

Welcome and meeting opening from Lisa Anteau. Shared that a meeting recap would be posted on our website and that there were pads of paper and pens on the front table if anyone wished to take their own notes. Introduction of Gracewin's Director of Operations, Nate Anderson, who will be presenting.

## AGENDA

- Gracewin Listens!
- Neighborhood Concerns
- City Requirements
- Project Modifications
- Conclusion/Feedback Forms
- Question and Answer

Nate ran through a quick review of the items that would be covered during the meeting and indicated that we would be available after the session for as long as needed to address any individual issues or concerns.

## GRACEWIN LISTENS!

- Woodridge Townhomes Neighborhood
- Irvingboro Neighborhood Feedback

Nate discussed the Baxter Cooperative project, which had an association of townhome owners on the adjacent property to the west speaking up at City meetings to express their concerns. He reviewed how we met with them in a similar manner to the meeting that was happening this evening, and that the Gracewin team listened to their concerns, responded and addressed them as best as we were able, with the result of the neighbors emerging from the experience deeply satisfied and huge fans of having the Cooperative as neighbors. He reiterated that many of the concerns expressed by the Baxter homeowners mirror those of the Irvingboro neighborhood with respect to neighborhood fit and potential for undesirable traffic patterns.

The Woodridge Townhomes neighborhood even prepared a letter sharing their experience with Gracewin that can be viewed on [www.gracewinliving.com/Bemidji](http://www.gracewinliving.com/Bemidji).

## NEIGHBORHOOD CONCERNS

- Building height
- Impervious coverage
- Density
- Access to Irving Beach Drive
- Light pollution, stormwater, parking
- Tree preservation and Site screening
- Pickleball court, Pets, IRA facilities

Nate reviewed the list of concerns that has been compiled from members of the neighborhood through emails, letters, discussions, and feedback at City meetings.

## CITY REQUIREMENTS

- Light pollution
- Stormwater
- Parking
- Tree preservation

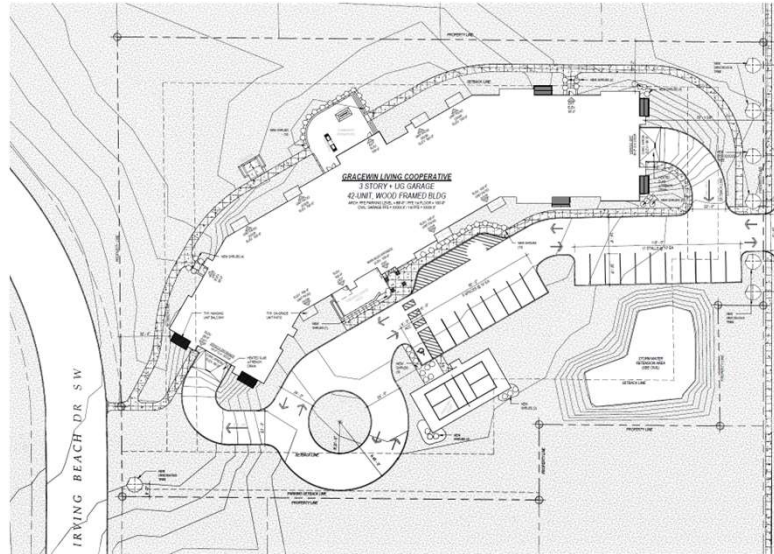
Nate reviewed that as a property in the R6 Zone with the Shoreland Overlay, Gracewin is subject to additional requirements that a single-family homeowner would not be, relating to specific areas of the site, stormwater handling, and building design. There will be a pond and treatment for stormwater on Gracewin property. He indicated that Gracewin would be fully compliant with all City and State guidance in the above areas of concern.

He provided a detailed review of how stormwater is handled and where the water actually routes. Water that lands on the west side of the property will run onto the street as it does today.

Parking has been reduced and now sits at approximately 1.5 stalls/household on the property. This was a delicate balance between reducing the footprint of parking, but having enough for Gracewin members so that we don't create a parking problem elsewhere. A question was asked about visitor's parking and the answer was provided that there are 20 surface spots for visitors, which includes the required number of handicap spots out front. Members will park in one of their assigned spots underneath the building, of which there are 42 spaces.

Tree Preservation is a focus and we are saving all we can. Presently, the plans are within a tree or two of the limit, and we'll replace according to the city standard. We'll place the trees appropriately to be able to be able to screen the pickleball courts, homes to the North etc.

## PROJECT MODIFICATIONS



The previous driveway access to Irving Beach Drive has been completely eliminated. The plan was provided to the Fire Chief and determined to be Fire Dept compliant. A question was asked as to whether or not there could be potential changes to this plan later based on Fire Dept. feedback after submission of our application. Nate shared that he has spoken to Mike Yavarro already. He shared that plans are formally reviewed once the application are submitted, and once the application is approved they will not be subject to further change.

Nate reinforced that the driveway change mitigates concern about traffic in the neighborhood as Gracewin traffic will stay to the east side of the site coming out near Luekens. This will also maintain the corridor of existing trees alongside Irving Beach Dr. He shared that Gracewin's site will maintain the natural grade of the land as much as possible, and that sidewalks can go around trees. There may be a tree or two that gets taken out by the exit as this will be unavoidable

## PROJECT MODIFICATIONS

- Access to Irving Beach Drive
- Flat roof
- Traffic Impacts

The next big change that was discussed was the implementation of a flat roof, which brings the height of the building down approximately 7-9 feet to the roof. Nate shared that there will be some parapet walls that go up 4-5' higher than the flat roof for decorative factor so the building doesn't look plain and monolithic.

A question was asked about what the height restrictions are for the city; Nate clarified that the zoning guidelines are set at 50-60 ft, whilst the Shoreland Overlay is set at 30 ft.

A question was asked as to whether or not the building plan had been re-worked to show what it would look like with a flat roof. The plans have not yet been re-worked, but Nate shared an example of a comparable building with a flat roof and then showed the existing rendering of the Gracewin building, explaining how the parapet walls would coincide with the bump outs on the side of the building.

A question was asked about the height of the Gracewin building with the peaked roof (47.7' – note this is a correction from what was said in the meeting, now verified) vs. the flat roof (35', at the highest point of the parapet wall)

He also explained how the City's height restrictions are measured to the mid-point between the base of the roof and its peak, as opposed to the highest point.

## CONCLUSION/FEEDBACK FORMS

- Gracewin fit
  - Effective City Planning
  - Efficacy of Cooperative Development
    - “Approvable” Alternatives
- Spirit of Cooperation
  - 70% of Neighborhood Concerns addressed



“Fit” is a big thing that has come back in feedback with respect to height, impervious coverage, and density. Nate expounded on fit as it pertains to city planning standards and best practices. The way that IRA is laid out is within best practices of city planning – layering commercial, higher density, single family. We fit in that flow with this project and due to Lueken’s and the other multi-family in the area. Gracewin will provide a nice buffer to the commercial area, which currently features the back of the grocery store. The IRA is also composed of diverse groupings of single-family housing at various price points, condos, duplexes, and apartments. Nate talked about Gracewin working well within this neighborhood and offering an option to older people that no longer desire – or are able – to live in their own home.

Lisa expounded on how any person with the means can purchase any home, at any time, and it is a wild card as to who they are, how they will care for their property, and how many family members reside within. Gracewin is a very well-understood quantity in terms of their Members: 55+, maximum double occupancy per home, and in reality a high percentage that are single occupancy. Additionally, Gracewin Members will be income qualified, credit checked, and have received background checks including eviction history, terrorist watch list, and sex offender database. Gracewin Members very closely mirror the composition of the IRA membership, and in fact 6/7 existing Gracewin reservations belong to Members of the IRA. This represents 5% of the IRA Membership.

An example of a building that would fit within the Shoreland Overlay guidelines was shared, along with the opinion that this was a less desirable usage due to aesthetics, as well as the more transient nature of occupants who – as renters – wouldn’t have the pride of ownership that a Cooperative Member would have.



## QUESTION AND ANSWER



There was discussion of a fear that the paths would be used too much. An attendee observed that almost nobody uses the trail or the park areas. Tom Barry chimed in that those who are in the Association pay for the facilities and they are private facilities that require financial support for their maintenance, operation, taxes, and insurance. Nate expressed his thoughts that the resources and financial support that could be contributed from Gracewin would be meaningful and that Gracewin could be a good partner to the IRA. He stated that a good way to look at this is an opportunity for more revenue and contribution from good neighbors who would want to be a part of the IRA.

A question was asked about the picture of the 2-story apartment building on the prior slide. Nate explained that something of this order is what could reasonably be expected in order to build on the land in such a way that a variance to the Shoreland Overlay would not be required. This building would reduce the size as well as the cost due to things like removing decks and amenities.

Are the pickleball courts lit? No – Gracewin removed the lighting following the receipt of community feedback and doing research on the prevalence of lighting on these types of courts.

A question was asked about what elements of the Shoreland Overlay is Gracewin still out of compliance with? The answer is density, height, impervious surface. An attendee made the observation that there are many homes within the neighborhood that are over on impervious surface based on what guidelines were at the time they were built, so there are varying levels of impervious coverage present already. The question was asked if we knew our building wasn't compliant when we bought the property. Nate answered that we didn't know that the Shoreland Overlay would present a problem and this wasn't flagged to us.

One attendee suggested that Gracewin should be required to be members of IRA.

A lot of issues were shared by individual homeowners within the neighborhood that have had their requests for variances denied, or who didn't submit a variance request because they were advised by a member of the City staff that there was no chance of them receiving one. Nate and Lisa drew the comparison of a single family home variance impacting that homeowner exclusively, or perhaps other homeowners directly adjacent, whereas Gracewin applies to 41 individual households. The topic was brought up that Gracewin Members would free up housing inventory in the Bemidji community overall, as well as Irvingboro itself because several neighbors are interested. An attendee (sharing that he is 78 years old) shared that he values having an option like Gracewin for a time that is coming for him – and for each of us – where it is no longer safe or advisable to remain in your own home; something he feels everyone should keep in mind.

Someone asked about the impervious coverage with the single driveway entry and the driveway from Irving Beach Drive removed. Nate shared that impervious coverage was at 45%, and is now bumped up to 46% with the loop.

The question was brought up about the impact of Gracewin on property values in the neighborhood. An attendee shared that he had a similar concern, so he had reached out to a reputable realtor in the area who told him unequivocally that property values will increase with the addition of Gracewin.

The question was asked as to whether or not we have developed rental properties before? Nate shared that the company has, and that there are 2 other markets that we are looking at for potential rental projects at the present time.

A question was posed to an attendee that works at the City about the precedence of denying so many requests from the neighborhood, and then allowing variances for Gracewin and the type of message that this sends. The response was provided that everyone has the ability to apply for a variance and those are evaluated on an individual basis. The point was brought up that there are varying levels of impervious coverage due to differences over time, so there is not uniformity as it is and the Planning Board has to make the decision with each application. He complimented Nate and effort to get community input because it's not a required part of the process.

There were some specific question on rules and which supercedes with respect to covenants that were very detailed, and determined to require further research and individual review. One attendee shared her personal experience building in the past year, and how difficult it was to sort through the requirements. She did get her home built and loves the neighborhood, but wanted a larger patio and different look to the front of her home, which were not allowed. She did obtain a variance of 5 ft from the light pole for her driveway. She has some concern about the garage entry to Gracewin and proximity to her home. Nate spoke with her privately following the meeting and assured her we would have further discussion.