MINUTES
GREATER BEMIDJI AREA
REGULAR PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

March 28, 2019
6:00 p.m.

City Hall
Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Chris Lahn called the regular meeting of the Greater Bemidji Area Joint Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m., roll call was taken and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Berg, Faver, Steffen, David, Heinonen, Lahn, Lemmer, Miller

MEMBERS ABSENT: Smith

STAFF PRESENT: Casey Mai, Jamin Carlson, Terri Ball

OTHERS:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:
Motion by Lemmer, second by Heinonen, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
Motion by Lemmer, second by Steffen, to approve minutes from the February 28, 2019, Greater Bemidji Area Regular Joint Planning Commission.

Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

VISITORS:
No one addressed the commission.

Public Hearing:
Mai presented the first case:

PLANNING CASE – Z-19-80.05225.00, 80.06875.00 – Loonesota Inc.
Lonnesota Inc. is requesting a rezone of two (2) properties along Division Street W to (B-2) General Commercial. The following properties included in the request are 80.05225.00, which is currently zoned (R-6) Multiple Family, and 80.06875.00, which is currently zoned (R-1) Rural Residential. The request is to expand commercial opportunities on these properties and along Division Street W.

BACKGROUND
In 2008, the GBAJPB rezoned parcel no. 80.05225.00, along with five (5) other neighboring parcels from (R-2) Suburban Residential to (R-6) Multiple Family. The other five (5) parcels that were included in the rezone request were as follows: 03.00050.00; 03.00051.00; 03.00056.00; 03.00065.00; and 03.00050.04. Since the original rezone approval, 03.00065.00 has been

combined with the subject parcel 80.05225.00; and all parcels within Bemidji Township have changed zoning due to Bemidji Township exiting the Greater Bemidji Area's Joint Power Agreement. At this time, JPB staff is unsure what the zoning is for the neighboring parcels, as Bemidji Township has not shared this information. These parcels are predominately single-family residential with a few vacant lots mixed in between.

On August 6th, 2018, the City of Bemidji adopted Ordinance No. 151, 3rd Series, annexing the subject property, parcel no. 80.06875.00, formally known as parcel no. 03.00050.00 from Bemidji Township. On October 15, 2018, the City adopted Ordinance No. 154, 3rd Series amending Ordinance 151 to include reimbursement from the City to the Township. Based upon review of Ordinance 151 and Ordinance 154, the Chief Administrative Law Judge officially approved the annexation on January 14th, 2019.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Rezoning parcels within a neighboring township that does not share its zoning information makes it quite difficult for future zoning needs. The JPB can only lean on the comprehensive plan (which does not go beyond the GBAJPB boundaries). Reviewing what is currently happening in the area, along with what the area is trending towards in regards to zoning, are the only useful tools the JPB can use at this time. The JPB will have to use its best judgement when it comes to rezoning when the parcels in question are surrounded by an adjacent township.

Existing Conditions & Current Zoning

Parcel 80.05225.00 – (no Address) – This parcel is currently a vacant parcel, approximately 16.1 acres (701,316 square feet) in size. The northern portion of this parcel, approximately 6.5 acres consists of wetlands according to the National Wetlands Inventory map. This wetland area is a natural barrier from the single-family residential neighborhood to the north (Arrowwood development). There is also currently a right-of-way and an easement for pipeline purposes that exist on the property. Enbridge Pipeline currently expands across a significant portion of the property, ultimately making that section non-buildable. This property is currently zoned (R-6) Multiple Family.

> ***(R-6) Multiple Family*** *Provide areas for multiple family residential development and compatible uses in both an urban and suburban setting.*

Parcel 80.06875.00 – 189 Gerald Ln NW – This parcel has a single-family house located on the property that is currently being rented out. This parcel is approximately 2.42 acres (105,415 square feet) in size. As land is annexed into the City of Bemidji, it shall be zoned (R-1) Rural Residential until such time that the land may be rezoned under the procedures specified within the GBAJPB Ordinance.

> ***(R-1) Rural Residential*** *Provide areas of low density development and low intensity uses to preserve a predominantly rural residential character.*

Adjacent Zoning and Land Use

The area surrounding this property to the East, West and the North is predominately single-family housing, with the zoning unknown due to it being under jurisdiction of Bemidji Township. As you transition to the east and west along Division Street W, the area starts to see commercial uses such as professional offices, dental clinics, retail, etc. The area to the direct south of the property is zoned (R-4) Moderate Density Residential, which encompasses the ISD #31 Bemidji High School.

Proposed Zoning

(B-2) General Commercial *Provide areas for the placement of commercial establishments, including service, retail, and wholesale providers, and uses complimentary to such uses, in areas where central services are available.*

Adverse effects on the surrounding neighborhoods are not anticipated with this rezone proposal as the area has been trending towards commercial or high density development. Any high intensity uses or major redevelopment of the area will require significant review.

Development Team: (Public Works/Engineering, GIS, Building & Fire Department)

There were no concerns from the Development Team regarding this rezone request to commercial.

Beltrami County Highway Department

Bruce Hasbargen, County Engineer stated that the County Highway Department has no concerns with the proposed zoning change request. The County would potentially look at entrance locations along with entrance widths at the time when development is being proposed.

Neighborhood Comment

At the time of writing this report, no neighborhood comments or concerns were received.

Comprehensive Plan References

The newly adopted Greater Bemidji Area Comprehensive Plan has identified this area within its future land use map as Commercial/Residential Mixed Use, which identifies the following land uses:

> *Retail or service businesses; high-density housing. May include vertical mixtures of land uses. The proportion of land use mixture is not mandated, but will be determined upon application review. This includes areas that are not fully developed and could transition into all commercial or all residential.*

Current corresponding zoning districts for the future land use category Commercial/Residential Mixed Use are as follows: (R-6) Multiple Family; (B-1) Low Density Commercial; (B-2) General Commercial; (OM) Office/Medical; (U) University; and/or (LD) Lake Oriented Development.

Objective 4.1: Preserve the Quality Residential Neighborhoods

2. **Promote "mixed-use" areas to improve the transition of residential land use to other land uses.** *Mixed-use areas can provide an excellent transition from residential areas to commercial or highly developed areas. Gradually intensifying the uses on the fringe of neighborhoods or along high-traffic corridors that have been traditionally residential will mitigate impact to existing neighborhoods.*

Objective 4.2: Preserve and Promote Commercial and Industrial Redevelopment or In-Fill Development Where Appropriate

2. **Identify areas where commercial and industrial uses should be located, specifically adjacent to highways with controlled access where noise, odor, dust, and glare will have minimal impact.** *When reviewing new commercial and industrial land uses, ensuring these areas are appropriate and compatible with opportunity to be successful. Piecemeal development of industrial and commercial land uses can increase urban sprawl and have negative impacts on existing, less intense surrounding land uses.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends approval of a rezone for the two (2) properties along Division Street W to (B-2) General Commercial. The following properties included in the request are 80.05225.00, and 80.06875.00.

Public Hearing opened at 6:19 p.m.

Representative Doug Fuller summarized applicant's request to rezone, and he explained that the house on the east lot has been vacant for more than ten (10) years and is expected to be demolished. Fuller also described the area designated as wetland as being low spots scarred by gravel excavation during the building of the highway bypass. Commissioner Miller questioned why this area is labeled wetland and staff explained that it was labeled in the 1970's during the Wetland Inventory. Miller also questioned proposed use of land which Fuller stated is currently unknown as the land is forsale, but potentially could be used as professional office building. Commissioner Heinonen asked about the small building on front of the lot as shown on the map. Staff confirmed that it is a camper owned by the neighbor. Miller asked if the lot will be designed so as to drive across the pipeline easement. Staff answered that is the expectation and Fuller stated that he anticipates Gerald Lane being improved to become the access over the pipeline.

Public Hearing closed at 6:25 p.m.

Motion by Steffen, second by Faver to approve a rezone for parcels 80.05225.00 and 80.06875.00 to become (B-2) General Commercial, with the following:

Findings of Fact:

1. **Whether the change in classification would be consistent with the intent and purpose of this Ordinance.**
   Yes. The current intent and proposed future land use are consistent with the (B-2) General Commercial Zoning District. Properties along Division Street W have been trending towards lower density of commercial land use or a mixed use of commercial and residential for quite some time.
2. **Whether every use that would be permitted on the property if it were reclassified would be compatible with the uses permitted on other property in the immediate vicinity.**
   Yes. General Commercial land uses are compatible along Division Street W. This area has been historically residential; however, recently has transitioned from residential to commercial.
3. **Whether adequate sewer and water facilities, and all other needed public services, exist or can be provided to serve the uses that would be permitted on the property if it were reclassified.**
   Yes. The ordinance requires that during development or redevelopment of property that sewer and water services are capable of serving the land use without adverse impacts on the public or environment. If a major development were to occur it would be served by City of Bemidji services as they are available off of Division Street W.
4. **Whether the proposed amendment would correct an error in the application of this Ordinance.**
   No. Both properties were rezoned from (R-2) Suburban Residential to (R-6) Multiple Family in September of 2008 to allow for high density residential or non-residential counseling/assistance centers. At this time, this area has continued to transition towards commercial with a mix of single-family.
5. **Whether the proposed amendment is made necessary because of changed or changing conditions in the area affected, and, if so, the nature of such changed or**

changing conditions.
Yes. This area has been traditionally single-family trending towards an increase in commercial activity in recent years, the continued growth of the Greater Bemidji Area is allowing the applicant the opportunity to increase commercial land use in an area that was previously zoned for multiple family, high density residential or non-residential such as counseling/assistance centers. The area is ripe for redevelopment due to several deteriorated vacant buildings, along with vacant land, and the new roundabouts helping with the flow of traffic.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mai presented the second case:

Updates to the 2019 GBAJPB Fee Schedule
Mai presented suggested changes to current fee schedule, as recommended by the Board. Discussion with commissioners about trying these updates and adjusting them later as necessary.

Public Hearing opened at 6:38 p.m.

No one present in audience.

Public Hearing closed at 6:38 p.m.

Motion by Steffen, second by Miller to approve the updates to the 2019 Greater Bemidji Area Joint Planning Board Fee Schedule, as presented by staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS:

DIRECTOR REPORT
Mai summarized last month's planning case decisions, the upcoming planning cases, and discussed several development projects. Mai also thanked those who attended the recent training, and announced the Joint Powers meeting scheduled next week.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES:

April 10, 2019	6:00 pm	JPB Regular Meeting
April 25, 2019	6:00 pm	JPC Regular Meeting
May 7, 2019	6:00 pm	Joint LGU Meeting
May 8, 2019	6:00 pm	JPB Regular Meeting
May 23, 2019	6:00 pm	JPC Regular Meeting

ADJOURNMENT:
There being no further business, motion by Heinonen, second by Steffen, to adjourn the Regular Planning Commission meeting at 6:47 p.m.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri Ball
Planning Administrative Assistant

Approved and attested by: _____
Joint Planning Commission Representative