



City of Ann Arbor

Meeting Minutes

City Planning Commission

301 E. Huron St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
[http://a2gov.legistar.com/
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Tuesday, May 21, 2019

7:00 PM

Larcom City Hall, 301 E Huron St, Second
floor, City Council Chambers

19-1030 The Garnet Rezoning and Site Plan for City Council Approval - A proposal to rezone 325 East Summit Street from C1B (Community Convenience Center) to C1A (Campus Business) and construct a 10-unit condominium building with fourteen lower-level parking spaces on this 0.20-acre site. Staff Recommendation: Approval

PROJECT PRESENTATION:

Brad J. Moore, Architect, provided the project overview.

STAFF REPORT:

City Planner Jill Thacher provided the staff report on the petition application.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Nebel or Ibrheem Shunnar (?) resident of 18 Heather Ridge Avenue, Ann Arbor, stated there is no place for a car to stop by at this location, which would be an issue for Uber and Lyft during pick-up and drop-off. They said whenever they pick up their daughter on East Huron, there is no place for a car to stop for the passenger transfer.

Brad Moore, J. Bradley Moore and Associates, 4844 Jackson Road, Suite 150, Ann Arbor, Architect for the project, believed that the alley or Amtrak Railway Station could be used for Uber or similar pick-up.

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

MOTION I:

Moved by Sarah Mills, seconded by Scott Trudeau, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve The Garnet Rezoning Petition to C1A (Campus Business District) based on the proposed zoning and recommended commercial-office land use designation and accept

these conditions:

- The maximum building height is four stories and 65 feet.
- The highest elevation is limited to elevation 850.00 feet.
- The parcel is limited to a floor area ratio (FAR) of 199%.

The approval is subject to executing a Conditional Zoning Statement of Conditions.

MOTION II:

Moved by Sarah Mills, seconded by Scott Trudeau, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve The Garnet Site Plan and Development Agreement.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

The Commission took into consideration the presented petition and discussed the matter. [For a complete record of the discussion, please see available video format]

Councilmember Ackerman thanked the applicant for working with the neighbors. He liked the design of the project and appreciated the use of the alley way for entry and exit to the proposed development. He enquired about the width of the alley way and if a United Parcel Service (UPS) or Federal Express (FedEx) truck could fit in the alley for deliveries to the site.

Moore said he believed they could fit in the alley way.

Commissioner Mills, agreed with Councilmember Ackerman that the style of the proposed building was pleasant. She said this building will be highly visible from the lower elevations, so it will be nice to see when approaching. She asked if the contaminated site will be cleaned up by developer, without any taxpayer funding.

Moore said yes, without any Brownfield funding. He reviewed the exterior of the building, noting there will be lots of outdoor balconies so residents can benefit from the morning sun.

Commissioner Weatherbee also liked the proposed design of the building. She expressed the need for more bicycle parking near the front entrance, since people won't walk any major distance to find parking. She

asked for the plan to manage refuse, which was explained by Moore and project Engineer, Kathy Keinath. Weatherbee asked staff about sidewalk gaps in the vicinity of North Division and Carey Streets, stating that she felt there should be continuous sidewalk connections. She encouraged the developer to work hard at finding a solution to the tricky locations.

Commissioner Sauve asked about the clean-up funding and how that cost would affect the proposed housing units for the site.

Moore explained that while Detroit Edison (DTE) is paying to clean up the contaminants to an industrial standard, it will still require considerable cost to cap and seal the soils before the 10 residential units could be built.

Victoria Pebbles, member of development team, explained that they had also considered pursuing tax increment financing (TIF) to help cleanup the contaminants, but didn't want to burden the taxpayer; they then learned that the historic owner who caused the contamination, DTE, has some responsibility under Act 381, and they are currently in negotiations as to how much DTE will help fund the clean-up.

Commissioner Suave asked if there was any plan to protect the existing Honey Locust trees on the corner. She expressed concern with the proposed tight configuration of the 3 proposed bike racks, and suggested they verify the setup.

Moore explained that the removal of the Honey Locust trees was part of the clean-up remediation since their roots were holding a lot of contaminants. He said they would be replaced with new trees.

Commissioner Woods asked about the alley ownership and the current condition.

Moore explained that per City legal staff, the alley belongs to the City; he said they will photo document the current conditions and if their construction deteriorates it, they would repave it.

Commissioner Briggs said it's exciting to see a project like this in this location, and she's happy to hear discussion over bicycle parking. She suggested any additional parking should be for bicycles instead of cars, unless there was space enough on site for both. She said this area in Ann Arbor is definately a destination location, where people walk and bike. She expressed that bicycle parking should be in easy accessible

locations, where it doesn't become a challenge to access one's bike. She asked about the timeframe of construction. Briggs commented that it would be beneficial to get modest improvements to the area added to the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) that might correspond with construction of this project.

Moore said they would like to get the environmental remediation completed towards the end of this summer, with foundation work happening in the fall, and having all earthwork completed before the winter (likely a 12-16 month period he estimated) and move-in planned for the end of 2020.

Commissioner Trudeau said he believed this building would fit in nicely at this location and he liked the proposed design. He expressed support for added bicycle parking that was easy accessible. He asked staff for further description of the proposed C1A (Campus Business District). Trudeau said he was comfortable with the location of this type of building on this site, and he felt it met the Master Plan's context as well as the character of the area. He looks forward to seeing more of this size and quality of projects throughout the City; projects that meld smart adaptive reuse of smaller parcels with gentle density. Trudeau said this is a great example of what we could get if we think carefully in the future in reworking the City's Master Plan, and how current setback and required parking rules don't allow for incremental infill.

Thacher noted it can be argued whether this location can be considered to be close to the University of Michigan Central Campus, while it is within walking distance. She explained that all of the C1 districts (C1, C1A, C1A/R, C1B) are designed to allow mixed uses to serve the residents within and nearby to that particular district location, and all forms of residential, including single and two-family, townhouses, and multiple-family apartments are permitted. She said staff is recommending approval of this project, with the voluntary conditions placed on the rezoning, and would not support it without these conditions.

Chair Milshteyn asked about the heating and cooling system, exterior facade and proposed brick materials. He said there would be considerable noise from the Broadway bridges as well as the railway line nearby; he encouraged them to look into the possibility of using full brick on the whole building to help insulate from noise as much as possible. Milshteyn asked about the proposed brick color.

Moore explained the heat-pump system and they are proposing a

single-brick type on the exterior, just in varying thicknesses (full 4-inch brick where building is ground supported, and a thinner veneer brick on others) similar to what they did on 'The Mark' building, using full brick along the side where noise comes from, and engineering it to make it possible to help insulate from noise. Moore explained that the choice of brown brick color on many of the existing buildings is climate preference as well as the availability of bricks that come in a full 4-inch width as well as a veneer, which limits one's selection.

Chair Milshteyn asked about the one-way alley signage, the green roof and how water will be managed on the site.

Kathy Keineth, Engineer for the project, explained that the majority of the roof will be a green roof system, and the required amount of first-flush will be stored on the roof, with roof drains coming down and leading out to a control structure containing a backflow that controls the release rate before flowing into the storm-system in the public right-of-way.

Moore explained they are asking for the additional 5 feet on the height restriction because they don't want to go over with the solar panels.

Commissioner Mills asked Moore what is considered 'storage' on the parking detail of the site plan, noting it was confusing and she would like to see bicycle parking in that location, to make sure they are making the most out of the location.

Moore said it would be up to the condominium association to use as parking or for guest parking.

Commissioner Sauve said she would rather see one area designated for bicycle storage to make the most out of the area.

Thacher responded the three spaces are marked differently because their size doesn't meet code, on the aisle widths and turning radius'. Thacher clarified that a 9 x 16-foot parking space is perfect size for 8, Class-B bicycle parking spots.

Moore stated they voluntarily offer to give up those 2 parking spaces. Moore said the applicant is willing to offer up the southeastern most vehicle storage spot as well as the striped area next to it for bicycle parking. Thacher noted that 8 bicycle parking spots fit comfortably into 1 vehicle parking spot.

Commissioner Woods said given the high pedestrian area of this location, she is glad to see interior space designated for bicycle storage where there might be less possibility of bikes being stolen from an outside hoop.

AMENDMENT TO MOTION I:

Moved by Sarah Mills, seconded by Lisa Sauve, to add the following, a fourth condition:

The addition to at least 10 Class-B, or better, bicycle spaces, and 4 Class-C bicycle spaces, outside, in the front of the building, in addition to the 2 required Class-A bicycle parking.

DISCUSSION OF AMENDMENT I:

Commissioner Briggs reminded the Commission they would like to see the Class-C bicycle spaces in front of the building where guests would like to use them.

Commissioner Mills said it was important to make sure the conditions are followed through on, in case the site becomes re-zoned, but the site plan doesn't become built.

The Commission asked staff for suggested language.

Lenart suggested the following; The addition of a 4th bullet in the Conditional Zoning, to add at least 10 Class-B bicycle spaces, and 4 Class-C bicycle spaces, outside, in the front of the building, and the site plan motion consider the condition that the site plan be amended to alterations to the northeast portion of the garage area to reflect a larger bicycle storage area to accommodate the Class-B bicycle parking. Lenart explained upon such voluntary condition, the City would require an updated site plan reflecting the changes before the project moves on to City Council.

Moore offered that the discussed 10 bicycle spaces could be either Class-A or Class-B spaces and they could put them either in the north or southeastern part of the building wherever they can fit in the most.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT I:

On a voice vote, the Chair declared the amendment carried.

AMENDMENT ON MOTION II:

Moved by Sarah Mills, seconded by Erica Briggs for the motion to

read, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve The Garnet Site Plan and Development Agreement, conditioned upon, the amendment to the plan and to reflect the addition of bicycle parking in the garage level consolidated Class-B or better bicycle parking in the garage level.

DISCUSSION OF AMENDMENT II:

Commissioner Trudeau said he felt this detail could be worked out by the condominium association, and he supported the project.

Commissioner Briggs said she appreciated the voluntary conditions, and knows that bicycles are expensive, so she believes residents whom can afford to live in these units would be able to invest in more expensive bicycles, and she felt it important to recognize the fact that this building is really built for them.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT II:

On a voice vote, the Chair declared the amendment carried.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION I & II AS AMENDED:

On a voice vote, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried. Vote: 8-0

Yeas: 8 - Wendy Woods, Erica Briggs, Sarah Mills, Alex Milshteyn, Scott Trudeau, Julie Weatherbee, Zachary Ackerman, and Elizabeth Sauve

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 - Shannan Gibb-Randall