



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE
PLANNING COMMISSION
(ELECTRONIC MEETING PLATFORM)
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 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: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

PC 08-01-20 APPROVAL OF THE JULY 14, 2020 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Owsinek, seconded by O'Rourke, CARRIED: To approve the July 14, 2020 Planning Commission minutes.

COMMUNICATION:

ATTORNEY'S REPORT: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Discussion – Zoning Map Update

Planning Consultant Ortega explained that research has begun into previous zoning maps to make sure all subsequent re-zonings are accurately depicted on the map. Mr. Ortega said he is in communication with City Attorney Vanerian and City Clerk Stuart for verification and ordinance numbers of past re-zonings that were approved. Mr. Ortega said after the new adoption, the map will show all the new re-zonings on one map.

2. Discussion – Proactive Rezoning

Planning Consultant Ortega said he has reviewed the Master Plan and its relation to the future land use map. Mr. Ortega said the Master Plan envisions a lot of new ordinance polices or a new

district for some of the proposed changes. Mr. Ortega said alternatively, some sites can be targeted for redevelopment through a transition. Mr. Ortega said a transition is typically for sites that can be best utilized for a planned unit development.

Mr. Ortega said one way to move forward is to potentially create a new zoning district in areas that are identified as "office tech" in the future land use map. Mr. Ortega said these areas are currently zoned industrial. Mr. Ortega explained that the district would have higher design standards that would move away from industrial uses, such as outdoor storage or overhead doors and have been problematic with compatibility with adjacent residences. Mr. Ortega listed a few potential areas. Mr. Ortega said it would be for uses such as research, internal office space, and limited production.

Chairman Hecht said he is interested in supporting density development downtown. Mr. Hecht questioned how do we get more density downtown?

Mr. Ortega said one option would be to revise the single-family residential zoning standards and make it more suitable for multi-family development. Mr. Ortega provided examples such as reviewing height requirements and parking requirements. Mr. Ortega said another option would be to change C-2 zoning to C-3 in some areas downtown.

Commissioner Owsinek said he likes the ideas of creating an "office tech" zoning district. Mr. Owsinek said he also likes the idea of expanding the ability of utilizing our old downtown areas.

Chairman Hecht asked if we could target the industrial area and invite the property owners to meet with the developers.

Planning Consultant Ortega said one way would be to invite real estate brokers. Mr. Ortega opined that many of these applicants would be interested in planned unit developments. Mr. Ortega said it is important to ensure that these undeveloped properties remain compatible with adjacent residents.

Chairman Hecht said he worries that with a new zoning district, it will remain undeveloped. Mr. Hecht questions what the first step would be to invite developers to the planning commission?

Commissioner Wolfson suggested one of the first steps would be to identify properties that are vacant and their current zoning.

Commissioner Owsinek mentioned that the parcels previously discussed are by residential units. Mr. Owsinek said privacy needs to be considered for development by residential units.

Chairman Hecht revisited his idea of possibly advertising vacant lots and encouraging developers to bring their ideas.

Commissioner Owsinek said many of these density issues could be addressed through a PUD. Mr. Owsinek agreed that we should be proactive, but at the same time review the different options to facilitate developments.

Planning Consultant Ortega said a good way to start would be to identify the target sites that the commission would like to develop, and then determine compatibility with adjacent sites. Mr. Ortega said a sketch plan could help flesh out these ideas. Mr. Ortega said another option would be a “sample book” that contains images and plans of developments that Walled Lake is interested in. Mr. Ortega said could be distributed to brokers who can then target their clients.

Commissioner Wolfson said he wants to be proactive and provide direction and agrees that identifying vacant lots is a good place to start.

Commissioner Hecht questioned if it would be a better idea to listen to the market to see what is needed? Mr. Hecht opinioned that by inviting property owners and advertising their lots to developers it could help.

Commissioner Wolfson said feedback from developers and brokers could be beneficial.

Planning Consultant Ortega said identifying target lots would be a good place to start to ensure that they are interested in potential development.

Chairman Hecht questioned how the commission could begin?

Planning Consultant Ortega said a draft map would be a good way to identify the lots.

Commissioner Hecht opinioned that inviting developers to discuss their ideas would help encourage development in Walled Lake.

Planning Consultant Ortega said a good way to start would be having a draft map with preliminary contacts. Mr. Ortega said the commission could then flesh out ideas on how to gather input and ideas.

PC 08-02-20 MOTION TO INSTRUCT THE PLANNING CONSULTANT TO IDENTIFY AVAILABLE PARCELS AND POTENTIAL CONTACTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Motion by Owsinek, seconded by Hecht, CARRIED: To instruct the planning consultant to identify available parcels and potential contacts for development.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (4)	Hecht, Owsinek, Whitt, Wolfson, O’Rourke
Nays (0)	
Absent (2)	Novak, Palmer
Abstention (0)	

3. Discussion – Proposed front yard setback zoning ordinance amendments

Planning Consultant Ortega explained the existing front yard setbacks in the ordinance. Mr. Ortega said currently, in single family districts we require a front yard set back established by either a 30ft minimum or calculating the established residential building pattern. Mr. Ortega said this was established by the City to allow for those sites that have homes closer to the street to maintain their street wall. Mr. Ortega said this typically happens on sites that are slightly smaller or in neighborhoods that were built with larger rear yards. Mr. Ortega said the residential building pattern allowed new homes that were going into these neighborhoods to respect the existing street wall pattern

Mr. Ortega said however, there are some areas where the existing street wall patterns are greater than the 30ft standard. Mr. Ortega said with the stipulation in the current language, the result is that these new homes are placed in the front yards of the existing space. Mr. Ortega said the new homes are not necessarily respecting the existing street wall established. Mr. Ortega said as a result they stick out.

Mr. Ortega said the primary location in the City that the ordinance affects is along East Walled Lake Drive. Mr. Ortega said to alleviate the concern and to preserve the current street wall, Mr. Ortega drafted an amendment. Mr. Ortega said for single family properties zoned R1-A and R1-B that have East Walled Lake drive frontage from Leon Road to West 14 Mile road, the minimum front setback should be based on the residential building pattern. Mr. Ortega said this means that any new development that is completely redeveloped in this area or modified, the front yard setback will be the average of the two adjacent homes.

Mr. Ortega said to move forward with this amendment, the Planning Commission first needs to hold a public hearing. Mr. Ortega said after receiving input from the public, the Planning Commission can then make a recommendation to Council.

PC 08-03-20 MOTION TO HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE PROPOSED FRONT YARD SETBACK ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

Motion by Owsinek, seconded by Hecht, CARRIED: To hold a public hearing for the proposed front yard setback zoning ordinance amendments.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (4)	Hecht, Owsinek, Whitt, Wolfson, O'Rourke
Nays (0)	
Absent (2)	Novak, Palmer
Abstention (0)	

4. Discussion – Fence Ordinance Update

Commissioner Hecht summarized prior discussions noting the issues regarding side yards and looking to change it to 8 feet around the home. Mr. Hecht additionally noted the issue regarding the language for lake front properties and their relation to Novi's ordinance.

Planning Consultant Ortega said he can provide more information at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

Commissioner Owsinek thanked the board for a constructive meeting.

Commissioner Whitt said he has been working with Mr. Ortega on the fence ordinance and designing language that works with Walled Lake's properties. Mr. Whitt said he was encouraged to hear discussion about future planning and zoning from the board. Mr. Whitt said there is a separation between economic development and planning, but there are some similarities. Mr. Whitt said it begins with identifying properties. Mr. Whitt cautioned the board on giving the impression of favoritism toward developers.

Commissioner Wolfson said change does not happen overnight and agrees that the board is on a good direction toward putting Walled Lake's needs first.

PC 08-04-20

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Owsinek, seconded by O'Rourke, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 8:18 p.m.



Hana Jaquays
Recording Secretary

Kyle Hecht
Chairman