

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS
City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street
Farmington, Michigan
April 10, 2017

Chairperson Crutcher called the Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan, on Monday, April 10, 2017.

ROLL CALL

Present: Buyers, Chiara, Crutcher, Gronbach, Kmetzo, Majoros, Waun

Absent: None

A quorum of the Commission was present.

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: Director Christiansen, Recording Secretary McGill

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Christiansen stated that the developer for the Maxfield Training Center had a conflict and would not be at the meeting tonight but indicated the Public Hearing will still be held that was scheduled for tonight's meeting and a second one will be held at the May 8, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting as well.

MOTION by Chiara, seconded by Buyers, to approve the Agenda.

Motion carried, all ayes.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

a. Minutes of Regular Meeting – March 13, 2017

MOTION by Chiara, seconded by Majoros, to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.

Motion carried, all ayes.

REQUEST FOR OUTDOOR SEATING SITE PLAN AMENDMENT – FARMINGTON BREWING COMPANY, 33336 GRAND RIVER AVENUE

Commissioner Buyers recused himself from this agenda item due to a conflict of interest and left Council Chambers.

Chairperson Crutcher introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen stated that attached with the Commissioner packets was a site plan amendment for outdoor seating for the Farmington Brewing Company located at 33336 Grand River. After giving a brief history of the item, it was moved to the end of the Agenda as the Petitioner was not present at the time it was called to be heard.

MOTION by Gronbach, supported by Chiara, to move the Request For Outdoor Seating Site Plan Amendment for the Farmington Brewing Company, 33336 Grand River Avenue to the end of tonight's agenda after Item Number 7.

Motion carried, all ayes.

Commissioner Buyers returned to Council Chambers.

REQUEST FOR OUTDOOR SEATING SITE PLAN REVIEW – BROWNDOG DESSERT BAR, 33314 GRAND RIVER AVENUE

Chairperson Crutcher introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen stated that the Browndog Dessert Bar, located at 33314 Grand River Avenue, had submitted a site plan with their request for outdoor seating at their location. He indicated outdoor seating in the Central Business District requires approval by both the Downtown Development Authority and the Planning Commission. He stated that the space they are requesting is to be shared with the neighboring Basement Burger Bar who had received prior approval at the May 9, 2011 Planning Commission Meeting and a copy of those minutes were included with the Commissioner packets. Applicant Paul Gabriel submitted a layout of the outdoor seating area and has included pictures as well.

Chairperson Crutcher called Petitioner Paul Gabriel to the podium.

Paul Gabriel, 33314 Grand River, stated they would like to have outdoor seating for their establishment utilizing the space for Basement Burger Bar and reconfiguring the current layout in order to accommodate seating for both.

The floor was opened for questions by the Commissioners.

Commissioner Chiara inquired who would be responsible for the costs connected to implementing lighting and electrical outlets for the space and Christiansen responded that discussions have been taking place for over a year with both Browndog Creamery, Basement Burger Bar, the owner of the Cook Building, the DDA and the City as it involves the Streetscape and that any approval could be contingent upon having some sort of agreement in place regarding that issue.

Commissioner Gronbach asked who would be monitoring the project as it is being constructed to make sure it is in compliance with the conditions set forth in any approval that may be made and Christiansen responded that the City would be overseeing it.

Chairperson Crutcher asked about the divider that was shown in the site plan and Christiansen indicated that was a requirement set forth by the State of Michigan when alcoholic beverages are served in an outdoor area and that it is similar in style to the one the Burger Basement Bar had installed and would be utilized as a divider to more clearly define the parameters of the shared space. He went on to say that if approval is granted by the City, the owners of the Browndog Creamery would apply for their outdoor license to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission as well.

Commissioner Majoros inquired about the outdoor seating and whether or not it encroached on other neighboring properties in its design as well as the public right-of-way and Christiansen responded that the site plan is consistent with the seating being situated in front of each establishment as the Basement Burger Bar is located within the Cook Building and their seating utilizes its frontage as it is located in the basement of the building. He went on to state that the outdoor seating that was granted in 2011 for the Basement Burger Bar included five feet of sidewalk for the public and that this current site plan is in compliance with that.

Commissioner Majoros asked who would be responsible for the monitoring of the outdoor seating and Christiansen responded that it is the hope that both establishments will work together on that issue.

Further discussion was held concerning if Basement Burger Bar was aware and in approval of the Petitioner's request and Christiansen stated that dialogue has been going on since last year with the parties.

Commissioner Buyers suggested that one of the conditions of approval be that Basement Burger Bar also sign that they are in agreement with the site plan presented by Browndog Creamery and Christiansen explained that their continued outdoor seating is subject to yearly approval by the City as cited in the language of their May 9th, 2011 resolution.

Commissioner Buyers went on to discuss fencing and requirements thereof for serving alcohol outdoors and Christiansen explained that those requirements have changed over the years and it is no longer required by the State to enclose the entire area with fencing and that the existing planter boxes that were part of the 2011 approval should suffice in meeting the current requirements.

Commissioner Kmetzo inquired about wheelchair accessibility.

Chairperson Crutcher asked if Basement Burger Bar had renewed their annual request for outdoor seating and Christiansen stated that has been put on hold pending the action of the Planning Commission on the Browndog Creamery request.

MOTION by Majoros, supported by Chiara, to move to approve the request for Outdoor Seating Site Plan Review submitted by the Browndog Dessert Bar, 33314 Grand River Avenue, based on the following conditions: 1. That it be subject to the financial arrangements and implications by the four entities involved, those being the Browndog Dessert Bar, Basement Burger Bar, the Downtown Development Authority and the City; 2. to ensure consistency with the character of the Streetscape; 3. Continued discussion by staff with the Petitioner concerning the potential safety implications.

Motion carried, all ayes.

REQUEST FOR SPECIAL LAND USE – DOGWOOD VETERINARY REFERRAL CENTER, 33300 NINE MILE ROAD

A. Introduction

B. Schedule Public Hearing

Chairperson Crutcher introduced this item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen noting the Petitioner not being in attendance asked that this item be moved to the end of the Agenda.

REQUEST TO SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARING FOR 2018-2023 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Chairperson Crutcher introduced this item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen stated that the Capital Improvement Program Steering Committee has been working diligently to present their final draft and they are asking that the Public Hearing for this item be scheduled for the May 8, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting.

MOTION by Chiara, supported by Buyers, to schedule the Public Hearing for the 2018-2023 Capital Improvement Program for the May 8, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting. Motion carried, all ayes.

PUBLIC HEARING AND PRELIMINARY PUD REVIEW – AC ACQUISITIONS, LLC, MAXFIELD TRAINING CENTER, 33000 THOMAS STREET

Chairperson Crutcher introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen again stated apologies from the developer regarding his absence from tonight's meeting. He then gave the history of the project stating that the Petitioner,

AC Acquisitions, LLC, had presented a pre-application preliminary PUD review at the March 13, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting. He detailed the contents of the Commissioner packets regarding this agenda item and indicated that all of this information can be found online at www.farmgov.com for the public. He also stated a representative from OHM is present tonight to go over their recommendations included in their letter. He indicated comments from the Design Committee were also included in the background. He stated that the Maxfield Training Center is a very unique property in its location and configuration and will be the cornerstone project of redevelopment in the downtown area with impact now and for many years. He pointed out two platted but unconstructed roads from 1850 which have been vacated. He indicated that Farmington Public Schools has owned this property from the mid 1800's. He said the Maxfield Training Center has been closed for approximately six years and that Farmington Public Schools has been looking to sell and repurpose the site for some time.

He stated the graphics and plans are the beginning of moving forward with the redevelopment of this property. He talked about the Vision Plan that was created in 2012 identifying four focus areas for redevelopment, with the Maxfield Training Center being one. He indicated that the Downtown Area Plan created in 2015 is very specific in evolution to the Vision Plan and is focused just on the Maxfield Training Center site and surrounding area and has five sub area components to it and that there are six conceptual plans included in that as far as redevelopment and what the City is looking to achieve with redevelopment of this site. He stated FPS put out an RFP in November of 2015 and it was tweaked and republished in 2016 which garnered four replies. AC Acquisitions was selected to purchase and submit plans for what they propose in the redevelopment. He detailed the parties that were included in the discussion for the redevelopment.

He stated this is the beginning, it is not a decision making time but a time of questioning and discussion concerning goals and objectives for the site. He went over the conceptual plans for the site on the screen, which included a rendering, materials they are proposing to utilize, proposed elevation of contemporary urban loft style apartments from the developer. He indicated the first level of this project is for podium parking. They are proposing 189 units from studio to three-bedroom units and 236 parking spaces in the podium parking. He stated the second level are residential units, that there will be elevators and terrace areas and a pool in one of the green areas on the site. He stated that a representative from OHM is present to go over engineering and planning letters.

Chairperson Crutcher called Matt Parks from OHM to the podium.

Parks stated they reviewed the package and plans and one of the key sides is looking at utilities and water and that three years ago a water reliability study was performed and

they looked at the ability to provide water with standard pressure and said that further work needs to be done by the developer to satisfy the needs of the proposed development. Sanitary sewers with it being a school at one time said it should be adequate but will need to be looked at by developer with utility based design. Stormwater management was looked at and they want the developer to look at that and have a stormwater quality review. With the number of units and parking structure OHM wants to make sure traffic flow and logistics of delivery trucks and parking on street and take into consideration access to Shiawassee Park, ADA compliance, and construction vehicles. They also need details of terraces and engineering details of proposed pool. OHM is requesting that there be a PUD agreement in place as well.

Heather Seyfarth, senior planner, did review of site and looked at zoning ordinance as a regulatory tool and looked at four different plans and recent parking study done. She stated the use is permitted, multi-family, but height can be worked on and density and parking will need to be addressed.

Commissioner Majoros stated that in the notes there are some significant items that need to be addressed like the elimination of a story and questioned Christiansen on the general footprint such as setback and number of floors and Christiansen responded that there are a number of planning tools that are in place that relate to and effect this property. And there are also specific regulations in this area and rules what you can and can't do to this property because it is in the Downtown, including the Downtown Master Plan, that is before Council to be adopted. The City has an overall Master Plan for its land use and that identifies existing land use, goals and objectives and proposed land use for what the City would like to see if things changed. The second is the Downtown Master Plan that is part of the City Master Plan and the existing plan and update was looked at along with the 2013 Vision Plan that looks at what the City's goals and objectives are in terms of redevelopment and that was looked at and reviewed by OHM. And then there is the Downtown Area Plan that is specific to the Maxfield Training Center site area and five sub areas apart of it, all of those things were looked at in terms of their planning approach. There is a Zoning Ordinance that has rules and the CBD that has specific rules. The City has different review processes and the PUD approach is one that is flexible and allows for more flexibility as far as building height etc. He stated the developer has had conversations with City concerning mass and its effect on the existing building environment.

The floor was opened for questions by the Commissioners.

Commissioner Waun questioned the flexibility aspect of the project.

MOTION by Chiara, seconded by Buyers, to move to open the Public Hearing.
Motion carried, all ayes.

(Public Hearing opened at 8:26 p.m.)

PUBLIC HEARING

Christiansen detailed the guidelines for speaking at the Public Hearing.

Chariperson Crutcher invited anyone who wished to speak to the podium.

Darlene Allen, who has lived on Warner Street for the last year and a half, spoke about her concern for safety of children due to traffic volume and also the height of the structure.

Chris Schroer, Warner Street, and was present at the last Planning Commission Meeting when this subject was addressed, indicated that he and his wife want to see some development on the property but not this development. He would like to see a different kind of transition and that this doesn't match the character of the community.

Doug Peterson, who lives on Oakland Street, stated this development is not what he was expecting but would look to more of a medium density project and this is not what was envisioned.

Shana Mulcahy, who lives on Farmington at Oakland and has three young children, cited her concern with traffic and the number of accidents they have witnessed and feels the apartment complex will not benefit the school system nor the esthetics of the neighborhood.

David Simowski, Warner Street, expressed his concerns with the developer not being present at tonight's Public Hearing and also addressed the issue of the number of parking spaces required for a structure of this size. He then questioned if there have been studies done of other communities who have put in this type of structure and its effect on the community citing rental versus owner.

Christiansen responded to Simowski's inquiry about parking studies and other communities.

Carol McGee, 23609 Warner Street, directly across from Maxfield Training Center, born and raised in Farmington stated she always aspired to live in the old village due to its special character, that she pays high taxes to live there and would like to see ownership

and not rental properties coming to the community in order to protect the historical aspects of it. She also questioned the agenda of the Farmington Public Schools and their engaging in real estate transactions without community involvement.

Christiansen responded about the relationship the City has with Farmington Public Schools and that he felt they acted in good faith in their transactions.

Doug Gress from United Methodist Church stated his concern with the parking and the impact it would have on the church.

Janie Gundloch, Warner Street, indicated that her property is adjacent to the Maxfield Training Center and shares a 239 foot property line. She stated she feels the proposed complex is out of character with the neighborhood, that it would degrade her quality of life, would be an eyesore and disturb her privacy and decrease the value of her home. She asked the Planning Commission members to envision the proposed development going in in their backyard to grasp the impact it would have on their neighborhood.

Jim White, who lives at Oakland and Warner, stated his concerns about the increased traffic the development would create and its impact on the neighborhood.

Susan Black, Oakland Street, spoke about her concerns with traffic and parking as well as the blockading of streets.

Nicole, Oakland Street, expressed concerns about the density affecting the neighborhood in a negative way and that the developer is not taking into consideration the Master Plan which dictates the direction the community wants the City to go in.

David Judge, commented on the developer and the reason for his absence, he also stated that the developer for DuCharme Place in Detroit has a different name. He went on to state his concerns about traffic, that he would like to see less density and would prefer ownership to rentals, and stated his concerns about parking as well.

Cathy Stienke, Shiawassee Street, commented on the impact this project will have on the neighborhood negatively and that it doesn't fit the character of the City.

Rick Gundloch, Warner Street, handed out photos, stated his concerns about erosion from the hill behind the Maxfield Training Center to the river as well as on his property.

John Pierini, Cass Street, stated he is not in support of this project as it is not in line with the City's Master Plan.

Mike Ritenour, stated he is neither for or against project, that it's part of the Vision Plan process to attract more young people, and that non-owner occupied is more attractive to millennials.

MOTION by Gronbach, supported by Waun, to close the Public Hearing.
Motion carried, all ayes.

(The Public Hearing closed at 9:28 p.m.)

Christiansen thanked everyone for their comments and their presence at the meeting. He then read into the record the comments from the Downtown Development Design Committee on their suggestions for the project.

A correspondence from Robert Cook, 33115 Shiawassee, speaking against the proposed project, was noted to have been received.

Commissioner Majoros suggested that the developer be made aware of the comments presented at tonight's meeting before the scheduling of the next Public Hearing on this issue.

MOTION by Majoros, supported by Buyers, to move to schedule a Public Hearing on the Preliminary PUD Review – AC Acquisitions, LLC, Maxfield Training Center, 33000 Thomas Street, for the May 8, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting, with the appropriate notice being mailed out and a copy of the minutes of tonight's meeting being provided to the Applicant for his review.
Motion carried, all ayes.

(Brief recess held 9:35 p.m. to 9:45 p.m.)

REQUEST FOR OUTDOOR SEATING SITE PLAN AMENDMENT – FARMINGTON BREWERY COMPANY, 33336 GRAND RIVER AVENUE (RECALLED)

Commissioner Buyers recused himself from this agenda item due to a conflict of interest and left Council Chambers.

Chairperson Crutcher introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen stated the outdoor seating for Farmington Brewery Company was granted in 2014 by the Planning Commission. He put the newly submitted plans on the screen for the Planning Commission and indicated the owners want to expand the seating to the east which is approved by the Civic Theater and the City.

MOTION by Gronbach, supported by Majoros, to approve the request for outdoor seating site plan amendment, Farmington Brewing Company, 33336 Grand River Avenue.
Motion carried, all ayes.

Commission Buyers returned to Council Chambers.

REQUEST FOR SPECIAL LAND USE – DOGWOOD VETERINARY REFERRAL CENTER, 33300 NINE MILE ROAD (RECALLED)

Chairperson Crutcher introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen stated the Applicant has requested a Special Land Use for Dogwood Veterinary Referral Center, 33300 Nine Mile Road, to be utilized as a surgical veterinary clinic. The area is zoned as IND, Industrial, and therefore requires a Special Land Use and a Public Hearing to be held in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance. He indicated the building is the former SWOCC headquarters and is owned jointly by the cities of Farmington, Farmington Hills and Novi.

MOTION by Chiara, supported by Buyers, to move to schedule a Public Hearing for the May 8, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting, for the request for Special Land Use – Dogwood Veterinary Referral Center, 33300 Nine Mile Road,
Motion carried, all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Buyers asked for an update on the status of Flanders Park.

Commission Waun asked for a synopsis on the next steps in the process of the Maxfield Training Center project.

STAFF COMMENTS

None heard.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Majoros, seconded by Buyers, to adjourn the meeting.
Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary