



City of Ann Arbor

Formal Minutes

Planning Commission, City

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
[http://a2gov.legistar.com/
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Wednesday, May 6, 2015

7:00 PM

Larcom City Hall, 301 E Huron St,
Second Floor, City Council chambers

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1 CALL TO ORDER

Chair Woods called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

2 ROLL CALL

Planning Manager Wendy Rampson called the roll.

Present 6 - Woods, Adenekan, Clein, Franciscus, Mills, and Bona

Absent 3 - Briere, Peters, and Milshteyn

3 INTRODUCTIONS

4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

15-0536 City Planning Commission Special Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2015

Approved

Moved by Franciscus, seconded by Mills, that the minutes be

approved as presented. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

5 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Adenekan, seconded by Mills, that the agenda be approved. 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

Rampson reported that at the previous night's meeting, the Flagstar Bank Site Plan was approved.

6-b Planning Manager

Rampson reported that the Ordinance Revisions Committee would be meeting in the Council workroom immediately following the Planning Commission meeting.

6-c Planning Commission Officers and Committees

6-d Written Communications and Petitions

ROLL CALL

Briere arrived at 7:12 p.m

Present 7 - Woods, Adenekan, Clein, Briere, Franciscus, Mills, and Bona

Absent 2 - Peters, and Milshteyn

15-0537 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.)

Gift Chowchuvech, 402 Second Street, Ann Arbor, student at the School of Social Work, spoke in favor of the mixed use proposal for Platt Road site. She said rankings of Ann Arbor are high for successful aging and older adults have many services to help them thrive and the on-going demand of the growing population of older adults needs continued support. She said much needs to be done to address the affordable housing needs of older adults as well as their ability to stay connected to the community. She said that's why the mixed use proposal for the Platt Road site is a great asset and choice for Ann Arbor, given the great location with access to nearby doctors and where seniors can meet their basic shopping needs. Elements of living among different generations is important for the aging as well as the community as a whole.

8 PUBLIC HEARINGS SCHEDULED FOR NEXT BUSINESS MEETING

15-0538 Public Hearings Scheduled for the May19, 2015 City Planning Commission Meeting

Chair Woods read the public hearing notice as published.

Received and Filed

9 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9-a 15-0539 Resolution Supporting Community Energy Resourcing

PUBLIC HEARING:

Wayne Appleyard, Chair of the Energy Commission, introduced himself and offered to answer questions the Commission might have. He noted that the Climate Action Plan was adopted by City Council in 2012, adding that we are not moving fast enough towards those goals, and they are asking for staff to help them move more quickly towards reaching those goals. He said this resolution has been passed by Energy Commission and the Environment Commission. He reported that the Sustainability position, held by Jamie Kidwell Bricks will be vacated at the end of June, since the funding for this position is no longer in the budget. He said they are getting reduced resources below what they had assumed they would have when they wrote this resolution, which was asking for more funding and staff to help meet the goals. He said they find themselves moving in the exact opposite direction at this point, while there is a possibility that there will be amendments to the budget on May 18th, which would help

move the Climate Action Plan and the Sustainability Plan forward.

Noting no further speakers, the Chair closed the public hearing, unless the item is proposed.

Bona said she would recuse herself from action because her employer has been hired by the City to work on the Climate Action Plan. She left the Council Chamber.

Woods explained that this resolution was initiated at the Environmental Commission.

Moved by Clein, seconded by Adenekan, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby approves the “Resolution Supporting Community Energy Resourcing” dated April 20, 2015.

ROLL CALL

Present 6 - Woods, Adenekan, Clein, Briere, Franciscus, and Mills

Absent 3 - Peters, Bona, and Milshteyn

15-0539

Resolution Supporting Community Energy Resourcing

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Clein said there are 7 Whereas clauses that are well written and state the case why it is important for us to consider this. He read the resolved clause and asked if his understanding of this is that even though we are directing and asking the City Administrator to analyze the progress and so forth, it could include providing resources.

Rampson said yes, in order to determine where we are and what is necessary would require staff time.

Clein said it makes sense to set goals and we would want to measure such goals moving forward in order to see what progress we are making. He said Council and the Administrator will have to see what costs are involved to monitor the goals but from the Planning Commission’s standpoint he is supportive of it.

Mills said she agreed with Clein and reiterated, what good is a plan if one does not act on it. She said she had a chance to go back and read the plan and expressed that it is very well done, laying out a clear path. She

said we should be able to see where we are in relation to those goals and it's not for us to debate whether those goals ought to change now, since it was done before certain Commissioner's time of service, but rather to support a resolution to make sure the City is meeting the plans that are currently on the books.

Adenekan said she felt it is well captured, and she too went back and read it, and she supports the resolution.

Franciscus said she is very supportive of the idea of what the Commission is talking about, however she had been unable to read through the entire document since the previous postponement, and she felt she could not vote on it without reading through the whole document.

Woods said she supports the resolution and felt it was important to recommend to City Council and the Administrator to look at the goals that we as a community have set forth.

Briere said she voted in favor of this at the Environmental Commission and she will vote in favor of it again tonight. She said she wanted to clarify a comment brought by 'Commissioner Appleyard' regarding sustaining sustainability staffing, noting that we have lost a staffing position and Council will discuss whether to find funding to hire a new person. She said it wasn't in the budget because at the time it wasn't necessary, so it would now require an amendment. She said those who have had a chance to read the plans and wished to weigh in, could contact their own Council members and urge them to do what was necessary on the matter.

Clein said he would like to urge his Councilmember Briere, to do this.

Adenekan asked if there is just one staff position lost.

Appleyard said yes, which represents 50% of the staff working on energy and sustainability issues.

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

Vote: 6-0

Yeas: 6 - Wendy Woods, Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Clein, Sabra Briere, Sofia Franciscus, and Sarah Mills

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 - Jeremy Peters, and Alex Milshteyn

Recused: 1 - Bonnie Bona

Franciscus asked if there is anything that the Commission can contribute for the Climate Action Plan.

Woods said the efforts had been a committee effort.

Franciscus clarified she was referring to measuring and benchmarks.

Appleyard said they are working on an energy benchmarking ordinance and when the time comes they will be looking for support as it moves to Council.

Rampson said in September there will be a joint meeting with the Energy Commission, the Housing and Human Services, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Council, and the Planning Commission where there can be discussion on the Sustainability Action Plan and she believed the Climate Action Plan could also be incorporated into that discussion. She said Chair Woods was the Commission's representative to the Energy Commission and they were many opportunities to bring thoughts and suggestions on the plans.

ROLL CALL

Present 7 - Woods, Adenekan, Clein, Briere, Franciscus, Mills, and Bona

Absent 2 - Peters, and Milshteyn

9-b [15-0540](#)

Staybridge Suites and Retail Planned Project Site Plan, Rezoning and Landscape Modification - A request to rezone this 3.56-acre parcel, located at 3850 Research Park Drive, from RE (Research District) to C2B (Business Service District) to redevelop for hotel and retail uses, and a proposal to demolish an existing building and construct a two-story, 9,120-square foot retail building and four-story, 90,198-square foot extended stay hotel with 134 rooms. Access to the site will be provided through a driveway on Research Park Drive. A planned project modification is requested to reduce the front setback along South State Street. A Landscape Modification is required because the hedge/berm/wall Right-of-Way screening requirement (Chapter 62, 5:602(1)(c)) along S. State Street cannot be met because it will damage the existing landmark trees. (Ward 4) Staff Recommendation: Approval

Chris Cheng presented the staff report.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Andy Andre, P.E., Bud Design & Engineering Services, Inc, 10775 S. Saginaw Street, Suite B, Grand Blanc, representative for the petitioner, said since they came before the Commission the last time, they have gone back to address the four landmark trees and been able to pull back the location of pavement, adjusting their site to be outside of the critical root zones. He said they worked closely with the City's Natural Resource staff. He said they have been able to make minor changes, and have addressed outstanding comments. He said they feel confident that they have met the intent of the South State Street Corridor Plan, the Master Plan, including the rezoning request and the planned project.

Noting no further speakers, the Chair closed the public hearing, unless the item is postponed.

Moved by Franciscus, seconded by Mills, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve Staybridge Suites & Retail rezoning from RE (Research District) to C2B (Business Service District), and

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Staybridge Suites & Retail Planned Project Site Plan; and

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the proposed landscape modifications to the Staybridge Suites & Retail site in order to waive the required right-of-way screening outside the critical root zones of landmark trees in accordance with Chapter 62 (Landscape and Screening Ordinance), Section 5:608 (1)(c).

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Bona asked about the planned project and the half foot encroachment at the corner.

Cheng said the building was was half a foot from the front property line, while the minimum requirement is 10 feet.

Bona asked if landscape modification is part of the planned project.

Cheng said no.

Bona said she was generally okay with the encroachment. She asked about statements made by the applicant in the application that one justification is increased usable open space. She said she didn't believe that this type of project required open space.

Cheng said that was correct.

Bona asked the petitioner about the building orientation and in trying to push it closer to the setback.

Andre said in looking at the large right-of-way that they have in this area, they worked with staff in trying to bring the buildings closer to the roadways, giving it more of a pedestrian feel, or even the possibility of vacating the right-of-way in order to put the buildings more forward. He said their intent was to give the building more of a storefront feel along State Street and give it more of walkability. He said they wanted the area to be a focal point even though it is set further off the road.

Bona said the pathway gives an illusion that they are setback further.

Andre said if they move the building further to the east, they are reducing the usable area and not getting the density that is feasible for this site.

Bona referred to the Comparison Chart, noting that the proposed 64% Floor Area Ratio [FAR] is a much greater improvement over the 11% FAR that is existing. She asked why they didn't go to the allowable 200% FAR given the 50 plus year life span on buildings. She said she also wanted to hear about the 2-story proposed retail, adding that the idea was a push in the right direction.

Andre said that the market study came back at the need for about 130-room level, and since market supports a certain count, that's where they want to go. He said they could have gone with a larger impact, from the density perspective, but the market wouldn't support it. He said with the retail, it serves well for the use, at this location. He said he is not sure that all sites can max out the allowable density, adding that in the downtown it is different with different buildings and uses. He said they feel this best suits this type of development and that they are maxed out from a market perspective.

Bona asked about the 2-story retail spaces.

Andre said the second floor allows them to increase the density, and that

there is probably a market for mixed use retail office. He said they have looked at possibly a yoga studio. He said a second floor retail in a non-downtown is unique but that the petitioner recognized the need to diversify the property as well as increasing density in the area. He said they do not have a particular tenant now, but that there are a lot of opportunities.

Bona said she believed the two stories would give the building more of a presence. She said as far as the planned project is concerned, she felt it looks the way it's supposed to be to her, regardless of whether we accept the petitioner statement or the staff's explanation that it improves pedestrian orientation. She said she felt we would be getting a better project than if we were to hold them to the setback, so she is supportive of that.

Briere asked about typical life-cycles of building and that in her mind these were not what old buildings looked like. She asked how old Research Park was and in particular how old the building was that would be replaced.

Cheng said he believed it was constructed in the 1970's.

Cheng responded to the density questions, that with every hotel room they would need to add a parking space and without below grade parking they are currently pretty filled up. He also pointed out that if they added more density they would need to begin going up in height, in order to give them more parking spaces, which would require them to ask for additional allowances.

Clein asked how long the current building has been vacant.

Andre said it has had such a low occupancy, that he believes it had the appearance of being vacant, but he believed it has been vacant for several years.

Clein said he believes the proposed plan does a lot of good things for the site and he had no issues with the relief they are asking for on the setback. He asked about the proposed trash enclosure location next to the retail building and the street. He asked about proposed screening.

Andre said they had not wanted to include the dumpster location in the shown location, and had proposed alternate locations, which even included enlarging the one for the hotel. He said the City's Solid Waste

Department believed that to be a little too far for retail use, so the current plan incorporates a second enclosure in proximity to the retail use which includes screening; a 6 foot block wall that would match the building, surrounded by landscape material calling for shrubs.

Clein asked if there had been discussion about putting it on the northern side of the building.

Andre responded that circulation became an issue.

Clein asked if the circulation issue was from Solid Waste's perspective or their decision.

Andre said it was their decision on the location.

Clein asked about the proposed art feature.

Andre said they are thinking they will have an outdoor seating feature, encouraging connection to Research Park; the area would be a gathering space where people could come together. He said with the gateway location, it is an opportunity to do something unique, which would be an art feature, having a focal point to the development that would go along with the theme of the development of this area.

Clein asked the possibility of a restaurant use.

Andre said it is possible, but they are not sure yet.

Clein said the location of the dumpster concerns him, if a restaurant use would move in, given its proximity to public seating.

Clein said the noted construction cost of \$ 6 million represents \$60 a square foot; further questioning the listed cost.

Andre said it would be wood construction, panelized, and pro-forma work. He said given that the petitioner has completed other similar projects the costs are well-understood and correct.

Clein said he's amazed. He asked about the hotel exterior materials.

Andre said it is a mix of stone, EIFS, and brick.

Clein said one of the participants listed on the Citizen Participation

Report is Bob Ufer.

Andre said he is the property owner.

Mills asked about the landscape modification. She said she thinks it's great to keep the existing trees and combine them with the new trees. She asked if the root balls for these trees overlap or if there was a gap.

Cheng reviewed the landscape plan with the Commission, noting that there are some trees in there but it is not a continuous hedge berm wall, which is part of the required right-of-way landscaping. He said it is complete where it is required to screen from the parking lot, except where those 4 landmark trees are located. He said the City's Natural Features Coordinator supports the Landscape Modification request.

Andre said they had originally planned for some planting in that area, but the City's Natural Feature's Department thought it would cause more disturbance than benefit given the large root zones. He said they agree that it would be more appropriate to not have any planting than to cause damage.

Mills said she agreed that Bona and Clein that bringing the building up, almost to the property line makes it look like it's supposed to be.

Rampson clarified the third motion wording.

Woods said "that Mayor and City Council".

Woods asked about bicycles and if Staybridge has any plans to make bicycles available to their guests. She said there had previous discussion that sometime people may bring their own bicycles to hotels.

Andre said since an extended stay hotel lends itself to more activity they will have bicycle parking available as well as having bikes available for customers.

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

Yeas: 7 - Wendy Woods, Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Clein, Sabra Briere, Sofia Franciscus, Sarah Mills, and Bonnie Bona

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 - Jeremy Peters, and Alex Milshteyn

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** **15-0541** Master Plan Review - Once a year, the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission and Planning & Development Services Unit review the City Master Plan. The City Master Plan is a collection of plans, or "elements," that work together to describe a vision for the City's future and guide decisions about its land use, transportation, infrastructure, environment, housing, and public facilities. The adopted plan elements can be found on the City's website at www.a2gov.org/masterplan <<http://www.a2gov.org/masterplan>>. As part of its annual review, the Planning Commission is seeking comments about the City Master Plan, including elements that should be studied for possible change or new elements that should be added to the master plan. This information is important to the Planning Commission in setting its work program for the upcoming fiscal year. Staff Recommendation: Postponement
Rampson presented the staff report.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Christine Crockett, 506 E. Kingsley Street, Ann Arbor, said she wanted to bring up the lack of progress on the R4C zoning amendments. She said when she came out from voting on Tuesday evening, she saw two more houses on Main Street boarded up, which from what she understands, are slated for demolition to be replaced with condos. She said since the houses are right next to each other, one can surmise that the lots might be combined. She said there has been just far too much dragging on the R4C revisions that were supposed to have been done a long time ago. She asked how long it is going to take and how much more of Ann Arbor

are we going to lose because of foot-dragging. She asked when changes will be made, adding that people will be alarmed at the loss of built fabric of Ann Arbor. She noted that North Main Street is not a historic district, but it would be a shame to lose more of the historic African American neighborhood because of foot-dragging. She urged the Commission to do something and do it quickly.

Noting no further speakers, the Chair declared the public hearing closed unless the item is postponed.

Moved by Mills, seconded by Franciscus, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby approves the “City of Ann Arbor Master Plan Resolution” and the “City of Ann Arbor Resource Information In Support Of The City Master Plan Resolution.”

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Mills asked for clarification on the resolution language and if an item was not specifically listed in the Master Plan it didn't mean that they were not working on it, such as the R4C.

Rampson clarified the Commission's aspiration goal setting and envisioning documents and their implementation process. She said one of those implementation efforts is the R4C as well as the Accessory Dwelling Units, which will also be discussed in the course of the Commission's Work Program. She said the Work Program will come before the Commission in June along with the Master Plan Review which will include the implementation features.

Mills asked about the presumed timing of the ZORO process and future land use review.

Rampson explained that the Commission has been asked to look at the Allen Creek Greenway, as a Master Plan component, as noted in the City's budget review. She said if Council says that, they will provide resources for consulting, then the Master Plan update for the entire City would be delayed until after that process is complete, since they would not be able to do both at the same time.

Mills asked about the possibility of adding the Corridor Improvement Plan and the Street Design Manual to the resource list.

Woods said typically once a plan is completed it either goes to Council or to the Planning Commission first, where it is voted on, and then the

Commission would separately decide whether or not to include it in the Resource List.

Mills said she would be recommending adding the Affordable Housing Needs Assessment to the list in the future.

Franciscus said she was in agreement with the noted items suggested to be added to the Resource List. She asked how Capital Improvements work with the Master Plan and if the Master Plan decides how they move forward with items listed in the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).

Rampson said yes, the Master Plan is a document that the Capital Improvements Plan is intended to implement.

Clein said the Commission really appreciated the public commentary and that the Master Plan annual review does not involve approving zoning ordinances. He said many on the Commission would like to see R4C amendments and other things implemented but that is not what this particular Master Plan review involves, so they would not be taking that up as part of this review.

Moved by Briere, seconded by Fransiscus, that the petition be postponed to allow the Commission to consider comments provided at the public hearing and to establish its work program priorities. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

Yeas: 7 - Wendy Woods, Eleanore Adenekan, Kenneth Clein, Sabra Briere, Sofia Franciscus, Sarah Mills, and Bonnie Bona

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 - Jeremy Peters, and Alex Milshteyn

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

None

12 COMMISSION PROPOSED BUSINESS

13 ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Clein, seconded by Adenekan, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:25 p.m. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

Wendy Woods, Chair
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