading). The steep slopes on the Eastern and Southern part of the Carlson proposed PLCD parcels are a concern because sediment (from erosion) carries phosphorus, which creates algae blooms beyond certain thresholds (stream and St. Croix River both a concern.) Stream erosion carrying phosphorus does not support a 27% reduction in St. Croix River phosphorus loading. Also, the trout stream is already impaired. (see PCA Assessment unit 82-0001-00). The section has a PCA TMDL plan for nutrient/eutrophication biological indicators.

*\*Sec. 12:46: 5. “Lake or stream frontage lots. All lots having frontage on a water body or lying within a Shoreland Management Area (part of this development) shall be subject to the regulations of the Shoreland Management ordinance, Article III of this chapter.” ...“All structures shall be set back a minimum of 20 ft. from the crest of all slopes exceeding 18% as determined by Zoning Administrator.:*

*...Sec 12-1329 B. “Any plat proposed in a Shoreland Management District must have approval of the MN DNR...and the watershed district.”*

\*Carlson lots 1, 2, 3’s drainage is to the North, toward the trout stream. This trout stream is not only ecologically valuable in and of itself, but feeding into the St. Croix River to the East, a nationally designated Wild and Scenic River and does not currently meet federal water quality standards. The Minnesota PCA designates Lake St. Croix and the river to its south (that includes the part East of this development) as impaired.

Table 49 of the PCA report below finds that the trout brook (see unnamed) exceed federal *e. coli* standards and is PCA-designated as “Outstanding Resource Value Water,” connoting high recreational and scenic value. (See <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-s6-48i.pdf>)(two unnamed creeks).

South Washington Watershed District (SWWD), the local watershed, says in its 2016 management plan: “*Excess nutrients in stormwater overwhelmingly drive water quality degradation in the SWWD. The source of those nutrients in SWWD is erosion.*”

-- SWWD Management Plan, page 10

Reference: <http://www.co.chisago.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/4314>

Afton code 12:216 and 217 re slopes.

\*Under LAND USE (Afton code), section D. *“Within the Lower St. Croix River Bluffland and Shoreland Management District, no slopes of 12% or greater shall be disturbed (Section 12-70s).”*

**Recommendations:**

Superimpose the Conservancy Overlay District and the Shoreland District on this plat in order to fine tune these recommendations below, in order to reduce erosion and stream/river contamination:

\*Remove Lots 1, 2, and 3 due to concerns about erosion into trout stream and river nutrient contamination. These appear to lie in the Conservancy Overlay District, and in part, in the Shoreland District.

\*Convert Southwest corner of plat, South of stream, to Afton parkland as parkland dedication fee. Append any land that exceeds the 7.5% of land value stipulation to the Open Space Conservation Easement.

\*Lots 4 & 5: Add parts with slopes above 13% to the 10-acre adjacent Open Space immediately to the West, and the remainder comprises one lot instead of two, if eligible per Afton zoning laws. These appear to lie in the Conservancy Overlay District, and in part, in the Shoreland District.

\*Lots 9 and 10: Append to adjacent Open Space Conservation Easement for reasons of slopes above 13% grade.

\*Lots 14, 15 and 16: Add those lot portions with slopes exceeding 13% to the adjacent Open Space to the North. Remaining portion comprises one lot, or whatever the remaining less steep landscape represents.

\*Run plat past local watershed and Minn. DNR (Shoreland District part of it) for feedback on lot placement relative to slopes and trout stream.

\*The revised plat map, after doing the above, is subject to review by MN DNR per Afton code pertaining to Shoreland Management District (Sec 12-1329) and relevant watershed district, especially relevant to concerns about erosion, slopes and trout stream integrity.

Will Carlson Sketch Plan for a Preservation and Land Conservation Development Subdivision for 2018 acres of Land Located on 60<sup>th</sup> Street West of Trading Post Trail.

Feedback submitted by Annie Perkins, member Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee

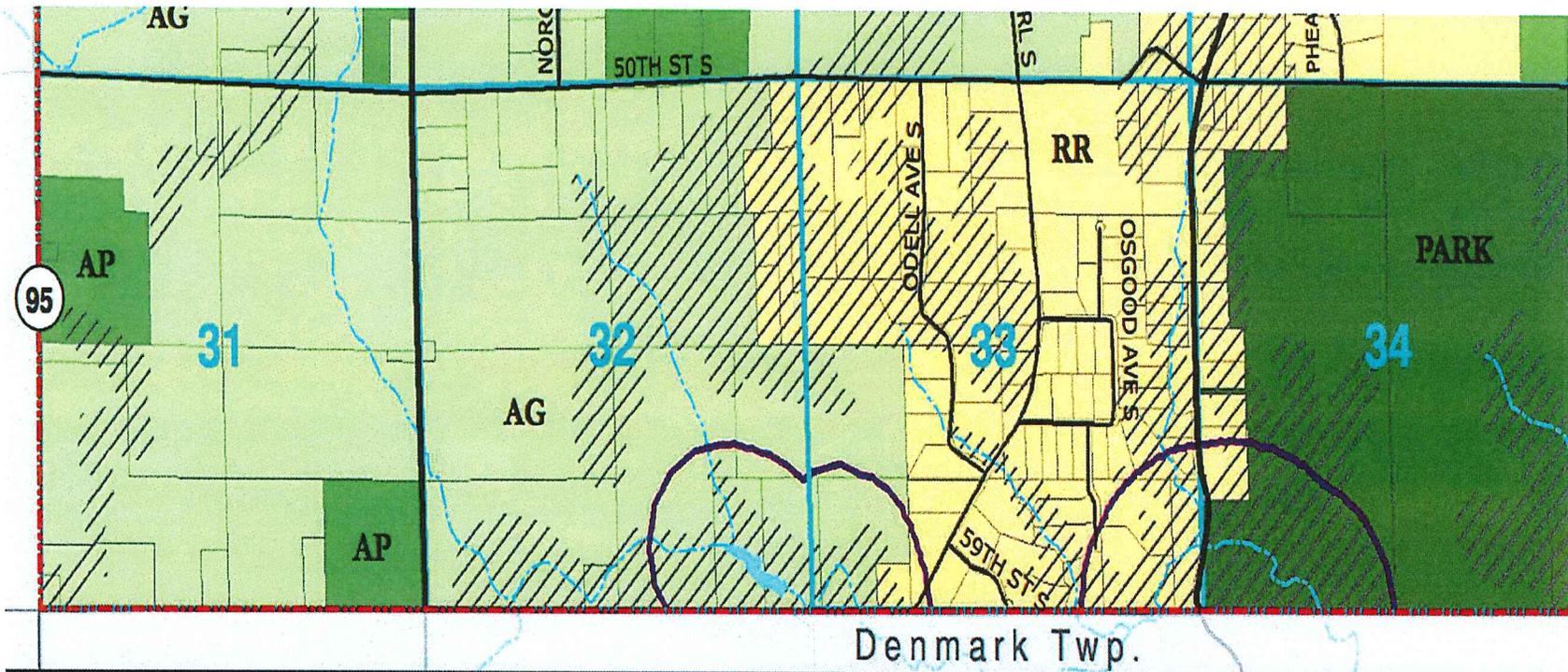
Member

1.3.2017

- Background/relevant context: per *Afton Natural Resources Inventory Final Report 2001* (pg. II-2) the PLCD, encompassing L28 and L29 of said report (see attached "Land Unit map"), has landscape rankings as follows:
  - **Ecological Ranking** - moderate /moderate
  - **Wildlife Habitat Rank** - moderate/moderate
  - **Rare Features Potential** - high(L28) /moderate (L29). Noteworthy Features:
    - L28 - "Interesting landscape with group of bedrock knobs containing prairie remnants. Moderate quality northern hardwood forest and mesic oak forest. This landscape unit encompasses the headwaters of trout Brook."
    - L29 - "Large area of moderate quality mesic oak forests. Good opportunity to engage local residents in stewardship activities."
    - **NOTE:** *criteria for a "high" ranking of Rare Features Potential is as follows: Documented endangered species and/or natural communities within site boundaries. Criteria for a "moderate" ranking of Rare Features Potential is as follows: Documented endangered species and/or natural communities adjacent to site -high potential for endangered species to be present on site due to good quality habitat (pg. IV-3).*
  - Review Table II.2 Major Management Issues - L28 and L29 have majority level of concern ranked at top two levels (medium and high). Report back with plan to address these sensitivities.
  - Review Table II.3.Stewardship Strategies outlined for L28 and L29. Report back with plan addressing these stewardship strategies.
  - L28 is listed under Table II-4 Priority Resource under "Key Natural Resources Management Recommendations" due to its ranking of highest quality/most unique landscape units within the City. Recommended action is as follows:
    - Headwaters of Trout Brook 1. Group of bedrock knobs contains prairie remnants that offer good restoration potential. Further survey should be conducted to determine management approach. 2. Evaluate headwaters pond (flood retention pond) to determine thermal impacts to brown trout survival/reproduction. If significant thermal impacts are shown to exist, work with landowner to remove structure, restore seepage wetlands and reestablish thermal/hydrologic regime to Trout Brook.
    - Provide the City with plan addressing above stated concerns.
- For reasons stated above, an Environmental Impact study of the proposed development needs to be conducted with the above report in mind, to help identify areas of concern (potential negative impact to Trout Brook and regionally significant ecological areas - terrestrial and wetlands). Additional considerations of existing steep slopes to be addressed as well. It is recommended that said impact study be conducted by reputable third party and presented to NRGW committee for review.
- Inherently, a PLCD is designed to "preserve natural resources of the site and to preserve wildlife habitat and corridors". With that in mind, all southern lots currently impede this directive.

Furthermore, a Conditional Use Permit will be required for PLCD; the CUP will be issued only if the PLCD abides by the Comprehensive Plan as well as provides for the preservation of the land's unique natural amenities (see Afton Natural Resource Inventory Final Report). Therefore, the shifting of lots, to adhere to existing PLCD language, is advised.

- Possible alternate plan options, in consideration of Afton's Natural Resources Inventory Report detailed above, as well as consideration of agreed upon Environmental Impact study, would be to extend the access road, moving the Cul de sac further west, shifting lots to northern edge of property (eliminating northern most east/west conservation sliver), and relocating Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 to the northwest section of property. The "Open Space Conservation Easement" would then shift south, abutting 60th Street. The proposed 10 acre Open Space located to the east of the Exception section, would then likely increase to 20 acres (replacing current Lots 4 and 5) and abut the access road.
  1. This alternative proposal addresses above stated concerns thereby avoiding disturbance to sensitive areas around the Trout Brook headwaters.
  2. Additionally, the preservation of land immediately adjacent to Trout Brook is imperative in ensuring adherence to Afton's Comprehensive Plan.
  3. Lastly, retaining access to Trout Brook allows for potential stewardship strategies involving the engagement of local residents as recommended in Afton Natural Resources Inventory Report as well as in Afton's Comprehensive Plan.
- Furthermore, this alternate proposal addresses Agricultural Zoning using a PLCD which states: "The City intends to provide more intensive land use planning throughout this zone so as to coordinate and link the preservation areas for maximum benefit and minimal impact to the character of the community." pg. 22, 2008 Amended Comprehensive Plan.
- Finally, the current PLCD lacks consideration for the City's Park Dedication ordinance. Leveraging this requirement in accordance to the language outlined in the ordinance, assigns land area in addition to and not in lieu of already designated conservation easement. Additionally, dedication of land under said ordinance aligns with the intent of Afton's Environmental Resources Plan as outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan. Per its language, and the calculation of land value, the land dedication could likely equate to that of one existing 5 acre lot. The parcel of land, meeting this requirement, dedicated to the City, should strategically fit into the larger plan for preservation of Afton's natural resources. Therefore, it's recommended that this parcel be accessible from 60th and abut the Open Space Conservation Easement.



**Zoning Districts**

-  Agriculture
-  Ag Preserve
-  Village Historic Site- Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Village Historic Site- Residential
-  Rural Residential

-  State Park
-  Marina Services
-  Conservancy Overlay
-  St. Croix River Bluffland
-  Floodplain Overlay (100 Year)
-  Shoreland Management Areas

-  City of Afton
-  Parcel Boundaries
-  Section Lines
-  Major Road
-  Local Road
-  Lakes & Rivers



Map prepared October 2010 1000 Friends of Minnesota TRC

Data Sources: City of Afton, Metropolitan Council, MN DNR, MN DOT, Washington County

# NRGC Memo

## Meeting: March 7, 2017

City of Afton  
3033 St. Croix Trl, P.O. Box 219  
Afton, MN 55001

To: Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee Members

From: Ron Moorse, City Administrator

Date: February 28, 2017

Re: Will Carlson Sketch Plan for a Preservation and Land Conservation Development Subdivision for 218 acres of Land Located on 60<sup>th</sup> Street West of Trading Post Trail.

---

At its February 7, 2017 meeting, the Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee (NRGC) discussed the sketch plan for a subdivision on 60<sup>th</sup> Street west of Trading Post Trail that was revised based on input from the NRGC, the Park Committee and neighboring property owners. The revised sketch plan is attached. Also attached is a letter received from neighboring property owners with concerns regarding the proposed PLCD. Because the NRGC did not have time to discuss the letter at its February 7 meeting, it was included for discussion at the March 7 meeting.

### **NRGC Recommendation Requested**

Motion regarding feedback to the applicant and recommendations to the Planning Commission and the City Council regarding the Revised Will Carlson Sketch Plan for a Preservation and Land Conservation Development Subdivision for 218 acres of land located on 60<sup>th</sup> Street West of Trading Post Trail.

To: City Council Members  
Planning Commission Members  
Committee Members  
City Administrator  
City of Afton, MN

From: Neighbors of Proposed Carlson 60<sup>th</sup> Street PLCD (See list below) (Neighbors)

RE: Carlson Proposed PLCD on 60<sup>th</sup> Street West of Trading Post Trail -Sketch Plan dated January 17, 2017 (Carlson 60<sup>th</sup> Street PLCD or PLCD)

Date: February 3, 2017

#### **SUMMARY**

On behalf of the Neighbors of the proposed Carlson 60<sup>th</sup> Street PLCD, we request the City of Afton reject the latest PLCD proposal shown on the sketch dated January 17, 2017. The proposed development fails to comply with existing Afton ordinances and the City's Comprehensive Plan and presents unacceptable environmental and safety risks.

First, the developer should not be allowed to burden an existing neighborhood for his own economic interest particularly when he has alternatives. The PLCD road access point on 60<sup>th</sup> street is poorly designed and a road safety study is key to ensuring appropriate safety standards are met at this site. A better access would be farther west on 60<sup>th</sup> where it straightens out; access could be from PLCD Lot 1 or 2. To protect existing neighborhoods, any construction access to the PLCD should be from and to Neal Avenue from a 60<sup>th</sup> Street access and shall be prohibited in local neighborhoods. Also, the closeness of the proposed road right of way to the eastern property line of PLCD Lot 20 creates a burden on the adjacent landowner parcel that would thereafter be subject to more stringent setback and other requirements than currently exists on this parcel. Further, the proposed 60<sup>th</sup> Street access point, would create a non-conforming PLCD Lot 3 in violation of City ordinances once the road right of way is created.

Second, the PLCD as proposed would have unacceptable adverse effects on the environment and adjacent properties which have not been addressed. While the plan may meet basic acreage guidelines for a PLCD, all land is not created equal. Most of the PLCD is in the Afton Shoreland and Conservation Overlay District. The site is unique being adjacent to Trout Brook and the tributaries of Trout Brook, a DNR-proposed designated trout stream. The PLCD site contains many steep slopes and highly erodible soils and portions are not developable at all. Erosion and storm water drainage from the PLCD acreage is an existing problem for existing adjacent homeowners and Trout Brook itself has been severely impaired by erosion. In addition, most of the PLCD is located in an area rated "High" for its rare features potential in the Afton Natural Resources Inventory. Given the unique and sensitive features of this parcel, the developer has proposed too many lots of insufficient size. A developer is not guaranteed the

maximum densities potentially allowed under the ordinance based on acreage. He has the burden to show the particular land in question is suitable for the proposed densities and he can not do so.

Lastly, City ordinances require an EAW be prepared for this project. It is essential this work be completed before the project undergoes further review in order for the City to be fully informed about the impacts of the project. The reported Atrazine spill on the northern portion of the PLCD parcel should be addressed as part of any environmental review.

#### **DETAILED LEGAL OBJECTIONS AND MINIMUM CONDITIONS FOR APPROVAL**

1. Criteria #3 for approval of a PLCD in Sec. 12-2375 requires "The preservation and land conservation development can be planned and developed to harmonize with any existing or proposed development in the areas surrounding the project site". Paragraph B.1 of Sec.12-2379 requires that "The proposed PLCD is in conformance with the comprehensive plan." Paragraph B 2 of Sec. 12-2379 further requires that "The uses proposed will not have an undue and adverse impact on the reasonable enjoyment of neighboring property and will not be detrimental to potential surrounding uses." Paragraph B.4 of Sec. 12-2379 requires that "The PLCD will not create an excessive burden on parks, schools, streets, and other public facilities and utilities that serve or are proposed to serve the district." Sec. 12-198 (item 2) requires traffic generated shall be controlled so as to prevent traffic hazards.
  - Without modifications, alignment of the PLCD road access point on 60th street would present hazards due to existing sight line restrictions and reduced right of way on 60th Street near the intersection of Trading Post. In addition, 60th Street is currently gravel and subject to continual erosion around this access point. Preliminary calculations indicate that the PLCD would add 200 car trips per day to a road already inadequate. Further study is necessary to analyze and impose mitigation measures to address safety issues at the PLCD road access point. A better access point would be located farther west where 60<sup>th</sup> Street straightens out; access could be from PLCD Lot 1 or 2.
  - The location of the proposed roadway thru 14260 60<sup>th</sup> Street is located on or very near the eastern property line of PLCD Lot 20. Location of a roadway at this location would place additional setback and vegetation control requirements on the adjacent property owner to the east, Randy and Kathy Graham. These additional encumbrances on the Graham property would amount to a public taking unless the road is repositioned.
  - **NOTE:** The previous sketch plan dated December 19, 2016 showed a second access point through a lot at 5550 Odell Avenue South that has been abandoned in favor of a culdesac and the single access point at 60<sup>th</sup> Street. The fire department has said the culdesac is adequate for its use. There has been some discussion about retaining the Odell access for emergency use. The Odell access is inappropriate for primary or emergency access because it does not comply with the City ordinances and because of safety and environmental concerns. See Attachment A for a detailed discussion.
2. Sec. 12-217 requires "No land shall be developed or altered and no use shall be permitted that results in surface water run-off causing unreasonable flooding, erosion or deposit of minerals on adjacent properties or water bodies. "

- Stormwater from portions of the PLCD flows south and east onto adjacent properties including the Dickes property, the Rickard property at 5650 Odell Avenue South and eventually into a tributary to Trout Brook located on the southern part of the Hall property at 5730 Trading Post Trail. Trout Brook and this tributary are proposed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as designated trout stream. See Notice of Intent To Adopt Expedited Rules published in the State Register on 22 Aug 2016 (41 SR 203). Trout Brook is an important public resource and its revitalization is a high priority for the DNR and local government as evidenced by the numerous applications for grants for stream restoration work submitted to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council and Clean Water Fund.
  - PLCD Lots 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 abut or are adjacent to existing lots/homes on the eastern boundary of the PLCD. Drainage from these PLCD lots flows towards these existing homes. Stormwater runoff from the Carlson property is currently a problem for these existing homes during heavy rain events with large amounts of water flowing from the Carlson property through these adjacent properties. The addition of more impervious surface and turf associated with the PLCD will exacerbate the existing drainage problem and is not addressed with on-site containment as required in Sec. 12.217 and 12.409.
3. Sec. 12-2377, paragraph C, states “Parcels which contain their maximum permitted density or have been previously subdivided to their permitted density may not be joined to a PLCD”.
    - The former Schuster homestead located on a 5-acre lot at 14220 60<sup>th</sup> Street is zoned as RR per the Afton 2010 Zoning map (on City of Afton website) and is currently at maximum permitted density and may not be joined within the boundaries of the PLCD as proposed.
  4. Construction of proposed access roadway will create a non-conforming lot inconsistent with Afton ordinances.
    - Construction of an access roadway through the existing 5-acre RR property at 14220 60<sup>th</sup> Street (PLCD Lot 3) would result in creation of a non-conforming lot as setback requirements for the existing house which is expected to remain and accessory building would not be met. In addition, the lot size would be non-conforming with City ordinances after the construction of the road right of way.
  5. Paragraph ( C ) (12) of Sec. 12-89 requires an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for “Actions resulting in the permanent conversion of 80 or more acres of agricultural, forest, or naturally vegetated land to a more intensive, developed land use.”
    - A mandatory EAW and related public hearing is required for the proposed PLCD and has not yet been completed.
  6. Sec. 12-2377 requires the PLCD be developed in coordination with subdivision regulations. Sec. 12-501 of the subdivision ordinances requires that “each lot created through subdivision, must be suitable in its natural state for the proposed use with minimal alteration. Suitability analysis by the local unit of government shall consider susceptibility to flooding, existence of wetlands, soil and rock formations with severe limitations for development, severe erosion potential, steep topography, inadequate water supply or sewage treatment capabilities, ...”

- Maps included in the Afton Comprehensive plan show the soils in the area are unsuitable for septic systems. In addition, soils in the area are identified as highly erodible, steep topography is located throughout the site and much of the property drains towards Trout Brook and its adjacent wetlands.
7. Part of the proposed development site is contained within the Conservation Overlay District and designated Shoreland Management Area as identified on the Afton Zoning Map. Chapter 12, Article III of the Afton ordinances identify specific development requirements for designated shoreland areas.
    - The developer has not provided adequate information or consideration of the shoreland management and conservation overlay requirements.
  8. Sec. 12.1251 acknowledges that much of the land in the southwest part of Afton is agricultural and that the Comprehensive Plan goal is to maintain the rural nature of this area and encourage the continued farming or productive farmland. In this regard, the PLCD is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan because it converts existing productive farmland to housing.
  9. In addition, the PLCD's proposed density is too high and fails to meet the requirements of Sec. 12-2375.B.2. Portions of the land identified in the PLCD Open Space Conservation easement have slopes in excess of building requirements and could not be developed into housing in accordance with City Ordinance. The developer is taking credit for this undevelopable land to achieve maximum densities in the remaining developable land. Thus, the PLCD does not meet the requirements of Sec.12-2375.B.2 because the proposal would not "benefit the area surrounding the project to a greater degree than development allowed within the underlying zoning district." A developer should not be allowed to count land that is currently undevelopable as part of the acreage necessary to meet the density requirement of the PLCD including the 50 percent conservation easement. To do otherwise delivers a net density gain to the developer over what is allowed in the ordinance because he gets credit for land he would not be able to develop anyway so he can maximize the density on his remaining acreage. This is a net loss to the City and would overall increase the density of development in the City inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. For example, suppose a developer owns a 100-acre property, 50-acres of which is lake/wetland that is clearly undevelopable and would remain so under City ordinances. Should he be able to use this 50-acre lake as part of his Conservation Easement space requirement under the PLCD ordinance so he can maximize density on his remaining developable acres? This does not "benefit the area surrounding the project". In fact, it is a net loss in terms of open space for the surrounding area and the overall City in violation of Sec. 12.2375.B.2.
  10. The project site is located in a highly sensitive area of Afton. It is located in Landscape Unit 28 identified in the Afton Natural Resources Inventory dated June 2001 (NRI) by Emmons & Oliver. This Landscape Unit is ranked as "High" for rare features potential. The site is also located in an area with many steep slopes, many in excess of 18 percent. It is also adjacent to Trout Brook and wetlands adjacent to Trout Brook, a DNR protected water identified as a candidate for stream restoration for a trout fishery. Several newly added lots along 60<sup>th</sup> Street since the original application for rezoning, directly abut the wetlands adjacent to Trout Brook. Given the unique nature of this property, the proposed density of the site is unsuitable for twenty 5-acre lots as detailed in the PLCD sketch and inconsistent with Afton's Comprehensive Plan.

11. It has been reported that there was an accidental spill of large amounts of the herbicide Atrazine on or around the northeast section of the PLCD in the early 2000s. This release was not reported to state or local government. Releases of Atrazine into soil and groundwater is regulated by the state of Minnesota and may require cleanup and/or monitoring if in excess of health risk limits (HRL) established in state law. The US Environmental Protection Agency has also established maximum contaminant level (MCL) standards for Atrazine in drinking water and levels in excess of federal standards may require cleanup and/or monitoring. See MN Department of Agriculture, Human Health Assessment: Atrazine, Report for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's Pesticide Registration Review, December 2009.

### **Minimum Conditions for Approval**

Based on the above concerns, the Neighbors object to the PLCD as proposed and suggest the following requirements, at a minimum, be imposed as conditions for approval:

1. Realign road access to the PLCD from 60<sup>th</sup> street farther away from the eastern edge of the PLCD property line and closer to the western portion of current PLCD Lot 3 and 4. Relocation of the access road farther west along 60<sup>th</sup> where it straightens out should be strongly considered from a safety standpoint. Access onto 60<sup>th</sup> could be from PLCD Lots 1 or 2.
2. A road safety study shall be completed at developer's expense by an engineering consultant acceptable to the City to evaluate alignment, sightlines, roadway width, traffic counts, road surface conditions, traffic speed, and safety mitigation measures such as a stop sign, safety signage or any other corrective measures that may be recommended.
3. Developer should pay for paving of 60<sup>th</sup> Street to encourage traffic flows along 60<sup>th</sup> to the west. Paving of roadway shall include adequate protections to address runoff to the adjacent stream via settling ponds, etc. This paving would also address a current City inequity in that residents along 60<sup>th</sup> Street have been paying City taxes related to the paving of roads for years yet 60<sup>th</sup> Street is the only street in the City that has not been paved.
4. All construction traffic access to the PLCD shall be routed from and to 60th Street from Neal Avenue. No construction traffic shall be routed on Trading Post Trail or Odell Avenue South. The existing unpermitted 16.5 foot farm access driveway owned by Will Carlson and located between two existing homes with ingress/egress onto Trading Post just north of 5888 Trading Post shall NOT be used for any construction activities related to the PLCD. Should the owner of the access driveway be interested in selling it, right of first refusal shall be granted to the two existing property owners adjacent to the access driveway. Pricing shall be at fair market prices set by an independent land appraiser.
5. The house currently located at 14220 60<sup>th</sup> should be removed or relocated so as to not create a non-conforming lot vis a vis setback and lot size with installation of the access roadway through the property.
6. The proposed lot sizes of the PLCD should be increased and number of lots decreased to decrease density and minimize environmental impacts to this highly sensitive area of Afton for consistency with the Afton Comprehensive Plan and PLCD requirements.
7. An Environmental Assessment Worksheet shall be prepared by the City as the Responsible Governmental Unit at the expense of the developer before approval of this project.

8. In lieu of the park dedication fee, the City shall take acreage located in the currently identified 9.7-acre Open Space Conservation Easement (OSCE) that currently abuts PLCD Lots 3, 4, and 5 to provide public access to this section of Trout Brook. This area contains some of the most scenic parts of Trout Brook and has high value to the public for passive use open space.
9. The City should also consider taking PLCD Lot 2 in lieu of part of the park dedication fee. The developer should build a parking area at this location and a public access way on the western portion of this Lot with a pedestrian bridge/boardwalk across the wetlands adjacent to Trout Brook to provide access to the OSCE just north of this site.
10. A study shall be conducted, and mitigation plan executed as necessary, to address the adverse impact of surface water runoff toward the NE branch of Trout Brook originating from the area of PLCD lots 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20.
11. Require stream bed and riparian area rehabilitation paid for by the developer consistent with the Trout Brook Management Plan dated May, 2009, as updated, to mitigate the adverse effects of a development adjacent to Trout Brook and the headwaters of Trout Brook.
12. The City shall require monitoring (City project manager chosen by City and expenses reimbursed by developer) during construction to insure all City conditions are met. Right of access to the PLCD shall be provided to adjoining property owners during construction, subject to appropriate safety limits, so that adjoining property owners can communicate their observations to the City about project compliance.
13. The owner/developer shall cleanup the brush/debris from the ravine adjacent to Trout Brook in the area of PLCD lot 4 and install soil stabilization along the slopes of the ravine.
14. No old growth tree removal should be allowed including but not limited to that which may exist on PLCD lots 4, 14, 15, and 16.
15. Development conditions shall require on site containment of all surface run-off from PLCD lots (15, 16 17, 18, 19, 20) that flows easterly towards adjacent lots on Odell Avenue South.
16. Restrictive covenants shall be placed on PLCD lots limiting size of turfing, mowed lawns.
17. Restrictive covenants shall be placed on all PLCD lots requiring that non-turf areas be planted in native vegetation and left unmowed in a natural state and any fencing be consistent with the open space nature of the PLCD in terms of size and location.
18. Restrictive covenants shall be placed on all lots preventing future subdivision of the 5 acre residential lots.
19. Restrictive covenants shall be placed in the PLCD on the use of 4 wheelers, dirt bikes and snowmobiles.
20. Development conditions shall require planting of native trees on the home sites.
21. Development conditions shall require that during all construction periods and until all homesites are sold and developed, the land shall be covered with a native grass cover crop to minimize exposed soils.
22. A soil conservation plan shall be required per Sec. 12-216. A drainage plan shall also be required in conformance with City ordinances.
23. The City Council shall require an Environmental Impact Statement for the PLCD per Sec. 12-89 given the potential for significant adverse environmental effects because of its proximity to Trout Brook and its tributaries and areas of "High rare features potential", the presence of significant old growth woodland areas, and significant slopes and highly erodible soils.
24. The project site is located in Landscape Unit 18 of the Afton NRI. It is ranked "High" for rare features potential. Given this ranking, a detailed survey of this Landscape Unit should be conducted at the

developer's expense by an environmental consultant acceptable to the City prior to any approvals to ensure rare features are protected. The survey should update the findings in the 2001 Afton NRI.

25. Soil and groundwater testing for Atrazine should be conducted on the subject property and cleanup/monitoring required if it is present in excess of state or federal standards.

Jim and Nicole Rickard

Mary P. McConnell and Patrick Leahy

Kathy and Randy Graham

Christian and Teresa Dawson

Franz and Carol Hall

Doug and Joy Forbes

William and Jan Dickes

George and Julie Kinney

Wendy and Mike McBain

Kevin and Vicki Slaikeu

Neil Rademacher

Ed Stanek and Sue Rich

## Attachment A—Odell Road Access

**NOTE: The existing sketch plan dated January 17, 2017 has removed the previously proposed PLCD access at 5550 Odell in favor of a cul-de-sac and one access at 60<sup>th</sup> Street. The fire department has noted this change is adequate for its access. There has been some discussion about retaining the Odell access for emergency purposes. This Odell access is not appropriate for a primary or emergency access as discussed below. Further, while a fire department may like to have as many access points as possible, this needs to be balanced with other needs. If a fire department always had a second access to every cul-de-sac, there would be secondary roads running through lots in every subdivision.**

The construction of a road from Odell west through an existing residential property at 5550 Odell to access the PLCD would cause an undue adverse impact and an excessive burden on the local road, Odell Avenue, because of the disruption to the existing adjacent neighborhood from traffic and drainage concerns. An access to the PLCD from Odell would slice through an existing neighborhood by pushing a 60 foot right of way road through an existing 5-acre lot/home with frontage on Odell. Preliminary estimates indicate the proposed PLCD will add 200 auto trips per day onto access streets. Even if this road were used for emergency purposes only, it would impose drainage and taking concerns as well as be in violation of several City Ordinance provisions as discussed below.

1. The location of the roadway thru 5550 Odell was planned to be located on or near the southern property line of that property with a 60 foot right of way. Location of a roadway at this location would place additional setback and vegetation control requirements on the adjacent property owner to the south, William Dickes, as this property would be a corner lot and be subject to comply with Sec. 12-198 and 12-132 subsection (a)(6) when the landowner wants to develop his property. These additional encumbrances on the Dickes property would amount to a public taking.
2. The homes along Odell Avenue were part of a subdivision approved by the Afton City Council many years ago with Odell serving as a local street to provide access to the homeowners whose properties abut Odell. A primary or emergency access through a lot at 5550 Odell would change the nature of Odell from a local street to a collector street as defined Sec. 12-55 pg. 21 for access to 20 additional homes whose properties do not abut Odell. A developer should not be allowed to negatively change the character of an existing subdivision/neighborhood or nature of the road of an existing subdivision just to serve his economic interests particularly when he has other access alternatives.
3. Sec. 12-217 requires “No land shall be developed or altered and no use shall be permitted that results in surface water run-off causing unreasonable flooding, erosion or deposit of minerals on adjacent properties or water bodies.
  - The road connecting thru to Odell does not contain adequate controls for drainage and would lead to additional run-off due to significant increases in impervious surfaces. This runoff will flow south onto adjacent properties including the Dickes property, the Rickard property at 5650 Odell Avenue South and eventually into a tributary to Trout Brook located on the southern part of the Hall property at 5730 Trading Post Trail. Trout Brook and this tributary are proposed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as designated trout stream. See Notice of Intent To Adopt Expedited Rules published in the State Register on 22 Aug 2016 (41 SR 203). Trout Brook is an important public resource and its revitalization is a

high priority for the DNR and local government as evidenced by the numerous applications for grants for stream restoration work submitted to the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council and Clean Water Fund.

- Lots 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 of the proposed PLCD abut existing lots/homes on the eastern boundary of the PLCD. Drainage from these PLCD lots and PLCD Lot 15 flows towards these existing homes. Stormwater runoff from the Carlson property is currently a problem for these existing homes during heavy rain events with large amounts of water flowing from the Carlson property through these adjacent properties. The addition of more impervious surface associated with a primary or emergency access at 5550 Odell would exacerbate the drainage problem.

4. Sec. 12-198 requires traffic generated shall be controlled so as to prevent (item 2)...traffic hazards. Alignment of road intersections on Odell would present safety hazards due to existing sight line hazards.

5. Sec. 12-2377, paragraph C, states "Parcels which contain their maximum permitted density or have been previously subdivided to their permitted density may not be joined to a PLCD". The property located at 5550 Odell is a 5-acre lot zoned RR and is currently at maximum density. As a required primary or emergency access road it would be joined to the PLCD in violation of the above Ordinance.

6. Construction of a primary or emergency access at 5550 Odell would create a non-conforming lot inconsistent with Afton ordinances. The existing home is proposed to remain on the lot with the road right of way to be located to the south of the home. The road right of way would create a non-conforming rural residential lot because of inadequate size after subtracting the road right of way and inadequate road frontage on Odell. If the existing home were to be realigned to face the new road, this would also create a non-conforming lot because of inadequate lot depth.

To: City Council Members  
Planning Commission Members  
Committee Members  
City Administrator  
City of Afton, MN

From: Neighbors of Proposed Carlson 60th Street PLCD (See list below) (Neighbors)

RE: Proposed Carlson PLCD on 60th Street West of Trading Post Trail -Sketch Plan dated January 17, 2017 (Carlson 60th Street PLCD or PLCD)

Date: February 14, 2017

This is a follow up to our letter dated February 3, 2017 regarding the PLCD. In particular, we would like to supplement our comments on the road access issues associated with the development. As stated in our previous letter, both of the two road access points that have been proposed have problems. The previously proposed Odell access point has been eliminated which is appropriate. However, the current road access near the old Schuster homestead at 14260 60<sup>th</sup> (the "Schuster Access") still has safety concerns that need to be addressed by a traffic/road study that focuses on site lines, inadequate road width, road surface, speed, curves, etc.

As we pointed out in our letter, a 60<sup>th</sup> street access farther west along 60<sup>th</sup> where the road straightens out (the "60th Street Access") appears better suited for access to the PLCD. We understand that the Public Works Committee and its advisors recently inspected the proposed Schuster Access and identified similar safety concerns and have also suggested that the 60<sup>th</sup> Street Access is more suitable. We agree and strongly urge the City to explore this alternative with the developer.

Specifically, the 60<sup>th</sup> Street Access alternative would likely come into the development from 60<sup>th</sup> Street at the current proposed PLCD Lot 1 or 2 and travel northeast to meet PLCD Lots 8 or 9. This would allow the developer to abandon the Schuster Access and create a cul-de-sac at or near PLCD Lots 4 and 20 thereby enhancing the value of all the lots in this area of the PLCD.

We believe this 60<sup>th</sup> Street Access alternative achieves the best balance among the various safety and environmental concerns and enhances the quality of the development for the following reasons:

- There are no safety issues related to site line, road width, speed, curves or other matters on the 60<sup>th</sup> Street Access.
- The current proposed Schuster Access is adjacent to the highest quality area of Trout Brook where there is perennial stream flow. This area has very steep slopes which already have significant erosion problems. The addition of impervious surface from road adjacent to this location would further aggravate the negative impacts on Trout Brook.
- The alternative 60<sup>th</sup> Street Access would direct traffic flow towards Neal Avenue and not through existing neighborhoods. It would also eliminate the burden of increased traffic flows and safety concerns on the Graham and Slaikeu properties—the two closest existing parcels located near the Schuster Access.

- Although the 60<sup>th</sup> Street Access road would be longer, this approach is more aesthetically pleasing and consistent with the “executive home site” quality the developer is attempting to achieve. The approach has more moderate slopes for access to homes and opportunities for landscaping. This is in contrast to the Schuster Access whose approach to the PLCD is a narrow and windy section of 60<sup>th</sup> Street leading up a steep hill, passing very close to the old Schuster homestead.
- The proposed Schuster Access would likely require the developer to modify the lot layout and lose lots in order to comply with existing ordinances because of steep topography, inadequate lot site after the addition of road right of away, and because PLCD Lot 3 can’t be joined to the PLCD in accordance with Sec. 12-2377. With the alternative 60<sup>th</sup> Street access, the developer would benefit because these lots would not be affected; the developer could create a cul-de-sac in this area thereby benefitting the quality of all the lots in this section of the PLCD.
- The 60<sup>th</sup> Street Access would still preserve a large parcel of land abutting Trout Brook on the northwest and western part of the PLCD for a conservation easement. The configuration of the proposed 9.7 acre conservation easement near the Schuster Access would be unaffected.

Because the proposed development tries to maximize density on a site that contains steep topography, wetlands, a Trout Stream and inadequate existing abutting roads, finding the perfect access to the PLCD is challenging. It is important to remember that it is the developer’s responsibility to present a configuration and access that is safe, does not burden existing neighborhoods, and minimizes environmental impact. The City does not have the obligation to find such an access for the developer or to approve an inadequate access so the development can move forward.

Unless the developer secures more suitable land along the straightaway portion of 60<sup>th</sup> Street, the 60<sup>th</sup> Street Access described above is the best alternative. It would require the crossing of wetlands and the intermittent flow portions of Trout Brook, and coordination with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to ensure measures are taken to minimize impacts. This must be balanced against the more significant impacts on public safety, neighborhood traffic flow, burden on existing properties, and environmental concerns associated with the Schuster Access. On balance, the alternative 60<sup>th</sup> Street Access is the best current candidate for access.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jim and Nicole Rickard  
 Mary P. McConnell and Patrick Leahy  
 Kathy and Randy Graham  
 Christian and Teresa Dawson  
 Franz and Carol Hall  
 Doug and Joy Forbes  
 William and Jan Dickes  
 George and Julie Kinney  
 Wendy and Mike McBain  
 Kevin and Vicki Slaikeu  
 Neil Rademacher  
 Ed Stanek and Sue Rich

**PRELIMINARY**

# PRESERVATION & LAND CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT - SKETCH

**PRELIMINARY**

Part of the Southeast Quarter of Section 32 and part of the Southwest Quarter of Section 33,  
all in Township 28 North, Range 20 West, City of Afton, Washington County, Minnesota

Developer:



**J.P. Bush**  
HOMES  
Lakeband, Minnesota

Property Owner: Will Carlson

TOTAL PARCEL AREA = 218.6 acres

Proposed Conservation Easements  
OPEN SPACE = 109.7 acres  
(50.2% gross parcel area)

Proposed Lots (20 total) = 100.6 acres

Proposed Road Right of Way = 8.3 acres

Proposed Road Right of Way Width = 60 feet

Proposed Road Right of Way Width  
(60th Street South) = 33 feet from center line

Proposed Length of Cul-De-Sac -  
Point A to Point B = 3,400 lineal feet  
Point C to Point D = 690 lineal feet

Proposed Road Type - 24 foot wide rural section  
All proposed lots have a minimum of 2.5 acres of buildable area.

### Legend

- Denotes slopes 12% to 17.9%
- Denotes slopes over 18%
- Denotes wetland location.
- Denotes stream.
- Denotes general surface water flow.
- Denotes proposed culvert location.
- Denotes proposed house site.
- Denotes proposed septic area.
- Denotes proposed driveway location.

Contours are at two foot intervals and are based on data provided by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

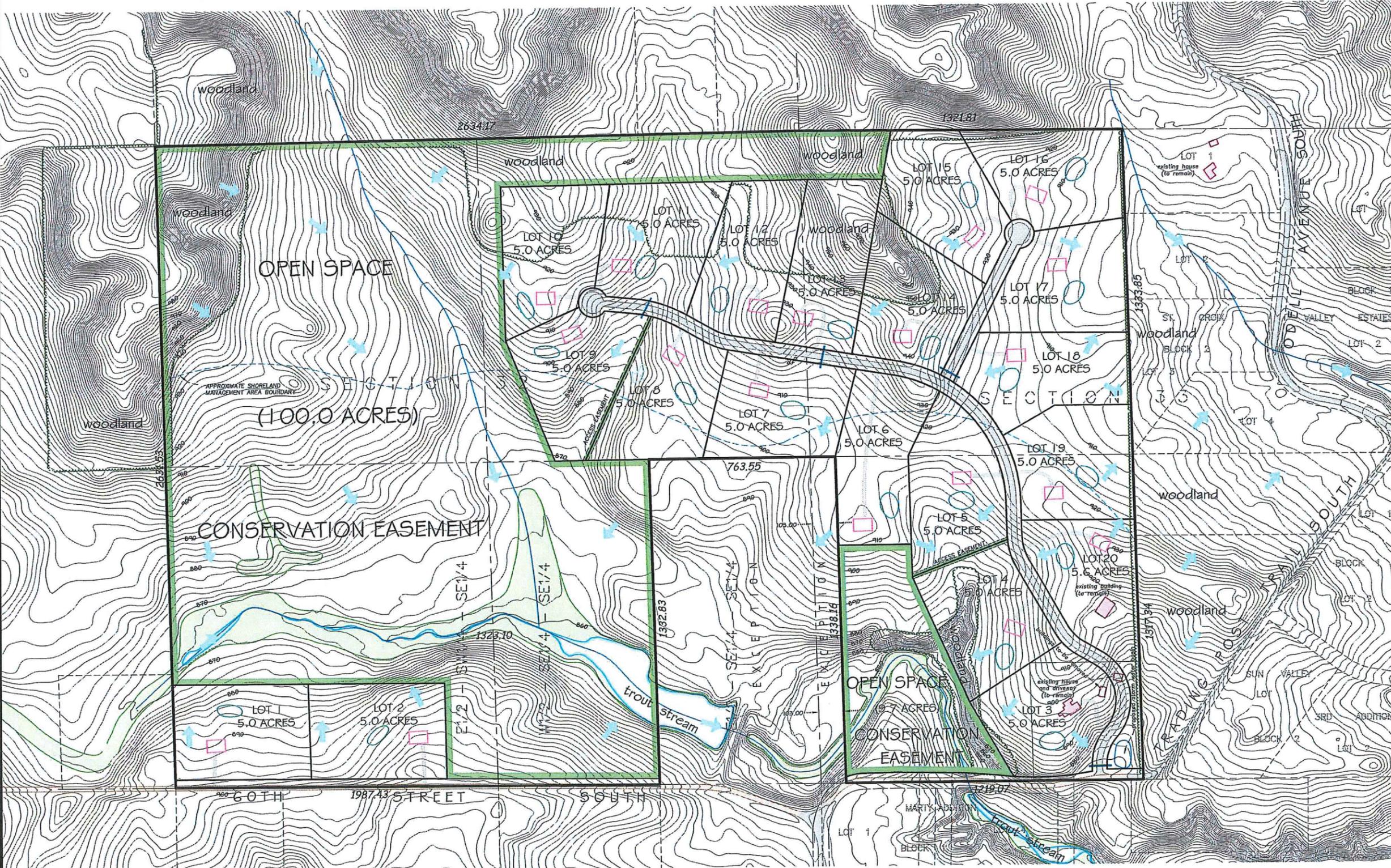
Wetland, Shoreland and stream locations are approximate and are based on data obtained through the National Wetlands Inventory - V2 online interface and the City of Afton Zoning Map (MAP 11).

Scale in Feet  
0 100 200 400  
1 inch = 200 feet

OFFICIAL COPIES OF THIS MAP ARE CRIMP SEALED

I hereby certify that this survey, plan or report was prepared by me or under my direct supervision and that I am a duly Licensed Land Surveyor under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

Landmark Surveying, Inc.  
**PRELIMINARY**  
Milo B. Horek, Minnesota License No. 52577  
Date: January 17, 2017



Landmark Surveying, Inc.  
21090 Olinda Trail North  
P.O. Box 65  
Scandia, Minnesota 55073  
Office number: 651-433-3421  
Cell number: 651-755-5760  
E-mail: intheheld@frontier.net

## **NRGC Memo**

### **Meeting: March 7, 2017**

**City of Afton  
3033 St. Croix Trl, P.O. Box 219  
Afton, MN 55001**

To: Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee Members

From: Ron Moorse, City Administrator

Date: February 28, 2017

Re: Development of a Template for the Committee's Review of Future Major Subdivisions and Particularly PLCD's

---

At its February 7, 2017 meeting, the Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee (NRGC) discussed the development of a template for the Committee's review of future major subdivisions and particularly PLCD's. A subcommittee was formed, made up of Keith Hoffmann, Mark Have and Annie Perkins, to begin drafting a template. The subcommittee will provide an update regarding the template at the March 7 meeting.

# Protect clean water!

Rain washes anything that's on streets and other paved surfaces down the storm drains and into lakes and rivers.



**Leaves and grass**  
Keep them off sidewalks and streets.



**Dirt**  
Keep soil covered with plants and mulch, especially near sidewalks and driveways.



**Dog poop**  
Pick up after your pet and put it in the trash.



**Trash**  
Seal your trash bags and keep litter out of the street.



**Salt**  
Always shovel before you salt, and remember: it only works when it's above 15 degrees and you only need a little. For colder temperatures, use sand or kitty litter.

**Motor oil**  
Keep your car tuned up so fluids don't leak on the street. Take used motor oil to a neighborhood drop-off site.



# NRGC Memo

## Meeting: March 7, 2017

City of Afton  
3033 St. Croix Trl, P.O. Box 219  
Afton, MN 55001

To: Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee Members

From: Ron Moorse, City Administrator

Date: February 28, 2017

Re: Update on Council and Planning Commission Business

---

In addition to the update on actions taken at the February 21 Council meeting, there are two additional items of note for the Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee (NRGC). One is that the Council would like to meet in a joint work session with the NRGC at the beginning of the NRGC's April 4 meeting to discuss the NRGC's work plan for 2017. The other is that, at the March 21 Council meeting, the Valley Branch Watershed District is going to provide an update regarding its septic inspection program in the Kelles Creek watershed area. Members of the NRGC are invited to attend the Council meeting to hear the report.

## Highlights From City Council Meeting, February 21

- The Council received an update from Matt Moore, of the South Washington Watershed district, regarding the District's accomplishments in 2016 and work plan for 2017.
- The Council approved the Afton Historical Museum's application for temporary liquor licenses for three community events in 2017, and approved waiving the license fees.
- The Council received the monthly budget report from Tom Niedzwiecki, City Accountant. The report was focused on the \$265,000 General Fund operating surplus for 2016.
- The Council adopted a resolution approving the plans and specifications for the 2017 Street Improvements Project and authorizing advertisement for bids.
- The Council approved agreements with Washington County and the Lower St. Croix Valley Community Foundation regarding funding and construction of the St. Croix Trail Recreational Trail Improvement Project.
- The Council approved a revised proposal from WSB for design engineering services for the 2017 Street Improvements Project, which reduced the fee amount from \$150,000 to \$100,000.
- The Council approved a proposal for construction inspection and other on-site engineering services for the 2017 Street Improvements Project in the amount of \$47,103.
- The Council approved obtaining price quotes for culvert replacements related to the 2017 Street Improvements Project, so that the culvert work could be completed prior to the road construction work.
- The Council approved the sale of \$2 million of General Obligation Temporary Improvement Bonds, with an interest rate of 1.4%, to provide interim funding for the Downtown Village Improvements Project.
- The Council approved moving forward with a bond sale in the amount of \$3.5 million to finance the 2017 Street Improvements Project.
- The Council adopted a resolution to complete the annual appointments for 2017
- The Council approved the appointments of Bake Baker to the Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee and Maureen Acosta to the Grants Committee.
- The Council approved a temporary pay adjustment for the Office Assistant during her interim assignment taking on the duties of the City Clerk position.
- The Council discussed the agreement with the Central Valley Cable Commission for local access programming services. The Council agreed that, prior to making a decision regarding the elimination of local access services, including the local access channels, there should be a test period during which the local access channels would be turned off and the cities would have an opportunity to see if they received feedback from residents regarding the loss of the access channels. The Council also agreed that the participating cities should continue to pay the current fees to the Central Valley Cable Commission for the local access services during the test period.
- The Council approved a one-year contract with StarTech for I.T. services
- The Council approved the purchase of microphones and related equipment for the Council Chambers to improve the sound quality of City Council meetings. The Council also approved the replacement of the current projector with either an upgraded projector or a large screen TV.
- The Council approved a policy to clarify that the role of Council members on City Committees and Commissions whose members are all or mostly non-Council members should be a liaison role, in which the Council member can serve as a resource and respond to questions from the commission members, but does not have voting rights and does not serve as chair.
- The Council authorized the City Administrator to move forward with the hiring of the Personnel Committee's top candidate for the City Clerk position, after discussions with those Council members who want to review the applications of the top three candidates.
- The Council scheduled a joint meeting with the Planning Commission, to discuss work planning for 2017, for Monday, March 6 at 7:00 p.m.
- The Council scheduled a work session for 1:30 p.m. on Monday, March 6 to discuss the Downtown Village Improvements Project and to begin the goal setting process for 2017.
- The Council scheduled a public hearing for Tuesday, April 18 at 7:00 p.m. regarding Mn/DOT's planned improvement project on Highway 95/Manning Avenue south of County Road 18
- The Council approved scheduling a joint work session with the Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee, to discuss work planning for 2017, for 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4.
- The Council adopted a resolution transferring the \$265,000 2016 General Fund Surplus to other Funds as follows: \$10,000 to the Special Reserve Fund, \$25,000 to the Land and Buildings Capital Fund for a joint project with the Washington County Sheriff's Department to construct a small office and garage adjacent to the Afton City Hall for the Sheriff's Deputies who serve Afton and the Lower St. Croix Valley area, and the remaining \$230,000 to the Street Improvements Capital Fund.