

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE**  
**VILLAGE OF NEW LENOX PLAN COMMISSION**

**Held in the New Lenox Village Hall, 1 Veterans Parkway**

**Tuesday, February 2, 2010 7:00 p.m.**

**#10-02-A**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Village of New Lenox Plan Commission was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairman Mark Muehlnickel, with a quorum present.

Chairman Muehlnickel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Upon roll call, the following were present: Chairman Mark Muehlnickel, Commissioners Joan Byerley, Gary Berner, Rob Moss, Robert Lash, and John Kuchler.

The following was absent: Commissioners Annette Boyd.

Also present were: Planning and Development Administrator Robin Ellis, Senior Planner Jeff Smith, Economic Development Director Randall Lowman, and Secretary Lorrie Sowko.

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF A REGULAR PLAN COMMISSION MEETING OF JANUARY 19, 2010**

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2010, Plan Commission meeting. Commissioner Berner made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Byerley. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried.

Chairman Muehlnickel invited public speakers for the public hearing to be sworn in by the Plan Commission Secretary. The speakers stood, raised their right hands, and were sworn in by Secretary Lorrie Sowko.

**REQUEST FOR SPECIAL USE FOR A HELIPAD (Public Hearing - Continued)**

**Silver Cross Hospital**

**71.07-acre parcel located at 1900 Silver Cross Boulevard**

**Geoff Tryon – Petitioner**

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to continue the public hearing at 7:03 p.m. Commissioner Lash made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Byerley. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE**  
**VILLAGE OF NEW LENOX ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

**Held in the New Lenox Village Hall, 1 Veterans Parkway**

**Tuesday, February 2, 2010 7:00 p.m.**

**#10-02-A ZBA**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Village of New Lenox Zoning Board of Appeals was called to order at 7:24 p.m., by Chairman Mark Muehlnickel, with a quorum present.

**ROLL CALL**

Upon roll call, the following were present: Chairman Mark Muehlnickel, Commissioners Joan Byerley, Gary Berner, Rob Moss and Robert Lash.

The following were absent: Commissioners Annette Boyd and John Kuchler.

Also present were: Planning and Development Administrator Robin Ellis, Senior Planner Jeff Smith, Economic Development Director Randall Lowman, and Secretary Lorrie Sowko.

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF A REGULAR ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING OF JANUARY 19, 2010**

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2010, Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. Commissioner Berner made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Byerley. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. Motion was made by Commissioner Moss, seconded by Commissioner Byerley. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried.

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Lorrie M. Sowko – Secretary

Geoff Tryon, Vice President of Operations at Silver Cross Hospital, and Will Swain of RTKL Architects were present to request a Special Use for a helipad for Silver Cross Hospital.

Geoff Tryon stated that the Special Use request is to allow for a helipad for helicopters at the new Silver Cross hospital campus to take-off and land. This service will be utilized for the transportation of extremely critical patients going to the University of Chicago Hospital, Loyola Hospital, and sometimes Children's Memorial Hospital.

There is an average of 75 landings per year at the current hospital and it is anticipated that the same amount of landings will apply at the replacement hospital.

After the Special Use is granted by the Village, Silver Cross Hospital will be required to file a petition with IDOT and the FAA, which will review and approve all flight patterns.

Senior Planner Jeff Smith explained that Staff provided an overall site plan that includes the helipad in relation to the hospital building, which is located to the northeast of the hospital. There is a 100-foot diameter area around the helipad for a flight approach and take off area.

The helipad area is 60 feet wide and 60 feet long and must comply with FAA requirements. There are three different flight approaches proposed on the site plan; one from the north, one from the east and one from the southeast. There are height restrictions moving out from the helipad area; for every 80 feet, the allowable height goes up 10 feet. Staff reviewed the proposed flight paths and there would be no impact for developments to the north, east, and southeast.

Once the FAA approves the flight paths, there could be some impact or modifications to light poles and/or landscaping on the Silver Cross site. Staff will work with Silver Cross once the impact and/or modifications are determined.

The helipad requires a Special Use and Staff finds that the criteria in the Village Code are met. Regarding these five criteria, Staff has the following comments and recommendations:

1. Staff finds that the proposed helipad would provide an important service to New Lenox residents and other persons within surrounding communities that require emergency services at Silver Cross Hospital or other emergency treatment facilities.
2. Staff finds the proposed helipad adequately addresses issues relating to the safety and the general welfare of the area. The proposed helipad and flight paths require review and approval from the FAA. Also, any beacon lights used for the helipad must comply with FAA regulations. Overall, the petitioner must comply with all FAA requirements to ensure the safety of the helipad operations, as well as avoiding any negative impacts to surrounding areas. The nearby properties are zoned for regional commercial or office uses or are recommended for such. The closest subdivisions are located further to the west, likely over 1,000 feet from the proposed helipad site. To the south, there are Com Ed power lines that are located at least 1,000 from the proposed helipad site.

There is an association that has recommendations for helicopter flights regarding approaches and take offs and noise issues. This association is called the Helicopter Association International. A typical helicopter flying over at 500 feet generates 75 decibels for less than 30 seconds, while a lawn mower generates 95 decibels for a much longer period of time. Overall, the helicopter industry and manufacturers are continuing to develop quieter aircraft.

HAI has established and promotes the “Fly Neighborly Guide,” which is a voluntary noise abatement guide and program promoting pilot awareness, training and operations that promote safety and respond to sensitivity concerns in the community that has been supported in the United States by helicopter operators, regional associations, manufacturers, pilots and numerous communities. Staff recommends that these guidelines are followed.

The site plan also delineates a 100-foot diameter flight approach and takeoff area (FATO) around the helipad area, which shall not contain any equipment, structures or taller landscaping, but only pavement, grass and low-lying shrubs. A 3-foot fence is proposed to be placed around this 100-foot area.

3. The proposed helipad would not limit the development and use of adjacent and nearby properties. There are forthcoming and anticipated regional commercial uses to the north and south/southeast of the helipad. Staff also points out that all adjacent or nearby properties at the U.S. Route 6 and Silver Cross Boulevard intersection are planned and/or recommended for future non-residential uses.

The maximum height allowances within the proposed Glide Path A and proposed Flight Path B would not impact future commercial developments, including street or parking lot lighting, shopping center signs and taller highway-oriented signs. The closest future commercial developments to the east would have a maximum height allowance over 60 feet, while the nearest commercial development to the north would have a maximum height allowance well over 100 feet.

The maximum height allowances within Glide Path C should not impact future commercial development within Cedar Crossings. The Village previously approved a site plan for a Meijer store and gas station on Lot 10 within Cedar Crossings that is located to the southeast of the helipad within proposed Glide Path C. As shown on the submitted site plan exhibit, the portion of the closest structures, the convenience store/gas station having a peak height of 15.5 feet and gas pump canopy having a peak height of 20 feet, are located within the 40- to 50-foot maximum height allowance range, while the actual Meijer store, which had a peak height of 34.5 feet, is located within a much higher maximum height allowance range of 100 feet or more.

Even if the Meijer project does not develop, a different commercial development on this lot within Cedar Crossings would still be allowed adequate commercial building height.

A minimum 50-foot building setback is required from the west property of Lot 10 within Cedar Crossings, as well as from Cedar Crossings Drive.

Once the final southeast Glide Path C is determined, Staff could determine whether or not any perimeter landscaping within the adjacent Cedar Crossings commercial lot would violate FAA maximum height allowances. If a new development is proposed on Lot 10 in the future, Staff will inform the developer of maximum building, lighting and landscape height allowances on specific portions of the commercial lot.

The Helicopter Association International has researched a number of studies, as well as real estate appraisal guidelines, which indicate that property values are not affected due to the proximity of a helipad.

4. The Comprehensive Plan recommends Institutional use. Subject to approval of a Special Use, the proposed helipad is in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.
5. If authorized, the petitioner has 180 days to commence the Special Use on the property. The application noted that the helipad would not be completed until 2012, in conjunction with the hospital. If the site work is started, it would commence the Special Use.

Overall, Staff finds that this request meets the criteria for the granting of a Special Use permit, and therefore recommends approval of the Special Use request to allow a helipad for Silver Cross Hospital located at the southeast corner of U.S. Route 6 and Silver Cross Boulevard, subject to the following conditions:

1. The helipad shall be permitted at the location on the subject property as depicted on the submitted site plan exhibit.
2. The property owner shall obtain a building permit for the helipad.
3. Prior to the building permit being issued for the helipad, the property owner shall provide the details of the proposed perimeter fence which shall be reviewed and approved by Staff.
4. The property owner is recommended to follow the "Fly Neighborly Guide."
5. The petitioner shall comply with all requirements of the Federal Aviation Administration. Any modifications to the helipad and surrounding area required by the FAA, including but not limited to landscaping, light pole and glide path locations, shall be provided to the Village.

Commissioner Berner asked if the service would be used more for outgoing patients.

Geoff Tryon commented that currently, all patients are transferred out of the facility, but he can't guarantee that there would never be patients transported to Silver Cross Hospital via helicopter. Typically, patients will arrive at the hospital by ambulance and then be flown to a different medical facility if necessary. Silver Cross Hospital is a Level 2 trauma center, not a Level 1 trauma center. Typically, patients are transported by air from a Level 2 trauma center to a Level 1 trauma center.

Chairman Muehlnickel asked if a helicopter would physically be positioned on the helipad.

Geoff Tryon stated that a helicopter is not stationed at the hospital and is stationed at one of the Chicago hospitals, and would fly to Silver Cross Hospital to pick up a patient and fly the patient to another hospital.

Chairman Muehlnickel asked why the helipad will be fenced with a 3-foot fence.

Jeff Smith mentioned that the height of the fence is restricted for blade clearance and approach and take off clearance and are mandated by FAA requirements. The Village can not overrule FAA requirements.

Will Swain of RTKL Associates explained that the reason the fence is proposed around the helipad is to accommodate the pedestrian walkways around the ponds. The fence will prevent any casual foot traffic from the hospital to the helipad.

Geoff Tryon added that typically, hospital security will meet the helicopter at the helipad. Occasionally, the helicopter has had to land in the hospital parking lot at the current hospital, and security provides protection.

Commissioner Berner inquired about the noise factor from the helicopter.

Geoff Tryon noted that there is noise, but it is very brief.

Commissioner Muehlnickel asked if noise is addressed in the Fly Neighborly Guide.

Jeff Smith confirmed that noise issues are addressed in the Guide.

Chairman Muehlnickel invited public speakers for the public hearing. There were no public speakers from the audience.

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to close the public hearing at 7:16 p.m. Commissioner Lash made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Moss. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried.

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to recommend approval of the Special Use request to allow for a helipad at Silver Cross Hospital, located at the southeast corner of U.S. Route 6 and Silver Cross Boulevard, subject to the five conditions noted in the Staff Report. Commissioner Lash made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Berner. Roll call vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

**COUNTY REZONING AND FINAL PLAT**

**Burch Garden Subdivision**

**2.71-acre site generally located west of Meader Road and south of Bruce Road**

**George Anderson and Faye Hollister – Property Owners**

**Andrew Dystrup –Attorney**

Attorney Andrew Dystrup explained that 25.6 acres of the original 40-acre tract have been sold to the Forest Preserve District. One of the sisters that own the property lives in the existing house outlined in the 40-acre tract. The division of the property is so that the sister living on the property will have buffers on the north and south. Parcel A was created north of the house and Parcel B to the south of the house, so that there is a buffer. Since the house is located on 10 acres, the current owner would like it to remain in the County Agricultural zoning district. The property north and west of Parcel A and Parcel B has been sold to the Forest Preserve. The requested zoning district is E-2.

No additional improvements are being proposed. The jurisdiction of this property will be determined by which village runs water or sewer utilities to the parcel. The New Lenox School Districts and the New Lenox Highway Township will not be affected by this subdivision.

Jeff Smith stated that the Comprehensive Plan recommends Estate Residential use and the County E-2 zoning designation complies with that recommendation.

Staff recommends that no legal objection be filed against the County rezoning and no objection be filed to the County final plat.

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to recommend that no legal objection be filed with the County, relative to the rezoning request from A-1 Agricultural to the E-2 Single-Family Estate Residence District for the subject 3-acre property located along the west side of Meader Road, approximately 950 feet south of Bruce Road. Motion was made by Commissioner Byerley, seconded by Commissioner Berner. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to recommend that no objection be filed against the County final plat, and that the Village subsequently executes the final plat for the one-lot minor subdivision to be known as Burch Garden Subdivision. Commissioner Berner made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Lash. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Robin Ellis reported that there will be a meeting in two weeks that includes public hearings for annexation and rezoning of the American Legion and also a text amendment.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Muehlnickel entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m. Motion was made by Commissioner Berner, seconded by Commissioner Moss. Voice vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

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Lorrie Sowko - Secretary