



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE
PLANNING COMMISSION
(ELECTRONIC MEETING PLATFORM)
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2020**

The Meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Hecht, O'Rourke, Owsinek, Whitt, Wolfson

ABSENT: Novak, Palmer

OTHERS PRESENT: Confidential Assistant Jaquays, Planning Consultant Ortega, City Attorney Vanerian

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES:

Commissioner Whitt recommended to move the public hearings to the beginning of the agenda.

**PC 09-01-20 MOTION TO AMEND AGENDA TO PLACE UNFINISHED
BUSINESS ITEM #5 and #4 BEFORE ITEMS #1, #2, AND #3**

Motion by Hecht, seconded by Owsinek, CARRIED: To amend agenda to place unfinished business item #5 and #4 before items #1, #2, and #3

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**PC 09-02-20 APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 11, 2020 PLANNING
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

Motion by Wolfson, seconded by Owsinek, CARRIED: To approve the August 11, 2020 Planning Commission minutes.

COMMUNICATION:

ATTORNEY'S REPORT: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- 1. Public Hearing – Forestbrook Park- PUD Site Plan**

Applicant Spencer Schafer provided a summary on the conceptual presentation done on September 1, 2020 for neighboring residences. Mr. Schafer explained residents expressed appreciation that the development will be enhancing and preserving the forest buffer.

Mr. Schafer provided some background information on the existing buildings and conditions on the property. Mr. Schafer said some minor adjustments have been made to the initial site plan per the Planning Consultant's review. Mr. Schafer said parking spaces have been added to the east side of the drive and a couple more facing the first building. Mr. Schafer said the calculation on density has changed. Mr. Schafer said initially they used a gross acreage for this calculation to determine 8.76 units/Acre, now it is 10.89 units/Acre. Mr. Schafer said they are proposing 58% open space of net site area, as well as a beautiful streetscape with trees. Mr. Schafer said when designing the site plan, the goal was to preserve the mature trees and maintain the forest buffer.

Mr. Schafer highlighted a focal point amenity at the corner of Pontiac Trail and Decker Road and said they are looking to do enhanced landscaping to make this a welcoming entry feature. Mr. Schafer noted that the floor plans are modern and open. Mr. Schafer said they are looking to do condo-like finishes.

Chairman Hecht thanked Mr. Schafer for the presentation.

Chairman Hecht opened the Public Hearing.

Open Public Hearing 7:55 pm

Commissioner Wolfson questioned an area in the northeast section of the development and wondered if this section will be too small of an area for additional development?

Mr. Schafer identified the triangular piece in the northeast section and explained that this section will be preserved in its natural state to allow a buffer between the proposed PUD and the existing condo complex.

Chairman Hecht closed the Public Hearing.

Close Public Hearing 8:01 pm

City Attorney Vanerian said the PUD process requires a public hearing held before the Planning Commission, then it goes to City Council with any recommendations from the Planning Commission. Mr. Vanerian said the City Council will make the final decision on the approval, denial, or approval subject to conditions on the PUD. Mr. Vanerian said if there are additional revisions that need to be made to the site plan, they can be done at the next Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Vanerian deferred to the Planning Consultant if any modifications need to be made.

Planning Consultant Ortega said since City Council has already approved the conceptual design, now is a good time to obtain approval from the City's consultants. Mr. Ortega said there were some issues identified in the City Engineer's review. Mr. Ortega said now would be an

opportunity for the applicant to address these issues, so once it appears before Council, the PUD will be presented in its final state.

Mr. Schafer said based on his conversations with the City, he understands that the PUD first goes to the Planning Commission for recommendation for approval by City Council. Mr. Schafer said once the PUD receives approval from City Council, outstanding issues can be addressed.

Commissioner Owsinek suggested the planning commission approve the PUD with the recommendations listed in the City Engineer's and City Consultant's letters and that these recommendations be met upon approval at City Council. Mr. Owsinek additionally suggested that the motion include any recommendations from the Planning Commission.

**PC 09-03-20 MOTION TO APPROVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASE 283
PUD AND FORWARD TO CITY COUNCIL FOR FINAL
APPROVAL CONTINGENT UPON MEETING THE CRITERIA
FROM CONSULTANT PLANNER DATED AUGUST 17, 2020,
CONSULTANT ENGINEER DATED AUGUST 20, 2020 AND FIRE
REVIEW LETTER**

Motion by Owsinek, seconded by Wolfson, CARRIED: To approve planning commission case 283 PUD and forward to City Council for final approval contingent upon meeting the criteria from consultant planner dated August 17, 2020, consultant engineer dated August 20, 2020 and fire review letter.

2. Public Hearing – Zoning Ordinance Amendment Article 17.02 (O)

Planning Consultant Ortega said currently, residential single-family homes either have to have a front yard setback equal to the 30ft minimum requirement or the established residential building pattern, which ever is less. Mr. Ortega summarized the proposed language change and how this would affect those areas.

Chairman Hecht opened the Public Hearing

Open Public Hearing 8:10pm

Chairman Hecht closed the Public Hearing

Close Public Hearing 8:11pm

**PC 09-04-20 MOTION TO RECOMMEND ZONING ORDINANCE
AMENDMENT ARTICLE 17.02 (O) AND FORWARD TO CITY
COUNCIL FOR FIRST READING**

Motion by Wolfson, seconded by Owsinek, CARRIED: To recommend zoning ordinance amendment article 17.02 (O) and forward to City Council for First Reading.

3. Discussion – Zoning Map Update

Planning Consultant Ortega said he is still conducting research on previous re-zonings. Mr. Ortega said we are making sure the zoning map accurately represents what was rezoned in the past and to confirm those boundaries.

4. Discussion- Potential Development/ Redevelopment

Planning Consultant Ortega said he prepared a zoning map with identified sites for future development or redevelopment. Mr. Ortega described the various locations that are vacant. Mr. Ortega said some sites may present more of a challenge to develop/redevelop based on their location within the City and the zoning standards. Mr. Ortega said with this in mind, it may be beneficial to focus on a select few.

Mr. Ortega opined a high priority site is the vacant Community Education site. Mr. Ortega suggested partnership with City Administration or City Council on input on the site. Mr. Ortega said Walled Lake's downtown district has a combination of sites such as vacant lots and areas within the master plan that would create conflict with what currently exists. Mr. Ortega said when reviewing the downtown, the planning commission should define what kind of development/redevelopment they want.

Chairman Hecht suggested the goal be to increase density in the downtown area, and then identify where that could be achievable.

Mr. Ortega explained, a goal might help provide direction and thus provide general objectives. Mr. Ortega said with objectives in place we can then review zoning ordinances and specific strategies. Mr. Ortega said he could provide more detail on what currently exists in the downtown area if the planning commission chooses.

Chairman Hecht listed parcels downtown that could be focused on. Mr. Hecht asked about potential "opportunity zones".

Mr. Ortega said he is not familiar with that designation. Mr. Ortega said there are two different state statutes that allow Cities to work with developers in targeting sites. Mr. Ortega asked if there was something specific he was looking into?

Mr. Hecht opined that his overall objective would be to increase density, and asked if Mr. Ortega could look into different statues or laws that would encourage development?

Mr. Ortega said there are some economic development tools at the State level that can be utilized.

Mr. Hecht noted that other communities have larger developments and wondered if these cities have programs or tax assistance for these developments.

Mr. Ortega said it may vary based on each community because it depends on the existing site conditions, resources that the municipality may provide, and site constraints. Mr. Ortega said by knowing what currently exists, this can guide the planning commission's direction.

Mr. Hecht asked if there were sites the other commissioners would like to focus on.

Mr. Ortega opined that before having these conversations with potential developers, the key would be to review our zoning ordinances and the economic development tools available to the commission.

Mr. Hecht opined the next step would be to market the downtown and be proactive with improving downtown.

Commissioner Wolfson identified a few areas where zoning could potentially change. Mr. Wolfson opined that the issue with Walled Lake is the lack of shopping stores. Mr. Wolfson opined including shopping stores may help the downtown.

Commissioner Owsinek said we need to keep the density balanced. Mr. Owsinek cautioned the planning commission about getting involved in marketing programs in that it may lead to potential litigation. Mr. Owsinek opined that the City is not in a position to be offering tax incentives to developers. Mr. Owsinek suggested the commissioners think these items through and focus on zoning and planning.

Commissioner Wolfson agreed that we must think this through and define realistic downtown area objectives.

Commissioner Owsinek said we should clarify and be specific about which areas the planning commission wants to target.

Chairman Hecht opined that the goal is to bring density into Walled Lake and develop a downtown. Mr. Hecht said the people he has spoken to are wanting a downtown similar to Brighton and Milford. Mr. Hecht opined the only way to do something like that would be to address density.

Commissioner Owsinek suggested he inquire where people want their downtown and what do they want to have in the downtown. Mr. Owsinek strongly encouraged the planning commission to exercise caution.

Planning Consultant Ortega said subtle design items can be considered, but also having a detailed map on downtown areas will be helpful for discussion. Mr. Ortega opined by focusing on zoning and planning, the planning commission may have greater impact.

5. Discussion Fence Ordinance Update

Planning Consultant Ortega said the language presented before the board addresses the issue regarding side yards and making them uniform for single-family homes. Mr. Ortega said right

now, the maximum height is 4.5ft to 6ft. Mr. Ortega said by removing the footnote, and saying the maximum height is 6ft, single family homes can have a 6ft fence from the front, to the side, and in the back.

Mr. Ortega said he researched the existing front yard fences around Walled Lake. Mr. Ortega said property owners would like to be able to define the perimeter of their property. Mr. Ortega said we need to acknowledge that if we allow a 6ft fence all the way around the property, it is possible for the community to have walls and walls of fencing which can be intrusive- hardly any community allows this. Mr. Ortega said by using a type of fence material that is see through, the property owner can still define their property. Mr. Ortega said the intent of using decorative fencing, it is not intended for a security barrier but a way to define property boundaries. Mr. Ortega said this would allow for people to put decorative fences in their waterfront yards.

Chairman Hecht said one area of concern for him was mirroring the other communities on the lake.

Mr. Ortega noted that many of the lakefront properties use gazebos; if you allow out buildings that are too large it may block the view of the lake. Mr. Ortega asked if we limited the size of the sheds to about 200 square feet would that be appropriate?

Mr. Hecht said when he was looking at the Novi side, he believes there is an ordinance on height. Mr. Hecht opined it would cosmetically help around the lake.

Mr. Ortega asked if the board had an interest in limiting shed materials.

Mr. Hecht said he appreciated Novi's side and would like to review their ordinances.

Mr. Ortega said he could review Novi's ordinances and see how their accessory structures relate to Walled Lake's ordinances.

NEW BUSINESS:

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

Commissioner Wolfson believes that through discussion and patience, planning can be improved for the City of Walled Lake.

Commissioner Owsinek agreed with Mr. Wolfson.

PC 09-05-20 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Owsinek, seconded by Wolfson, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.



Hana Jaquays

Hana Jaquays
Recording Secretary

Kyle Hecht
Chairman