



City of Ann Arbor
Formal Minutes - Final
Planning Commission, City

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
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Wednesday, September 3, 2014

7:00 PM

City Hall, 301 E. Huron St., 2nd Fl.

10-a 14-1336

MAVD Financial Institution Site Plan, Street Vacation, Special Exception Use, Rezoning and Landscape Modification - A proposal to construct a one-story, 5,004 square foot financial institution building with drive-thru service at the rear of the building at 2727 South State Street. Associated with the request, the property owner is requesting vacation of a public easement along South State Street, special exception use approval of the proposed drive-thru facility and rezoning of a portion of the parent parcel from M1 (Limited Industrial) to O (Office). Ward 4. Staff Recommendation: Approval

Chris Cheng presented the staff report.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mark Melchi, 1471 Ardmoor Avenue, Ann Arbor, representing the proposed MAV development, explained the request to the Commission. He said they currently own and operate the three buildings at South State Commons. He introduced their team members; Brian Bagnick, from Hobbs and Black Architects, Tiffany Ford and Al Augenstein from UM Credit Union, and Rick Meader from Washtenaw Engineering. He pointed out that there currently is an excess of parking, even with the buildings being full.

Woods noted that several Commission members are also members of the UM Credit Union, Briere, Franciscus, Woods, Peters, and Westphal, but that they had no personal gain or benefit from the request.

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

Moved by Clein, seconded by Westphal, that The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the MAVD Financial Institution rezoning from M1 (Limited Industrial District) to O (Office District) and

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the MAVD Financial Institution Site Plan, subject to: 1) special exception use approval for a drive-thru facility; 2) recording of cross access easements, 3) approval of a land division, and 4) approval of an administrative amendment to the parent site plan and the site plan located north of

this site, and

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the vacation of a 50-foot wide easement for future right-of-way across 2727 South State Street, and

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby approves the proposed landscape modifications to South State Commons I (2723 South State Street) and South State Commons III (2727 South State Street) in order to maintain their previously approved landscape plans in accordance with Chapter 62 (Landscape and Screening Ordinance), Section 5:608(2)(c).

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Briere asked about the vacation and proposed land split, noting that she was not seeing clearly what was being proposed.

Cheng showed the request on the site plan.

Westphal asked about the need for right-of-way for the discussed Connector 'super stop' on South State Street.

Rampson said the 'super stop' location identified in the South State Corridor Plan was on the south campus of University of Michigan, so it would actually be in a place where a bus could pull off as opposed to pull over.

Westphal said he didn't see any issues as it was proposed.

Bona asked how the idea of splitting off the site came to MAV's attention, and why they believe removing parking will not affect tenants.

Melchi said when they redid the parking lot in 2002 and inter-connected the parking lots; the building was empty at the time and they got approval for medical office use, which had an increased parking requirement. He said they determined the parking was in excess even after the building was completely occupied. He said they also have the parking structure to the west with the covered parking underneath being heavily utilized, while the top of the structure is not.

Bona asked about other potential opportunities for commercial development that would be more mixed use than what they traditionally get.

Melchi said the South State Commons I and II were done as a planned development. He said there is acreage to the south of the deck that could be used. He noted some concern from tenants about parking, adding that they might have to migrate somewhat in their parking habits, but that they feel like this will be a good balance when they are done with the development.

Bona noted that the Commission wrote the new drive-thru standards to make them more pedestrian-friendly, and she said she would like to know if the code worked for the UM Credit Union.

Tiffany Ford said when they worked with MAV and Hobbs and Black on the design, they preferred to put the drives in the back, reason being that they want the branch design to represent their brand and allow their members to feel secure that they are investing in their ownership. She said when you put the drive in the front, you limit the design. She said they would like people to be able to look through the building and see the atmosphere they have created inside. She said it worked really well from their perspective and what they wanted to accomplish for their members.

Bona said she was happy that the new code worked for them. She said in regards to the landscape modification, she felt it was acceptable and a reasonable request since there was nothing really being done on the site.

Clein said this is a great use of parking space while creating a little more density, and he felt the proposed use of space would not be controversial to the citizens. He said he felt it was moving in the direction of the State Street Plan which looks for more density and more active uses on the street, which he felt was great. He said the rezoning seems to fit very well. He said regarding the landscaping issue he also felt it would be unreasonable to expect the petitioner to re-landscape the entire site. He said he would like to see the entrance doors easily visible from the street, either through the use of color, a canopy, or signage, which makes it seem more approachable from the street. He asked about the movement of traffic for the drive-thru, noting that it looked like it went from four lanes to one lane and asked if there were any concerns regarding the merging.

Rick Meader, Washtenaw Engineering, said they gave a lot of thought to the arrangement and that there would never be four vehicles leaving the windows at once. He said the traffic going back there would be so infrequent that they don't anticipate any blockages for the people leaving the drive-thrus.

Melchi said the flow will be clockwise direction and that there would also be an ATM next to the building.

Adenekan asked when they anticipated the most traffic.

Ford said most of the anticipated traffic will be in the afternoon through the drive-thrus.

Woods asked whether they would be closing the branch on South Main Street.

Ford said this location is a relocation of the branch from Eisenhower and Main Street.

Peters said he is glad to see that they are turning parking spots into active uses along a main corridor coming into the City. He said he loves that they made the decision on their own to put the drive-thru in the back since it is a much more welcoming way.

Ford said they are very excited to offer the branch to the community.

Melchi said Hobbs and Black has made a great design on the entrance which will have a prominent blue color. He said the connection to State Street through sidewalks and the brightly colored entrance colors will accomplish what they are looking for, adding that there is also a bus stop nearby.

Brian Bagnick, Hobbs & Black Associates, Inc., passed out 3-dimensional renderings and explained that they wanted to make the building transparent and friendly, pointing to the bike racks out front near the sign. He clarified that on the drive-thru, there are two lanes going to four and back to two lanes and that they had done traffic counts and they don't anticipate traffic backups.

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

Yeas: 8 - Bonnie Bona, Wendy Woods, Kirk Westphal, Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Clein, Sabra Briere, Jeremy Peters, and Sofia Franciscus

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 - Diane Giannola

SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE MOTION

Moved by Adenekan, seconded by Peters, that The Ann Arbor City

Planning Commission, after hearing all interested persons and reviewing all relevant information, finds the petition to substantially meet the standards in Chapter 55 (Zoning Ordinance), Sections 5:10.12(3)(c) and 5:104 (Special Exceptions), subject to approval of the corresponding site plan, and, therefore, approves the MAVD Financial Institution Special Exception Use for a four-lane drive-thru financial facility.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION ON SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE

Clein said normally they are not supportive of drive-thrus in the community, but felt that the petitioner had done an exceptional job in designing and using the building to shield the drive-thru so it still retains the experience for people on foot, bike, or vehicles. He felt it would be a positive contribution to State Street and he was in favor of the request.

Briere asked whether the ATM is accessible by foot.

Ford said yes, although it was designed for automobile usage. She said there was another walk-up ATM at the front of the building.

Westphal echoed Clein's comments on the design and said it was one of the more attractive additions to the landscape of credit unions. He said it will beg the question about where drive-thrus will not be appropriate, even if they are in the back. He said the proposed request meets the City's standards and will not harm the pedestrian environment of the surrounding area.

Peters asked whether the ATM in the lobby will be available after hours.

Ford said it will be accessible after hours through the exterior drive-thru lane, in addition to the exterior one located adjacent to the main entrance.

Briere recommended that Council receive copies of the 3-dimensional renderings.

VOTE ON SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE MOTION

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

Yeas: 8 - Bonnie Bona, Wendy Woods, Kirk Westphal, Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Clein, Sabra Briere, Jeremy Peters, and Sofia Franciscus

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 - Diane Giannola

