



City of Ann Arbor

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
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Meeting Minutes Planning Commission, City

Tuesday, December 17, 2013

7:00 PM

City Hall, 301 E. Huron Street, 2nd Flr.

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1 CALL TO ORDER

Chair Westphal called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

2 ROLL CALL

Rampson called the roll.

Present 6 - Bona, Woods, Westphal, Giannola, Briere, and Parekh

Absent 3 - Adenekan, Clein, and Peters

3 INTRODUCTIONS

4 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Woods, seconded by Giannola, that the agenda be approved as presented. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

13-1487

October 15, 2013 City Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Moved by Giannola, seconded by Briere, that the minutes be approved by the Commission and forwarded to City Council. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

**6 REPORTS FROM CITY ADMINISTRATION, CITY COUNCIL, PLANNING MANAGER,
PLANNING COMMISSION OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES, WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS
AND PETITIONS**

6-a City Council

Briere reported that at the previous night's meeting, the City Council decided to give the entire net proceeds of the Y[MCA] lot sale to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. She said Council also directed the City Administrator to develop plans for a series of milestones on implementing the Non motorized Transportation Plan. She noted that Council postponed taking action on that item until the next meeting. She reported that Council approved \$125,000 for Police overtime for traffic enforcement, which she noted has a bit to do with pedestrian crosswalks and the safety improvement plan.

6-b Planning Manager

No report.

6-c Planning Commission Officers and Committees

No report.

6-d Written Communications and Petitions

[13-1542](#)

Various Correspondences to the City Planning Commission

Received and Filed

7 AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (Persons may speak for three minutes about an item that is NOT listed as a public hearing on this agenda. Please state your name and address for the record.)

None

8 PUBLIC HEARINGS SCHEDULED FOR NEXT BUSINESS MEETING

9 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9-a [13-1543](#)

Germain Motors Site Plan for City Council Approval - A proposal to construct single-story additions totaling 11,306 square feet, to two of the three auto dealership buildings on this 9.78 acres site located at 2575 South State Street. The existing parking lot is proposed to be expanded to provide 224 additional vehicle inventory parking spaces. A modification of the landscape requirements (Chapter 62) is proposed, in addition to variances from the Off-Street Parking Ordinance (Chapter 59). Ward 4. Staff Recommendation: Approval

Kowalski presented the staff report.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Noting no speakers, the Chair declared the public hearing closed.

Moved by Woods, seconded by Giannola that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Germain Motors Site Plan, subject to variances for parking lot and landscape modifications being granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals

and

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby approves the proposed landscape modifications in order to reduce the requirement for depressed landscape islands, according to Chapter 62 (Landscape and Screening Ordinance), Section 5:608(2)(c).

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Bona asked why the pervious pavers are proposed to be located at the front of the site.

Kowalski said the petitioner preferred not to have them in customer areas for maintenance reasons.

Bob Wanty, Washtenaw Engineering, agreed, adding that they are proposing the pavers in the areas where they are expanding the parking lot. He said they discovered that at the back of the property, a lot of the soil is fill and variable soils, while the soil in the front is better. He noted that the pavers also set off the vehicles, giving them a different area.

Bona thanked the petitioner for looking into the green roof option, and she appreciated the analysis and decision. She suggested that the petitioner's conclusion about energy savings may not be accurate and could use more data, adding she has heard anecdotally that green roofs make a significant difference.

Bona said the variances requested all seem reasonable to her, explaining that if they complied with the ordinance there would be more pavement per car than needed. She agreed that they should not remove mature landscaping to create depressed islands. She said she was in support of the proposed project.

Woods thanked the petitioner for bringing back the requested information and asked how the traffic flows in the rear parking lot, since it looks tight.

Kowalski said he witnessed dealership staff moving cars for stacking while he visited the site, explaining that the aisles provide enough room.

Wanty said the steep area is not generally accessed by customers, since staff shuttle cars up to the customers.

Woods asked where the snow is stacked.

Wanty said that they will move cars in order to push the snow into the sediment retention basin.

Westphal echoed Commission comments, especially the analysis of green roofs.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.

Yeas: 6 - Bonnie Bona, Wendy Woods, Kirk Westphal, Diane Giannola, Sabra Briere, and Paras Parekh

Nays: 0

Absent: 3 - Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Clein, and Jeremy Peters

10 REGULAR BUSINESS - Staff Report, Public Hearing and Commission Discussion of Each Item

(If an agenda item is tabled, it will most likely be rescheduled to a future date. If you would like to be notified when a tabled agenda item will appear on a future agenda, please provide your email address on the form provided on the front table at the meeting. You may also call Planning and Development Services at 734-794-6265 during office hours to obtain additional information about the review schedule or visit the Planning page on the City's website (www.a2gov.org).)

(Public Hearings: Individuals may speak for three minutes. The first person who is the official representative of an organized group or who is representing the petitioner may speak for five minutes; additional representatives may speak for three minutes. Please state your name and address for the record.)

(Comments about a proposed project are most constructive when they relate to: (1) City Code requirements and land use regulations, (2) consistency with the City Master Plan, or (3) additional information about the area around the petitioner's property and the extent to which a proposed project may positively or negatively affect the area.)

10-a [13-1544](#)

1643 & 1645 South State Street, Hoffman Rezoning for City Council Approval - A proposal to rezone 2 parcels; 1643 South State Street (0.30 acre) and 1645 South State Street (0.22 acres) from TWP (Township District) to C1 (Local Business District). Ward 4. Staff Recommendation: Approval

Kowalski presented the staff report.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Noting no speakers, the Chair declared the public hearing closed.

Moved by Briere, seconded by Giannola, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Hofmann Zoning from Unzoned to C1 (Local Business District).

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Bona asked about the current uses on the site and whether they were allowed by C1.

Kowalski clarified the uses of the two buildings in the back are auto repair and storage uses, which are considered non-conforming, and there is also a wood shop use at the front of one of the parcels that would be considered a conforming use.

Bona asked if there was a way to allow any non-conforming uses in the C1 district through Special Exception Uses.

Kowalski said that there are not special exception use options for these types of uses in the C1 district.

Bona said the storage use does not make a lot of sense in this area where we are trying to create a vital environment, but the wood shop would.

Briere recalled at the earlier discussion of the zoning request, the petitioners expressed a desire to have a large retail operation, as well as manufacturing sausages. She asked whether the C1 designation would do this better than a C3 designation.

Kowalski said the C1 district is a little more restrictive, with tenant spaces limited to 8,000 sf. He said large-scale processing is not permitted in this district. He noted that the C1 zoning is the best fit with the master plan.

Briere asked what the zoning designation is on the adjacent Produce Station site.

Kowalski said the Produce Station site is zoned C3 and P.

Briere asked if the South State Street Plan recommended C1. She noted that she did not see a map of the proposed zonings for the State Street Area land use recommendations at a larger scale in the staff report.

Rampson explained that the South State Street Plan does not have a proposed zoning map. She said that the plan identifies clusters of parcels with area-specific land use recommendations. She noted that this parcel is in Area 1A, which is recommended for a local business service district, which is best suited for C1 zoning.

Westphal asked if these South State Street rezonings are an item in the work plan.

Rampson said not at this moment, but the Commission has talked about being proactive about rezonings along the corridor.

Woods said she is supportive of this request, and understands why it was turned down the first time.

Westphal asked if a site plan comes forward for the site, they would look at parking conformance, but in the interim the current parking configuration could continue.

Kowalski said yes.

Parekh asked if the existing auto repair is a non-conforming use.

Kowalski said yes, but they are allowed to continue.

Parekh asked if this use could remain even if there was a transfer in ownership.

Kowalski said yes.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows, with the Chair declaring the motion carried.

Yeas: 6 - Bonnie Bona, Wendy Woods, Kirk Westphal, Diane Giannola, Sabra Briere, and Paras Parekh

Nays: 0

Absent: 3 - Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Klein, and Jeremy Peters

site plan petition proposes to incorporate an additional parcel into the previously approved 624 Church Site Plan. Two buildings, 624 Church and 1117 Willard, are proposed to be demolished, and a 116,167 square foot, 13-story residential building is proposed to be constructed adjacent to and over the building at 618 Church. At the street level, a covered patio/courtyard is proposed between the existing Pizza House restaurant and the proposed residential lobby and management office, which will be extend to the Willard Street corner. Floors 2 through 13 will contain 122 dwelling units with a total of 232 bedrooms. The proposed building will be located approximately 10 foot 3 inches from the western property line; the previous proposed addition had no set-back from the western property line. A one-way drive providing access to 5 on-site parking spaces is proposed at the rear of the site. The petitioner is requesting that the remaining 48 required vehicle parking spaces be provided through permits in the Forest Street Parking Structure. (0.45 acres) Ward 3. Staff Recommendation: Approval

Kowalski presented the staff report.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Brad Moore, architect, said that when the petitioners got the approval for this site last time, the property owner to the west was concerned about constructability with a zero lot line, so they decided to step back to address those concerns. During this time a neighboring property became available, and they were able to incorporate that parcel, making the re-design possible. Moore said that they believe they have made the project better, giving more flexibility, which is what the Design Review Board recommended. He said the Design Review Board was concerned about programming of the outdoor plaza, which the Pizza House has now moved to program as outdoor dining area.

Moore explained that the Pizza House designed a 'garage bar concept', with active space on the street, and the transparent garage doors being used during inclement Michigan weather. He said they have tried to improve the bike storage room, but do not feel that that space qualified as active space so they did not move it forward. He said the bike room will be well lit and under security observation at all times and they believe that it will be safe and used.

Noting no further speakers, the Chair declared the public hearing closed.

Moved by Giannola, seconded by Woods, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the 624 Church Street Site Plan and Development Agreement.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Briere asked about the solid waste and recycling pick up.

Moore pointed out the solid waste storage room. He said the compacter dumpsters will be wheeled out of the room, and the truck will approach from Willard, tip, then, back up. He explained that they met with City staff on site and all parties have agreed this proposal is the best.

Briere noted there are citizen complaints about noise from trucks backing up in blind

alleys throughout the City and she is eager to look for solutions.

Moore noted there is already a dumpster on an adjacent site, and the same trucks will be servicing this site so there won't be added noise.

Briere said, however, with the added residents in the new building who have to listen to the noise, she will get more complaints.

Briere asked about the outdoor dining area and if it will be a three or four season space.

Moore said since it is not heated, it is intended for use from mid-April to mid-October.

Briere asked if the space will be open 24 hours per day.

Moore said the glass doors would be closed after hours.

Briere asked about access from the Pizza House to the dining area.

Moore said access will be through the Pizza House main front entrance and then through a door leading to the dining area.

Giannola asked if the area is just intended for Pizza House visitors and not a 'party place' for residents.

Moore said it is just for Pizza House.

Woods asked about the parking.

Moore said there are 48 permits that have been granted by the DDA, but they have asked for extension options beyond the 15 year contract for use of the Forest Street parking structure.

Woods said that she parks in the Forest Street structure and noted that oftentimes when she arrives in the mornings the structure is already full. She wondered if there are a certain number of spaces allotted to UM staff and others for the general public. She expressed concern with the possibility of parking spaces being oversold, and with the promise of more parking spots it could be a problem in the making. She said the DDA will have to look at the situation.

Moore said he will ask the DDA about the situation, adding that he believes there are a certain number of spaces allocated to UM staff.

Rampson explained that when the Forest Street Parking structure was constructed, it was a joint venture between the University of Michigan and the City, with costs split between the two as well as parking allocations.

Parekh asked if the DDA feels there are spots available.

Moore said he was not privy to the DDA's data, and that the DDA made the determination as to which parking structure had available spots after looking at their whole system.

Parekh said he has never been in the Forest Street Parking structure when he hasn't experienced a problem with trying to find a parking space.

Bona clarified that parking in lieu requires the developer to provide funds instead of providing parking through their project. She asked what happens if residents don't have a need for the spaces and if parking spots are included in rents.

Moore said the parking spaces would be a separate rental contract and in checking with existing high-rise management the parking spaces are always rented by residents.

Bona said it is important that parking spaces don't become attached to rental units so tenants feel they need to fill a parking space just because they have one.

Bona said she is disappointed that the proposed bicycle parking is in the back. She asked if students don't use the parking, what options are available to them.

Moore said they can always take their bikes to their apartments.

Bona asked about the roof above the top floor and if it is solar ready.

Jim Caesar, Opus Group, said their management team is concerned about putting things on the roof given the maze of mechanical equipment as well as the needs of the window washing equipment. He said the roof was solar ready at one time but that was taken out as a request of the management company to meet the maintenance needs.

Bona asked about the mechanical equipment on roof.

Caesar said there are 3-4 heat pump condensers with heat coils underneath that eject heat for the rejection system. He explained that the heat pump will be located in the mechanical penthouse next to the elevator core with the heat pumps outside that core in order to eject heat into the atmosphere. He explained the various mechanical and plumbing equipment proposed for the roof top.

Bona said noise generated from rooftop equipment is a concern, and she suggested the petitioner gather noise level information in time for the City Council review.

Rampson clarified the parking requirement.

Woods commented that the building looked very nice on the plans and asked if the finished building will look like the elevation renderings.

Moore said yes.

Woods asked about the slope.

Moore said there is a gentle slope.

Woods asked about fire command room.

Moore said it is a requirement per building code for buildings over 55 feet and is used as a staging area to combat any fire that might occur in the building.

Woods asked if the room will be fire proof.

Moore said it is fire rated on three sides and the glass facing the street is not required to be fire-rated.

Westphal said in looking at the elevation of the garage style doors, will they be fully transparent.

Moore said yes, they will be polycarbonate panels in steel frames and fully transparent.

Westphal asked if the proposed usage for the seating area could be envisioned for use beyond the summer season.

Moore said it was intended mainly for use during the extended summer season, depending on the weather.

Westphal asked if external heaters would be allowed or considered for usage to warm the space to extend the season.

Moore said he would have to check with the Fire Marshall.

Westphal commented that the more activity that could be seen from the sidewalk would be great for the block.

Westphal asked about materials suggested by the Design Review Board, such as pre-cast concrete materials.

Moore said in the inset they are looking to use a technique that would give the exterior a different texture than the smooth facing of the ribs, and they are looking to have an alternate contrasting texture.

Westphal said he felt the notch was good to break up the massing, but given the plane of the pre-cast concrete and flat windows, the building reads quite flat. He noted that while the design was not within their purview, he would encourage alternate textures.

Westphal asked about a comment made on possible fading of pre-cast panels.

Moore said a member of the Design Review Board thought he had noticed on another building some fading of the red pigment, and to mitigate those concerns Moore has proposed a red brown color to address possible fading of red pigment.

Westphal asked if the garage door materials are labeled on the site plan.

Kowalski said the plan says "glazed" and they could add the specifications if the Commission desired.

Westphal asked how cyclists would access the bike room.

Moore said from the driveway on Willard or Church Street.

Bona said the trim detailing on the plans is different from each other and she suggested the articulated plan showing more heft to the trim was preferred to her, rather than the skinny trim, and with relief rather than flush with the exterior.

Woods said she liked the lighter colored lights shown on the plan.

Briere asked about the lamp post outside of the garage and if it was a lamp post to be installed by the petitioner.

Moore responded that the lamp post was existing but his rendering might not be showing the correct color.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.

Yeas: 6 - Bonnie Bona, Wendy Woods, Kirk Westphal, Diane Giannola, Sabra Briere, and Paras Parekh

Nays: 0

Absent: 3 - Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Clein, and Jeremy Peters

11 AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (Persons may speak for three minutes on any item.)

None

12 COMMISSION PROPOSED BUSINESS

Briere said that at Council the previous night, they postponed taking action on the Planning Commission Bylaws to the first meeting in February in order to allow the Planning Commission time to address the changes. She said she wanted to make sure the Bylaws made it onto the next Commission agenda.

Parekh asked about the Downtown Zoning next steps.

Rampson said the item will be on the City Council agenda at their second meeting in January.

13 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Kirk Westphal, Chair
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