

SUNFISH LAKE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MAY 15, 2025
7:00 P.M.

Attendants

Chair: Kevin Wu
Commissioners: Present: Ginny Beckett, Jeannine Naves, Claire Noble and John Oakman
Absent: None
City Planner: Lori Johnson
City Clerk: Christy Wilcox
Members of the General Public.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Wu called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **ADOPT AGENDA:** Chair Wu asked if there were any additions to the agenda and there was no response.

Commissioner Beckett moved to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Naves.
Motion carried (5-0)

3. **APPROVE MINUTES, APRIL 17, 2025, PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING:** Chair Wu asked if there were any additions or corrections to the April 17, 2025, Planning Commission meeting minutes.

Commissioner Noble moved to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2025, Planning Commission meeting, seconded by Commissioner Beckett. Motion carried. (5-0)

4. **2 ACORN DRIVE – MAJOR SITE AND BUILDING PLAN REVIEW AND VARIANCE.**

Hartman Homes Inc, applicant, and owners David Carlson and Chris Nelson, are proposing to build a 2,578 square foot home at 2 Acorn Drive. The lot on which the home is proposed is 2.43 acres in size and is currently wooded and vacant. New homes require the review and approval of a major site and building plan according to Section 1208.02C of the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed site plan also includes a separate accessory building labeled as a lounge and sauna. That structure is proposed at 241 square feet.

The proposed driveway requires a variance, as the driveway is proposed with a 10-foot side yard setback where a 25-foot setback is required.

This item was tabled from the last regular meeting of April 17, 2025.

Chair Wu moved to remove from the table consideration of the Major Site and Building Plan Review and Variance at 2 Acorn Drive, seconded by Commissioner Noble. Motion carried (5-0).

Chair Wu asked if there were any public comments and there were none.

Planner Johnson provided a brief update. The applications were tabled at the April 17th meeting with the direction of setting up an onsite meeting which was held tonight at 6:00 p.m. at 2 Acorn Drive. Additional items have been submitted since the last meeting. A set of engineered plans that everybody has a copy of

and was also distributed to those in attendance at the onsite visit. These plans meet all the City Engineer's comments as they related to his memo provided in the packet. It should be noted that a conditional use permit has been added to the land use application type to be consistent with the nonconforming section of the ordinance for lot sizes. Planner Johnson recommended approval of the variance.

Chair Wu went through the items that were discussed at the onsite meeting which included the topography, trees that needed to be removed and the potential retaining walls. Chair Wu explained that we shouldn't be focused on trees because in any case the driveway will be positioned in, significantly trees will be removed and should not be a criteria in terms of evaluating a practical difficulty with regards to this project.

Commissioner Beckett asked if there is anything that needs to be altered at the site of the house for turning around of emergency vehicles in either case of the 10 foot or 25 foot variance? Planner Johnson said this should not be an issue. Commissioner Beckett noted that per the City Engineer there are no drainage advantages or disadvantages to 10 or 25 feet.

Commissioner Naves commented that one of the reasons we requested an onsite visit were concerns about the light pollution and having to face that every time somebody came and went from that driveway. There are just so many times in the city where the topography or the size of the lot or the position of the lot is just such that there are only so many things you can do. Prior to the meeting we were discussing with the City Forester a way to make sure that we could put as many trees or the right kind of trees in place to minimize what we could. What we were told is that there are kinds of trees that are better than others and we can just try to make sure that we get a good number of trees and the right kind of trees planted. However, it sounds like nothing I've heard from anybody else that was at the site visit is going to completely take care of 100% of the car lights.

Chair Wu noted that no matter what the set back is from the driveway, there is still going to be screening in place. Chair Wu asked the City Engineer what he reviewed in terms of proposals for driveway placement when he came to his decision and whether or not other locations were rejected because they were not feasible or because this was a combination of one; this would work from an engineering standpoint and two; from a grading standpoint it minimizes earth movement and tree removal. Also, the other site on the top of the hill or higher up on the hill or inside that bluff is technically possible, it just requires a lot more work to make it happen. From my perspective, given that our engineer says that moving the driveway is not a barrier because we could move it, but it requires more work I don't know if we really can look at this from a practical difficulty standpoint because that's still possible.

Commissioner Oakman said that he understands there are three driveway possibilities, 10-foot setback, 25-foot setback and over the hill. There could be issues with any of the possibilities.

Chair Wu moved to deny the variance for the 100foot setback based on the rationale that practically difficulty does not seem to apply in this situation because trees are removed in either case, screening is provided in any situation where the driveway is located and the City Engineer has indicated that the driveway can be placed in a variety of other locations that do not require a variance, seconded by Commissioner Oakman. Motion carried (5-0).

Chair Wu moved to recommend approval of the Major Site Plan and Conditional Use Permit for 2 Acorn Drive subject to the findings and face and conditions as outlined in the Planner's Report dated May 9, 2025, seconded by Commissioner Beckett. Motion carried (5-0).

OTHER/NEW BUSINESS:

5. ADJOURN

Chair Wu moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Noble. Motion carried.
(5-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Christy Wilcox, City Clerk