



## Legislation Text

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**Date:** July 15, 2021

**To:** Members of the Planning Commission

**From:** Mikayla Schmidt, City Planner

Consideration of the Preliminary Plat for Kraewood Addition.

**Action Requested:**

The Planning Commission is requested to review and provide a recommendation to the City Council on the preliminary plat for Kraewood Addition.

**Summary Report:**

Rebound Real Estate has applied for a preliminary plat to create Kraewood Addition on property known as the Paulson Christmas Tree Farm.

The parcel is approximately 12.5 acres and proposes to create 31 lots and is zoned N2-B: Neighborhood General 2. The proposed site layout consists of 22 single-family homes, 2 twin homes, 1 four-plex/row house and an apartment building.

**Background:**

Rebound Real Estate has been before the Planning Commission for voluntary review of this subdivision and has met with the surrounding neighborhood. The site has historically been operated as a Christmas tree farm by the Paulson family.

**Analysis:**

**Sanitary Sewer and Water:**

All necessary utilities are available adjacent to the site from multiple locations and will be extended into the public streets.

**Stormwater:**

Staff will be working with the applicant to ensure final stormwater detention requirements are being met and reflected in final engineering and construction documents. Preliminary review suggests the stormwater detention/infiltration basins proposed for the project should be adequate to meet the infiltration volume, rate and flow control required under the City of Northfield Code. The filtration basins are located throughout the proposed plat in Outlot A, Outlot D and on Lot 1 Block 5 (the location of the proposed apartment building).

**Streets, sidewalks and trails:**

This project includes public street, utility and sidewalk connections that will connect to existing streets, and in one case allow for a future extension.

- Kraewood Drive will run through the parcel (North/South) connecting with Lincoln Parkway and

Greenvale Avenue.

- Juniper Avenue, on the northeast corner of the site, will be extended west to connect to Kraewood Drive.
- Highland Avenue, on the southwest corner of the site, will extend east to connect to and past Kraewood Drive, to the easterly property line aligning with Highland Avenue for a possible future connection.

Sidewalks will be provided along both sides of all streets in the plat. A sidewalk will also be included along the south side of Lincoln Parkway from Green Meadow Court to Linden Street North.

Street width and construction will follow Northfield subdivision design and street construction standards. There are no trail connections to connect to as part of this project.

**Park Dedication:**

Staff is preparing the park dedication calculation and the applicant will be notified of the fee for cash-in-lieu.

**Adjacent Property:**

The property to the south, east and west consists mainly of single-family residential development with a church approximately one block east of the site. Greenvale Park Elementary and the Northfield School District Office & Area Learning Center are located to the north.

**Conformance with Comprehensive Plan:**

The proposed subdivision has been reviewed for conformance with the Comprehensive Plan and is found to be in alignment with Comprehensive Plan objectives. The large parcel, that is the majority of the site, is zoned N2-B: Neighborhood General 2. There is an existing homestead on the property. The homestead site and a narrow parcel on the northern edge of the site (adjacent to Lincoln Parkway) are zoned N1-B: Neighborhood General 1. The Conservation and Development map in the Comprehensive Plan denotes these parcels as “Infill Sites” and “Developable Land”. The Comprehensive Plan states this about “Infill Sites”:

*Infill sites are frequently the “next to develop” and typically already have access to infrastructure. Even though these sites are undeveloped, the fact that they are already zoned gives those specific entitlements or the right to develop certain land uses at certain densities. Redevelopment and intensification sites present the biggest challenge to develop as they have existing structures, and the community has an expectation or desire for a similar use that currently exists.*

...

*In considering the public’s vision for future growth a series of land use maps were created. The land use maps reflect the community’s desire to return to a more traditional development pattern that is connected, and promotes inward rather than outward growth. The land use maps are intended to act as a framework for future development. These maps should be considered when evaluating future development, and generally illustrate the preferred development pattern.*

This parcel was a tree farm, but has not actively operated as an agricultural business for many years. “Infill Sites” identify these areas as best suited for redevelopment and land intensification along the corridor with a mix of uses, with increased intensity at major nodes, or intersections, and with a redesign of existing roadways to calm traffic flow, which this project will achieve. “Neighborhood General 1” in the Framework Map of the Comprehensive Plan states:

*The Neighborhood General 1 zones are found outside the historic plat of Northfield and are typified by single family homes with lots that are generally larger than those found in Neighborhood Central. There is a Land Use 11/17/08 Comprehensive Plan for Northfield 4.17 significant change in the street framework within this district, moving from a linear grid to curvilinear. The change in framework reduces the connectivity and accessibility of the road network. The diminishing quality of connectivity and accessibility due to block length and a single use zoning pattern creates an area that is less walkable than the Neighborhood Central zone.*

*Future Character: While considering the adjacent pattern typified of this zone, future development in the Neighborhood General 1 zone should be more pedestrian friendly and reflect traditional neighborhood qualities, such as a gridlike street pattern, the built form's relationship to the street, and street connectivity. These qualities are further explained in the Land Use Principles found earlier in this chapter.*

**Zoning:** With the exception of the existing homestead site and a narrow parcel along the south side of Lincoln Parkway, the property is zoned N-2B. Development of the property is subject to the land uses, site design standards and regulations of the Northfield Land Development Code and N-2B Zoning District. This zoning district allows for a mix of different styles and densities of residential uses. Section 2.3.6 of the Land Development Code includes the following language and identifies its relationship to the Comprehensive Plan:

*The Neighborhood General 2 (N2) district is applied to residential neighborhoods of the city that may include larger vacant areas within the current city limits and areas that will be within city limits through future annexations. The N2 district will create a pedestrian-friendly environment, such as found in the R1 district, with strong neighborhood qualities, such as a grid-like street pattern, consistent block size, compact development, a range of housing types and architectural styles, street connectivity, sidewalks, and homes located in close relationship to the street. In addition, the N2 district will include greenways and natural areas, and options for neighborhood-serving commercial. This development pattern is the preferred future pattern for the city, as expressed in the comprehensive plan.*

#### **Approval Criteria & Findings:**

The Planning Commission and City Council shall consider the following criteria in the review of a preliminary plat. Criteria (a) and (g) must be met and (b) through (f) shall be considered:

**(a) The proposed subdivision must be in full compliance with the provisions of this LDC;**

*Staff Response:* The preliminary plat will require a few modifications, which are identified in the recommended conditions. Staff will be working with the applicant on final engineering and design details prior to the Final Plat.

**(b) The proposed subdivision must be in accordance with the general objectives, or with any specific objective, of the city's comprehensive plan, capital improvements program, or other city policy or regulation;**

*Staff Response:* This subdivision is in compliance with the Northfield Comprehensive Plan and the intent of the project reflects the spirit and values of many of the 12 land use principles including:

- **Encourage a compact development pattern, and support infill, redevelopment and land intensification.** - Development of the Paulson property will infill a site surrounded by existing residential homes, a church and school. The density proposed supports compact development, infill, redevelopment and land intensification.
- **Facilitate the creation of residential areas with strong neighborhood qualities.** - The infill of this neighborhood will complete street connections and have sidewalks on both sides of all streets supporting the neighborhood and surrounding neighborhoods.
- **New and redeveloped residential communities will have strong neighborhood qualities** - The development of

this parcel will create a neighborhood with mixed housing types that are drawn to the street with sidewalks and complete previously dead-end streets.

- **A wider range of housing choices will be encouraged** - This development will provide 4 different housing types, including single family homes, twin homes, a four-plex and an apartment building.
- **Streets will create an attractive public realm and be exceptional places for people** - All of the streets proposed will have sidewalks on both sides of the street, street trees, and follow a grid-like pattern to the maximum extent possible.
- **Places will be better connected, opportunities will be created to walk and bike** - The development will incorporate walking and biking opportunities on the street and sidewalk connections in the subdivision and adjacent to the parcel.

- (c) **The physical characteristics of the site, including but not limited to topography, vegetation, susceptibility to erosion and sedimentation, susceptibility to flooding, water storage, and retention, must be such that the site is suitable for the type of development or use contemplated;**

*Staff Response:* The site has rolling terrain and will be designed to accommodate new public infrastructure and residential development. Stormwater management will be incorporated into the project. The site is suitable for residential development.

- (d) **The site must be physically suitable for the intensity or type of development or use contemplated;**

*Staff Response:* This development infills a large tract of land (approx. 12.5 acres) which was previously a tree farm. The site has rolling terrain and will be designed to accommodate new public infrastructure and residential development. Stormwater management will be incorporated into the project. The site is suitable for residential development.

- (e) **The design of the subdivision or the proposed improvements must not be likely to cause substantial and irreversible environmental damage;**

*Staff Response:* Development of the site will include grading, new public infrastructure and residential development and will convert the land from a former tree farm to a residential neighborhood. The City of Northfield Natural Resources Inventory identifies the perimeter of the tree farm as Woodlands and Forest in the Semi-Natural and Planted Communities. The trees on the perimeter of the site are planned to be maintained and preserved as part of the preliminary plat submittal documents. Much of Outlots A, B and C will maintain significant tree preservation. The rears of the single family homes will do the same. In addition, the developer proposes to provide native and pollinator friendly planting throughout the plat. The plat is not expected to result in substantial or irreversible environmental damage.

- (f) **The design of the subdivision or the type of improvements must not be detrimental to the health, safety, or general welfare of the public; and**

*Staff Response:* The design and development of the subdivision is not expected to be detrimental to the health, safety, or general welfare of the public. Creation of the neighborhood with mixed housing types that are drawn to the street, with sidewalks is expected to result in improved connectivity and walking routes within the neighborhood and to Greenvale Park School.

- (g) **The design of the subdivision or the type of improvement must not conflict with easements on record, unless those easements are vacated, or with easements established by judgment of a**

**court.**

*Staff Response:* There are no known easements to be vacated at this time.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends approval subject to the following conditions, in order to ensure compliance with the Land Development Code and applicable policies:

1. Sidewalk shall be constructed on the south side of Lincoln Parkway from Green Meadow Court to Linden Street North by the applicant.
2. Highland Avenue shall be constructed to the east of Kraewood Dr. to within 20 feet of the east property line and include city services as determined by Public Works.
3. Realign Kraewood Drive where it intersects with Greenvale Avenue, so it aligns in the middle of the two parcels on the south side of Greenvale Avenue.

**Financial Impacts:**

None.

**Alternatives:**

The Planning Commission could recommend to approve as recommended by staff, recommend to approve with alternate findings or conditions, or recommend denial if alternate findings warrant. The City Council has final decision authority, subject to applicable policies.

**Tentative Timelines:**

The preliminary plat is planned to go before Council in the month of August 2021.

Future timeline would include (tentative - subject to change):

- Preliminary Plat: The Planning Commission will consider the Plat on July 15, 2021. If the Commission makes a recommendation to the Council at this meeting, the item will likely be before the City Council in August.
- Rezoning:
  - Which would include rezoning the main homestead from N1 to N2 and potentially the sliver parcel on the north end of the plat from N1 to N2
  - This application has not been made yet and would require a public hearing at Planning Commission, a recommendation from the Planning Commission to Council, with Council making the final decision
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Application:
  - A TIF application was received this week and may be considered by Council in August or September.
- Site Plan Review:
  - No application received at this time. Application is anticipated to require staff review only.
- Final Plat:
  - No application received yet, requires Council action only.