

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS
City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street
Farmington, Michigan
September 12, 2016

Chairperson Crutcher called the Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan, on Monday, September 12, 2016.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None

A quorum of the Commission was present.

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: Director Christiansen

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Motion carried, all ayes.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

a. Minutes of Regular Meeting – August 8, 2016

Motion by Buyers, seconded by Gronbach, to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.
Motion carried, all ayes.

SITE PLAN REVIEW, CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE EXISTING BUILDING FAÇADE AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS IN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT – THE GROVES RETAIL CENTER, 33019-33021 GRAND RIVER AVENUE

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

Christiansen stated this item is a site plan review, consideration to approve existing building façade and site improvements in the Central Business District for the Groves Retail Center, located at 33019-33021 Grand River Avenue. There is detailed background that has been provided in your staff packets, and a detailed staff report. He displayed an aerial photograph of the site which shows the existing building and reminded the Commissioners that the west side of the Groves Retail Center and improvements to the existing building and site improvements was before them a couple years before, being presented at the same time that the Groves Street Project Phase I and the Warner Street Project Phase II came online. He detailed the history of the west side improvements and indicated at the time they were approved, they would come back before the Planning Commission for façade and site plan approvals as well for the east side.

He introduced Charlie Kuhn, the President of Groves Center, LLC, who is present at the meeting to present his site plan for the east side.

Christiansen stated that the east side is being repurposed with two new tenants, one being Cross Fit and also Great Lakes Ace Hardware.

He went over the site plan improvements, including the building entrance, the modification of the parking lot to accommodate truck traffic, the façade improvements by repurposing it with new exterior finish materials and breaking up the mass and flat roof line similar to what was done on the west side as well as the canopy itself being modified, and repurposed entryways for both tenants. He indicated the windows remain the same, citing the differences being on the north end that there's an extension of roof line with a series of spandrel glass with the appearance of roof line and parapet extension which is intended to break up the mass of the building.

He demonstrated the improvements on the renderings displayed.

He told the Commissioners that the façade improvements were presented to the DDA Design Committee who reviewed them and gave feedback as to changes they would like to see including black out windows or suggested them to come up with a unique and creative way to utilize the windows. He also discussed the sign rendering, which is a smaller version of the one on the west side.

He stated the staff report talked about the exterior finish materials and stated everything proposed in terms of doors and windows and finish materials are very similar to what was approved on the west side and meets ordinance requirements. He indicated the DDA Design Committee at their September 8th meeting recommended approval of the façade improvements subject to a few minor modifications to the canopy and window treatments.

He then went into the site improvements which included upgrades and enhancement to the landscape beds, revised parking lot layout, new dumpster enclosure, new grease traps, revised and updated landscaping, and noted an outdoor storage area that is being proposed for the hardware store at the southwest corner of the parking lot south of the dumpsters which requires a separate approval of the Planning Commission but is part of the exterior site plan. He summarized that what is being proposed here is taking an older site that has existed for quite a period of time and repurposing it similar to the west side.

Chairperson Crutcher invited the Petitioner, Charlie Kuhn, to the podium.

Kuhn thanked the Commission and stated they were excited to be present at the meeting to introduce the tenants and indicated their purpose was to create a sense of place for them. He stated the input from Great Lakes was taken into consideration as well in the site plan.

He talked about the materials that would be utilized and identical to the west side. He then welcomed questions from the Commissioners.

Buyers inquired how far the north side would protrude into the sidewalk and Kuhn responded 4-6 inches, that the stone is applied to the brick.

Buyers then asked if the Spandrel glazing was an architectural element and Kuhn responded in the affirmative.

Buyers then asked what the windows on the north side would display as far as shelving and the like and Kuhn responded that they are going to propose vinyl wraps.

Brandon Stewart, store manager of Great Lakes Ace Hardware Farmington, provided the Commissioners with a handout. He indicated that Brian Nelson had provided them with some historical pictures of Farmington and that their idea is to have historical Farmington photos as a decorative window treatment. He stated he had provided two proposals and pictures to the Commission and detailed their significance.

Christiansen reiterated that the DDA Design Committee was comfortable with the proposed window treatment.

Chiara complimented the Petitioner on their plans.

Gronbach asked the Petitioner what the darker color shown on the east side elevation reflected and Kuhn responded it was efface material, the same as on the west side and further discussion was held on the windows and columns and canopy.

Majoros inquired about the signage for the Cross Fit store and Christiansen responded.

Majoros also commented on the multitude of colors in the renderings and suggested the Petitioner revisit that and further discussion was held.

Crutcher asked if logos were required and Stewart responded to his inquiry. Christiansen then indicated this issue was addressed and there was discussion held on the color scheme of the signage as well as other aspects of the signage.

Crutcher then brought up the issue of the parking pattern and Kuhn indicated it was not totally worked out. He then inquired if there would be parking spaces taken out when they change the pattern and Christiansen responded that most likely they would and they are currently working on a path where delivery trucks have the ability to enter and exit the site with a good turning radius.

Crutcher then queried the Petitioner on bike racks and Buyers inquired on the number of handicapped parking spaces.

MOTION by Majoros, supported by Chiara, to approve the Site Plan Review for the Existing Building Façade Modifications for the Groves Retail Center, 33019 - 33021 Grand River Avenue; such approval being contingent upon the Petitioner working with the City on the most appropriate final structure of parking to accommodate truck delivery and the appropriate flow of traffic; and that the Petitioner continue working with the DDA and staff to develop a design plan that is harmonious with their requirements and architecturally appealing in its design.

Christiansen stated that the Design Committee had addressed four items; one being the north side façade requesting for architectural treatment there with the possible consideration of an awning; the window signage on the north side façade; the revised site circulation to include the consideration and possibility of counter-clockwise circulation on the site; and provision of a bike rack.

Majoros then amended his original motion to include the four items requested by the Design Committee to read as:

MOTION by Majoros, supported by Chiara, to approve the Site Plan Review for the Existing Building Façade Modifications for the Groves Retail Center, 33019 - 33021 Grand River Avenue; such approval being contingent upon the Petitioner working with the City on the most appropriate final structure of parking to accommodate truck delivery and the appropriate flow of traffic; and that the Petitioner continue working with the DDA and staff to develop a design plan that is harmonious with their requirements and architecturally appealing in its design and to include the north side façade requesting for architectural treatment there with the possible consideration of an awning; and also on the north side façade the window signage; the revised site circulation to include the consideration and possibility of counter-clockwise circulation on the site; and the provision of a bike rack.

Motion carried, all ayes.

Crutcher thanked the Petitioner for his presentation.

**SITE PLAN REVIEW FOR OUTDOOR STORAGE - THE GROVES RETAIL CENTER,
GREAT LAKES ACE HARDWARE, 33021 GRAND RIVER AVENUE**

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

Christiansen brought up the graphic on the screen for the Commissioners and stated the Petitioner has submitted plans for outdoor storage and closure to be located along the rear of the existing commercial building unit at 33021 Grand River Avenue which will be Great Lakes Ace Hardware. He indicated the existing shopping center is zoned CBD, Central Business District. He stated the submitted plan shows a storage area approximately 1,000 square feet with a chain link fence located at the south and west corner of the existing shopping center parking lot on the east side of the building. He indicated the enclosure will have a gate and was not aware of the specifics on that, although it will be locked and security will be from the outside, with a 6 foot chain link fence and that there was screening discussed in that area. He stated the requested action of the Planning Commission is to review the submitted outdoor storage application for Great Lakes Ace Hardware. He also indicated a representative from Great Lakes Ace Hardware was present.

Crutcher invited the representative to the podium.

Brandon Stewart from Great Lakes Ace Hardware, stated that typically outdoor storage is used as a back door, a receiving door where product comes into the building. He indicated that due to the configuration of the site, the hardware store does not have a back door at this location.

Crutcher asked if customers would purchase items from that area and Stewart explained that the area would be used as storage of large numbers of topsoil, rock salt, etc.

Christiansen reminded the Commission that the True Value Hardware Store at Farmington Crossroads, Nine Mile and Farmington Road, has a permanent outdoor storage area very similar to the proposed one here tonight and is consistent with ordinance requirements.

Further discussion was held relative to the dumpster and the chain link fence both being 8-feet high and Christiansen detailed the dimensions of the outdoor storage area.

Gronbach inquired if the material along the south side of the enclosure was also 8-feet high chain link fence or if there is a wall present or just a fence and Christiansen responded there is a wall adjacent to the apartment complex, a screen wall that also serves as a retaining wall as well.

Crutcher inquired as to the height of the wall and Christiansen responded it would probably be six feet.

Gronbach asked if that would overlook or join in the parking lot further east of T. J. Maxx and Christiansen responded it is adjacent to the apartment complex. Gronbach then inquired if the south wall abuts or fence abuts the apartment complex site, wouldn't screening be required to the same height and further discussion was held.

Christiansen confirmed that is what the Petitioner is proposing is an 8-foot all the way around screening.

Buyers asked what the screen is comprised of.

Stewart stated it is the chain link with plastic slats and/or woven material and Christiansen described the details of the screening.

Crutcher inquired if the maintenance of the wall could be accommodated considering the space between it and the wall and Kuhn responded and indicated that he would look into it.

Buyers inquired as to the logistics of the wall and its attachment.

MOTION by Buyers, supported by Chiara, to approve the site plan for outdoor storage for the Groves Retail Center, Great Lakes Ace Hardware, located at 33021 Grand River Avenue as requested and submitted in their plans and drawings.

Christiansen asked Buyers to include having the Petitioner work with staff to determine the best alternative for that portion of the fence adjacent to the wall as an alternative whether it is directly adjacent or becomes attached to it as part of the wall.

Buyers amends his motion to include the suggested language to read as:

MOTION by Buyers, supported as amended by Chiara, to approve the site plan for outdoor storage for the Groves Retail Center, Great Lakes Ace Hardware, located at 33022 Grand River Avenue as requested and submitted in their plans and drawings, and that the Petitioner work with staff to determine the best alternative for that portion of the fence adjacent to the wall as an alternative whether it is directly adjacent or becomes attached to it as part of the wall.

Motion carried, all ayes.

**PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCE WITH PLANNING COMMISSION ON PUD
PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN – OLD 47TH DISTRICT
COURTHOUSE PROPERTY**

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

Christiansen stated this item is a preapplication conference, a discussion and review with the Planning Commission on a proposed PUD planned unit development concept plan for the redevelopment of the old 47th District Courthouse property. He indicated the purpose of the Preapplication Conference is to discuss the appropriateness of the PUD and the concept plan to solicit feedback and additional materials supporting the proposal.

He indicated the applicant, SBC Ventures, has submitted a PUD concept plan for the redevelopment of the old 47th District Courthouse Property. The concept plan includes the proposed layout plan site plan, the proposed floor plan and the proposed building elevations. Also attached is an aerial photograph and the existing conditions survey of the site.

The Applicant is here at the meeting to present the PUD Concept Plan to the Commission and Mr. Roger Scher, representing SBC Ventures, is present at the meeting.

Christiansen provided an aerial photo of the project and detailed the surrounding sites. He described the courthouse property as being vacant for the past thirteen years and it consists of a circular drive, the 15,000 square foot courthouse building, the courthouse parking area and then open space that exists to the west of that. He pointed out the open field area, that area actually housing a couple ballfields at one time.

He gave a history of the property and its prior proposal for the redevelopment of the site for an 88 bed assisted living and memory care facility which was approved by the Planning Commission but did not move forward for several reasons. He also indicated there was a prior proposal for duplex developments which was approved but scrapped due to the economy.

He stated that the issue before the Planning Commission tonight is similar to what the Planning Commission approved in 2006.

He then went over the projections provided on the screen, i.e. existing conditions, property survey indicating it is a 3.82 acre site, the 15,000 square foot courthouse building, the parking area, the horseshoe drive which provides access to both the Ten Mile School parking lot to the back and to the courthouse property and the parking lot.

He stated the property has had several investigations, there was an oil tank that was part of the courthouse property and removed several years ago, and a closure report for that was on record and a Phase I Environmental that was done on the site and a Phase II Environmental due to some concern for the spoil pile that exists down on the south end of the site and then there was a second Phase II that was done and the site continues to be a clean site.

He stated there are a couple different concepts that Mr. Scher submitted and that he requested an extension from City Council to move forward with a revised concept for the multiple family before the Commission this evening.

Crutcher invited Scher to the podium.

Roger Scher introduced himself and stated that Kevin had given a very complete history and presentation and offered to answer any questions the Commission may have.

He indicated they had originally started with a single family development on the property with the thought process that at some point the school would sell that property and that they would develop single family homes. Recognizing the school may not be as near towards selling their property they looked at the courthouse property as one that could be done on it alone.

He described the housing they are proposing on the property, i.e., ranch style housing without maintenance which are in demand in every community. He described the duplex style units they are proposing with a number of different site plans to accomplish that.

He detailed the focus of the different layouts and their amenities and further discussion was held.

Buyers described the benefits of the PUD and asked the Petitioner why he applied for it.

The Petitioner described the Ordinance as being a major component in their decision as to what would be the best avenue to apply to the Planning Commission.

Chiara had questions on the aerial plan and also asked how the new tax rolls would affect current practices.

Christiansen then explained why the processes are not being combined and the benefits of the PUD and further discussion was held.

The floor was opened up for questions from the Commissioners.

Waun expressed her approval to the project and stated she thought it would attract a wide range of people.

Christiansen explained the next step is to propose the concept plan, proposal and get feedback from what was provided this evening which allows them to move forward to the formal PUD application and preliminary plan materials and more detailed information coming to the Planning Commission where a Public Hearing is held and stated there is no action required on the part of the Planning Commission this evening.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS

None heard

STAFF COMMENTS

Christiansen reiterated to everyone that with all the efforts that the community has made to be redevelopment ready, that the City is now realizing the fruits of their labor and seeing results.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary