



City of Plymouth
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
201 S. Main Street Plymouth, MI 48170
Wednesday, April 11, 2018, 7:00 PM

1. ROLL CALL

Chairman Mulhern called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.
The Board said the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT: Tim Joy, Jennifer Kehoe, Chuck Myslinski, Adam Offerman, Joe Philips, Hollie Saraswat, Scott Silvers, Karen Sisolak, Jim Mulhern

Also present was Community Development Director, John Buzuvis, Assistant Community Development Director, Greta Bolhuis and Planning Consultant, Sally Elmiger.

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Craig Menuck, builder for the Starkweather School project, gave an update of their progress. Mr. Menuck explained the process of completing the interior build-out and was hopeful to begin obtaining certificate of occupancies by summer.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) Comm. Philips, supported by Comm. Offerman, made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the March 14, 2018, as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

b) Comm. Kehoe, supported by Comm. Sisolak, made a motion to approve the special meeting minutes from the March 27, 2018, as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Comm. Philips, supported by Comm. Myslinski, made a motion to amend the agenda by adding number 9, Master Plan discussion and moving adjournment to number 10, as amended.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None.

6. OLD BUSINESS

None.

7. NEW BUSINESS

PUD 18-01: 250 N. Main, Zoned B-3 (Preliminary PUD Review)

Ms. Elmiger presented her analysis. She explained the applicant is proposing a mixed-use retail/office and residential PUD with over 10,000 square feet of commercial space and seventy-nine (79) proposed residential units.

Ron Jona, Jona /Abro Architects, discussed with the board the site plan for the proposed PUD. The applicant explained the lofts building will have commercial on the first level, the corner building will have first floor retail with residential units above and a roof terrace along with a fitness center. The bridge building will have

twenty-two (22) residential units and the tower building will be a five-story building consisting of residential units with below ground parking.

Ms. Elmiger has concerns with the PUD project not meeting the PUD eligibility requirements. In her opinion, the project needs to have a significantly larger commercial/office component given the underlying zoning and the parcel's location on the City's most prominent commercial corridor. Ms. Elmiger indicated the apartment building is too tall at five stories, and the residential density too high. A four-story apartment building at the rear of the site is the most this parcel can accommodate, she indicated given the surrounding land uses and density of the development as well as the zoning limitations. The parking is deficient and the proposed density too high. If the five story building is reduced to a four story the density will be inline Ms. Elmiger indicated the property is overbuilt. Ms. Elmiger summarized why the PUD project in her opinion does not meet the criteria in the ordinance, the recommendations from her review are listed below:

1. Provide an explanation of why the PUD project is superior to a project that could be done in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance.
2. Site plan requirements.
3. Increase the amount of commercial land uses to be consistent with the underlying zoning and Master Plan
4. Design consistency of two buildings facing Main Street.
5. City Engineer to confirm capacity of City water and sewer systems to accommodate the proposed development.
6. Reduce the height of the apartment building to coordinate with surrounding developments. Include top story in a mansard-style roof to mitigate the height of the building.
7. Reduce residential density.
8. Parking and Loading: 1. Parking deficiencies due to proposed scope of project. 2. Deviations in parking lot screening/buffering. 3. Deviation from the length of proposed parking spaces. 4. On-street parking space dimension. 5. Number of barrier-free parking spaces. 6. Possible barrier-free space in underground parking area. 7- Description of anticipated deliveries and truck maneuvering paths shown on plans. 8. Clear vision area.
9. Circulation: City Engineer evaluation of proposed driveway locations. 2. City Engineer evaluation of traffic study.
10. Pedestrian Amenities/Landscaping: 1. More room in front of commercial units (on Main St.) to accommodate outdoor seating. 2. Raised beds along Main St. vs. at-grade planting beds. 3. Parking lot screening and landscaping. 4. Foundation plantings along large apartment building. 5. Desirability of proposed "open space."
11. PUD Agreement: Develop PUD agreement with performance guarantees for public amenities.
12. Architectural Elevations: Architectural interest on and architectural coordination of the apartment building with the commercial buildings.

Board Discussion

Comm. Myslinski asked what portion of the PUD is deficient and Ms. Elmiger referenced the the nine PUD standards contained in the ordinance.

Comm. Kehoe spoke about downtown walkability and indicated she would prefer a boulevard design that was more inviting for pedestrians to be drawn into the proposed commercial businesses. Ms. Kehoe suggested stepping in the upper residential units to make the first story businesses more inviting. In her opinion with the lack of parking, restaurants should not be included in the retail units. Mr. Jona discussed his opinion of the ratio used for adequate parking provided and explained how the 2nd story overhang works.

Comm. Joy stated that he liked the residential component and felt it would fit well with the surrounding neighborhood but did not care for the tall 5-story building.

Comm. Offerman felt the 5-story building was too tall and asked about the Starkweather Station apartments and Mr. Buzuvis responded that they were a 4-story building with about an 80% occupancy.

Comm. Silvers liked the proposed extension of the downtown streetscape and felt it would be a benefit to Main Street and also felt the impact of the 5-story building may be minimized by its location at the rear of the site.

Comm. Sisolak agreed with the Planner that extending the downtown walkability throughout the community would be the PUD benefit but with reduced residential density.

Comm. Philips discussed the Starkweather Station project that offers a walking path, a park area, a bike path, extends the streetscape, has cars out front and all of these being a PUD benefit to the Community. Comm. Philips felt this development isn't able to accommodate bike parking on the sidewalk. Comm. Philips further indicated that the 5-story building doesn't bother him as much as the lack of green space surrounding the development that contributes to the lack of being PUD worthy.

Comm. Myslinski spoke about the 70 foot building with little space for landscaping and trees he felt the nearby grade changes make the 5-stories more visible. He was in favor of the commercial buildings being pulled forward towards Main Street making it a walkable extension of downtown. Comm. Myslinski was concerned with the longevity costs associated with the Right of Way (ROW) parallel parking, he would prefer uniquely breaking up the facades/balconies but does not see enough benefits to granting the PUD eligibility.

Comm. Saraswat felt it was not practical to think that people will walk from Ann Arbor Trail all the way to Union Street it's just too far. Comm. Saraswat agreed with Comm. Myslinski that the 5-story building regarding the impact it may have on the neighbors particularly on Union St.

Comm. Joy spoke about the addition of 100 new residents walking to and from this development.

Comm. Sisolak described the City as a family oriented engaging Community and she does not see a park, walkway, green space or public benefit for the good of the Community to be more PUD justified.

Comm. Offerman felt the general concept for the development is great for the City.

Comm. Silvers described the 10% mix of retail and felt it will be viable retail.

Comm. Kehoe felt the Tower building is a large long building with too much residential.

Chair Mulhern indicated he does not find the community benefit. He felt the building is too tall and the property too dense. Chair Mulhern explained the maximum density for this property at the highest level multi-family residential would equal 116 rooms, and the number of residential units proposed is 179 rooms, that equals well over 54% more than permitted.

Comm. Joy spoke about a possible pathway along the north end of the property.

Public Comments

Ellen Elliott, 404 Irvin, agrees with comments there is no PUD worthiness and the density is too high. She felt parking decisions should be made carefully and not relaxed and less.

Jim Burrows, 1014 Dewey, made three points of concern: green space, huge walls & bigfoot. Mr. Burrows stated this project is huge with no green space or trees.

Ron Jona, Jona /Abro Architects, discussed with the board some of the suggestions made and asked for some input on what will make this PUD worthy. Chair Mulhern responded that the planner's twelve (12) recommendations would be a place to start, parking will be tough but there is flexibility with that and suggested contacting Ms. Elmiger and John Buzuvis for guidance.

Comm. Philips spoke about the Master Plan and the need for more park areas and suggested a possible Community benefit by providing a grassy area adjacent to Main street with a pathway to access it, where you can stand and watch the trains go by.

Comm. Kehoe discussed the need for parking and suggested more underground parking or less residential units.

The board discussed nearby attractions that may attract a restaurant or coffee shop such as the Plymouth Library or the PARC development located a block away with the possibility of a new 800-seat capacity auditorium.

Comm. Saraswat asked about PUD eligibility and Ms. Elmiger responded redevelopment of the site is great but that is not a public benefit, a public benefit offers space for a use that otherwise would not be part of the development such as a park, plaza, or a reuse of a historic structure, it is subjective & each site is unique.

Ms. Elmiger stated what is unique to this site would be a train platform park.

No action was taken.

8. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

None

9. DRAFT MASTER PLAN DISCUSSION

The Board discussed the remaining chapters of the draft Master Plan and made general and specific edits/ comments related to grammar and content.

City Staff will collect the edits and compile them into the revised final draft for the next meeting.

The Board suggested a final review of the Master Plan at a Special meeting to be held before the next Regular meeting. Once approved for distribution by the Planning Commission the MP will be forwarded to the City Commission for their review and then distribution to the neighboring communities/ utilities, for a sixty-three day comment period. The Planning Commission will then have to hold a Public Hearing prior to final approval and recommendation of adoption of the Master Plan by the City Commission.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, a motion was made by Comm. Myslinski, supported by Comm. Joy to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 PM.

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY