

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS  
City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street  
Farmington, Michigan  
March 11, 2019

Chairperson Crutcher called the Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan, on Monday, March 11, 2019.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Chiara, Crutcher, Kmetzo, Majoros, Perrot, Waun, Westendorf  
Absent: None

A quorum of the Commission was present.

Chairperson Crutcher asked Director Christiansen to introduce the new Planning Commissioner.

Christiansen welcomed Dan Westendorf to the Planning Commission. He stated he is the new appointment by City Council to the Commission, that he is a Farmington resident and also a professional architect and that he will be filling the unexpired term of David Gronbach, who retired after eighteen years of service.

**OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Director Christiansen, Recording Secretary Murphy

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION by Chiara, seconded by Perrot, to approve the Agenda.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

**APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. February 11, 2019 Minutes**

MOTION by Chiara, seconded by Waun, to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

**PUBLIC HEARING – 2020/2025 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

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

Christiansen stated this item is to hold the required Public Hearing for the 2020/2025 Capital Improvement Program for the City of Farmington. The Capital Improvement Program Steering Committee and City staff have been working diligently on updating the program to incorporate into the upcoming City Master Plan Update, the Capital Improvement Program for the next six years and are requesting the Planning Commission to hold the Public Hearing this evening.

At the February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Planning Commission meeting the Public Hearing was scheduled as required for the Capital Improvement Program for 2020/2025 for tonight's meeting. Public Notice was published and a draft of the 2020/2025 Capital Improvement Program was attached with the staff report for consideration this evening, along with the staff report and also the Capital Improvement Program draft, and a copy of the Public Notice.

The request of the Planning Commission again is to hold the Public Hearing, to open it up for anybody who wants to participate to share their comments regarding the draft Capital Improvement Program as currently proposed and then once the Public Hearing is held, to bring it back to the Commission for their deliberation, consideration and the requested action then is to consider the draft 2020/2025 Capital Improvement Program and to take action on the draft and move it forward to the City Council for their consideration.

He went on to state the Capital Improvement Program as drafted and proposed for 2020/2025 is available online for anybody that wants to look at it, it's on the home page of the City of Farmington website, at [www.farmgov.com](http://www.farmgov.com) and anybody who wishes can certainly make comment on that as well as this evening or comments can be shared through the City Manager's office for through the Economic & Community Development Department, City Administration and staff as well.

Looking at the draft on the screen, the proposed plan, the draft plan includes the cover sheet, the table of contents, focuses on Capital Improvement items by category, buildings and grounds, drain systems, land acquisition and redevelopment, parking lots, recreation and culture, roads, sidewalks and streetscapes, vehicles and equipment and water and sewer systems.

It also references those that have participated in the draft which is the Steering Committee which is made up of organization representatives, with Mr. Majoros being the Planning Commission's representative, City staff and the Planning Commission is referenced as well, and this is a recommendation and consideration of this item from the Planning Commission, the final approval of the Capital Improvement Programs rests with the City Council.

There is a resolution for consideration this evening if the Commission is supportive of the draft, then this would be the action item that would be moved forward to City Council. There's a transmittal letter that's been drafting for moving this forward on the Planning Commission's behalf.

The Capital Improvement Program, again is a short term plan for identifying and categorizing large and/or very expensive projects. It is a budget item or a budget outline, it's kind of a road map for capital improvements in the City over a six-year period. Capital Improvement for the City's purposes here is an improvement that is at least one of the following: a purchase or improvement of a facility, system, infrastructure or piece of equipment that costs \$10,000 or more with an expected service life of more than one year. It is a nonrecurring expenditure, and it can also be a study that leads to such purposes. So it is not budget, but it is basically a plan for budget and so it goes in hand with the City's budget. It's also required to accompany the City Master Plan. It is part of the Master Plan Program for the City and it's really an implementation tool of the City Master Plan and as you know the City is currently moving forward with updating the current Master Plan, we're going through the 2018/2019 Master Plan Update and the Planning Commission has had an opportunity to participate with that to a certain extent, and as that moves forward the CIP basically becomes part of that document so that will all move forward together.

A CIP is required by Statute, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, along with the Master Plan. The benefits of the CIP that have been talked about, it calls attention to community deficiencies and provides a means to correct them and it identifies long term and short term expenditures which greatly improve the budgeting process and efficiency for the City, it enhances the ability to secure grants, reducing the taxpayer burden, increases the likelihood of Departmental/Intergovernmental cooperation, improving continuity and reducing costs and encourages efficient governance.

The Executive Summary is part of this document. For the 2020/2025 six year Capital Improvement Program year, which is now where we are at, there are a total of 112 projects that are identified in this six-year CIP Program, totaling 23.2 million dollars. The projects are identified by year, over the six years 2020/2025, and are also as represented by this pie chart identified by project category. This is consistent of the Capital Improvement Program process that the Planning Commission has participated in over the past number of years and the requested action this evening is to hold the required Public Hearing as scheduled, consider the draft Capital Improvement Program 2020/2025, and then to take action on the Plan to move the draft forward to City Council.

MOTION by Westendorf, supported by Chiara, to open the Public Hearing.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

(Public Hearing opened at 7:10 p.m.)

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

Chairperson Crutcher opened the floor for questions and/or comments.

None being heard he called for a motion to close the Public Hearing.

MOTION by Chiara, supported by Majoros, to close the Public Hearing.

Motion carried, all ayes.

(Public Hearing closed at 7:11 p.m.)

MOTION by Majoros, supported by Chiara, to proceed with the 2020/2025 Capital Improvement Plan as submitted and prepared by the Steering Committee, along with the draft resolution and letter as noted in the draft copy, for forwarding along to City Council for their approval.

Motion carried, all ayes.

Director Christiansen stated this is an ongoing process, that the Plan is a living, breathing document, it is a tool, it is a guide for identification and implementation of the City's Improvement Program and City Council will consider this draft plan as forwarded by the Planning Commission formally during their budget process. So if anybody is interested, they still have an opportunity to make comment and/or share their concerns to City Council if they so choose when Council considers that draft plan formally as part of their budget process.

## **DISCUSSION AND SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT – BLUE HAT COFFEE, FARMINGTON MASONIC TEMPLE, 23715 FARMINGTON ROAD**

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

Director Christiansen stated this item is to discuss and schedule a Public Hearing with the Planning Commission for a proposed PUD, Planned Unit Development, to be located at the Farmington Masonic Temple. Article X, PUD, Planned Unit Development, Section 35-135, approval procedure of the Zoning Ordinance, requires that a Public Hearing to review the requested PUD and the site plan be scheduled in accordance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act and the City of Farmington's Zoning Ordinance requirements. The Applicant, Farmington Masonic Temple Association, has submitted a PUD concept plan for Blue Hat Coffee. The Applicant requests that the Planning Commission schedule a Public Hearing to be held at the April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019 meeting, along with a review of the preliminary conceptual PUD plan as proposed.

The purpose this evening then is to have an introduction of this item formally to the Planning Commission. A PUD application has been submitted to the City, along with the required preliminary conceptual plans. That information has been provided to the Planning Commission as part of the staff report and staff packet this evening. And the Applicant, as well as the Applicant's service providers, consultants and the owners of Blue Hat Coffee are here this evening and it is their intention to introduce themselves and also introduce their proposed coffee house here for location at the Farmington Masonic Temple along with the plans that they have prepared.

Commissioner Westendorf recused himself from this item and left Chambers to avoid any perceived conflict of interest.

Phillip Jewell came to the podium to introduce himself and his wife Catherine who was in the audience as the owners of Blue Hat Coffee. He stated they are currently in an 1850's building in Coldwater, Michigan which they restored. They spent six years restoring it and three or four years adding onto the property. They currently roast their own coffee. They started as a coffee house but then found they were also a restaurant because everyone wants food with their coffee. So they now make all of their own pastries, they make their own bread, they make their own meat products, pulled brisket, pulled pork, they make their own rolls, and so everything they've done has basically been revolving around producing quality products.

They are extremely picky on the coffee that they roast, we cup and taste probably twenty coffees for every one they select. They have coffee from around the world and have gained a reputation of having coffee that people stop by as they go through Coldwater just to buy three to six bags of coffee. The last couple days they got a call from some people in Traverse City, they had tasted the coffee and all of a sudden a flood of orders came in over the internet from Traverse City.

He went on to state that coffee roasting is a relatively easy process but the process of selecting good coffees is very time consuming and they have developed a knack for doing it. The roasting process, they tend to not follow the standard roasting guidelines because of specific profiles and they know what those profiles are in their customers.

He stated they looked at the Masonic several months ago, they loved the property, it has a kitchen available to them which they will need since they plan to produce all of their food items and their dessert items. They also plan to expand the menu over time and add alcoholic beverages as they move forward and become more of a full service restaurant/coffee house, a high quality venue where you have access to homemade croissants, homemade muffins, homemade desserts, homemade breads and very good products in the coffee area.

Christiansen asked through the Chair for Mr. Jewell to take a moment to share a little bit about the history of Blue Hat Coffee and the building. Christiansen stated he had the pleasure of visiting the store's website and looked at it in detail and downloaded materials from the website and attached it with the Planning Commission's staff packets so they could become familiar with you and for their continuing interest and for those that are watching at home because of the reference made to the building and the uniqueness of the business.

Jewell came up to the podium and went over the information on the screen. He stated he is a retired software engineer so the website design and everything else on the website he got to do himself. The house is the Abram C. Fisk House, it's a National Historic Site Building and registered as such. It was owned by his mother who bought it in 1965, she registered this individually as an historic site with the National Park Site, so it's a National Historic Site and it's also registered with the State of Michigan as a State Historic Site. He and his brother inherited the home and then he and his wife bought this house from the estate in 2008. He stated the home was in a state of disrepair but not bad disrepair because the house itself is basically three brick construction, it's an early Italian 8 model house, the walls are 14-inches thick, the basement foundation is 25 inches thick, it has a full basement with 8-foot ceilings and it has basically three floors, the first floor, second floor and an attic that's 14-feet at the center and there's a walkway up to the cupola.

When the home was restored, the first thing they had to do is repair the plaster. They pulled off one to five layers of plaster, got down to the cracked plaster. They pulled up two layers of wall to wall carpeting and got down to the linoleum from the 1920s. So they left the linoleum because they knew they had to repair the plaster. This has 12-foot ceilings on two floors and they started the process of restoring all the plaster. This particular house because it's on US 12 which is a major highway adjacent to I-69, the ceilings were all starting to float so they had to figure out how to fix that and they didn't want to put in drywall. So he researched on the internet and found a restoration that was being done by a company in Boston on an old building that was owned by several people from the City of Boston, learned how to fix plaster that was floating, you basically drill holes every five inches and pour construction cement up in there, put plaster keys and then you plaster over the top of it. So they did that, and that a year to do the whole house. That was a major portion of the work. The floors had to be restored, so they restored all the floors and the walls were in pretty good condition, and the front porch had to be restored and then they had to add on. They added on a back porch so they could serve coffee and they added on a second building where they're roasting coffee. It now has a full kitchen. The first thing they started baking themselves was pies and they have become a major source of their business as far as some of the products. They get people coming in and asking why don't you have any cherry pie? They're basically a 5-pound

pie. It's ten to twelve cups of fruit, ten to twelve cups of cherries, which is about four pounds and all butter crust and this is something I still get to do myself.

Jewell then stated that a lot of people ask where they their name. Branch County donated more horses to the Union Army during the Civil War than any other county in the country and a lot of them came from this property which was a horse farm. So it's named after the Union Officer's blue hat, that's the genesis of the name. Another thing is because they had to cut down trees to build, they cut down black walnuts, maples, pine trees and all that lumber was used to make tables for the property. So all the tales that are in the residence for seating are black walnut and maple that we cut down to build. One of the floors is made from that lumber and all of the countertops are made from the lumber that they milled when they had to cut down to build. So we are very aware you want to reuse everything you can and we used it and it makes a huge difference. He pointed out the picture which showed the original layout of the property, there is a mile, to a mile and a quarter track that went around to the front yard of the home, and Abram C. Fisk raised Morgan horses that were in the 1870s were selling for \$10,000 and \$15,000, which is over a million dollars today. He was selling houses to Europe, throughout the United States and to Russia.

Christiansen thanked Jewell for sharing his story.

Jeff Scott, Scott Architects, 32316 Grand River, Farmington, came to the podium. He stated the project they are here for tonight is something that the City has long waited for some activity on that site. It's probably one of the most underutilized prominent locations in Farmington and this project will bring that breath of fresh air onto the site. The project will allow the community now just to drive by it and admire the old building, but now they'll

be able to go inside on a regular basis and experience a little bit more the history that Farmington has to offer. This is something that's been talked about a long time, to bring a full service type restaurant into that location and I think with Catherine and Phillip's direction, they're looking to involve that same vision onto that site.

They will be leasing the first floor, doing some minor renovations to the interior to allow for new counter, the documents show a conceptual floor plan. And then really no proposed work to the exterior with the exception of on the north side they've introduced a barrier free ramp, right now that site is accessible and we want to make it commercial and allow all the public to enjoy what Blue Hat has to offer so that will be barrier free. That is located on the north side trying to make it as less obtrusive as they can and then on the south side overlooking that corner, keeping those trees, they've introduced a patio out there where people can go out and sit and enjoy a nice cup of coffee in the spring,

throughout the summer and part of the fall. They will not be taking out any of the trees, it's set back far enough away from those trees they shouldn't be affected.

The patio is not going to be just a deck, they're looking at a system where they're actually going to put some kind of pavers, like porcelain tile pavers over, so it's more substantial but they're going to lift it up which allows them to have the barrier free accessibility off the restaurant floor. It's really bringing a nice breath of fresh air into that building. We know the Masonic Temple, they really need that and it's really good for the sustainability of the building and that site.

As mentioned, the second floor is going to remain with the Masons, they're going to use that with their meetings, I think three to six times a year they have a meeting, sometimes they're off site. They don't foresee any conflicts there with the activities there.

He said the Jewells do eventually want to go into more of a full service restaurant and with the PUD they want to make sure that that's clear. The hours are going to be right now more of just coffeeshop hours, eventually it will go a little bit longer but what I want to make sure happens is that it gets addressed in the PUD agreement so we're not having to come back and renegotiate the agreement in that manner.

And then the other thing that is affected is the parking. Right now the Masons are into an agreement with the City which allows the City to utilize the parking lot. There are twenty-two spaces on site right now, those currently are untimed parking spaces that they're allowing the City to utilize in their whole parking grid. Now, with this new tenant we're looking at taking the westerly five spots and make those assigned that that's for employee parking for Blue Hat only. And then the remaining seventeen spaces would still be allowed to be utilized by the City, we're not going to close off the lot, that we're anticipating being used by the City but those would then become three hour timed, so go into that

timed parking scenario. So that's really the big issue. The parking requirement, we meet the parking space requirement for the number of seats inside the building. Where we exceed it is the tables on the exterior. With that additional, we have six tables shown on the outside, the ordinance requires one parking space per table for exterior seating. So at that point I think we're required to have twenty-five spaces, but we're looking at with all the on street parking that the City provides, there's going to be plenty as far as for this new development. He then offered to answer any questions from the Commissioners.

Chiara asked if there are any zoning situations related to this.



Christiansen replied yes, the property is zoned R1-P, so it's Residential Parking. So the intent of zoning that property as is when the City did that, was to accommodate the use of the site as was being used and continues to be used predominantly the Lodge, Masonic

Temple, using that for Lodge purposes but also to the parking. Because the parking not only serves the Temple, it serves the Lodge, but also there's an agreement between the City and the Masonic Temple, to utilize that parking as public parking. So there's an agreement between the City and Masonic Temple organization. In any event R1-P is the zoning. The property is in the DDA, the Downtown Development Authority boundaries, however it is not zoned CBD, Central Business District, like the majority of the downtown is. It's zoned R1-P. And there are other properties, if I were to go back to this particular drawing on screen which is a site plan prepared by Mr. Scott's office, you'll see properties around it and you'll actually see the zoning here. If you look on the north side of Oakland Street, you can see R-1 zoning. If you look across the street, you can see on the east side of Farmington Road, those properties are within the CBD. This property is R1-P. You can see the properties that are on the south side of Grand River, they're in the CBD. So there's a unique zoning to this property. So that's the zoning issue.

The discussions that we've had with the Petitioner representing the developer as well as the broker representing the developer's interest as well as with their desire to locate Blue Hat Coffee here, what are the alternatives in terms of approach. One of the alternatives that could have been pursued was looking to rezone the property and that was a possibility maybe rezoning it to a Commercial type district like CBD, so extending the CBD onto this site. However, that's not what the Master Plan identifies. So there has to be a basis for it and there's also a reason that has been kept R1-P. You'll also note, if you look at the site plan that the property to the west of the Masonic Temple Lodge site is municipal property to the War Memorial and that's also zoned R1-P.

The other alternative was to look at possibly some sort of variance, a use type variance. But in order to substantiate a use type variance, there were some pretty stringent requirements to do that. You have to exhaust a lot of alternatives.

Another alternative then was to look at the site and look at the specific use being proposed and similarly to what the City has engaged in and done with other properties in the downtown, possibly look at a Planned Unit Development process for this site that's specific to the use and specific to the plans and has a PUD agreement that could then be created and entered into between the Applicant, owners of the Masonic Temple and the City specific to what's being proposed and that was the direction after a lot of dialogue that was thought to be best so that's kind of why we're here.

Majoros stated that the Commission should be prepared for issues that might arise with the Historic Commission in the future.

Christiansen responded that is another reason for the PUD, is the PUD is going to allow for engagement of those that have interest including those municipal bodies that also have interest in something like this and that would be through the PUD process, the Planning Commission and the City Council are required. The Planning Commission and the responsibilities that you have, making recommendation to Council and then final site plan and Council with approving the preliminary conceptual and the PUD agreement. Also, because it's in the DDA, the DDA Design Committee is going to be given the courtesy of review. Also, because it's in the Historic District, the Historical Commission will be given the courtesy of review. And also, because there is an interest in continuing to work with the City in providing for utilization of parking between the Lodge, the intended use here, and the City, there is going to be some dialogue with the Parking Committee because there was a desire to have some limitation on the parking as is today, there's no limitation currently there, there's just an agreement to share use but there's an interest in time limiting some of the parking in everybody's best interest. So there's going to be a lot of opportunity, that's kind of what the layout is, that kind of follows too what's provided for in allowing the PUD process.

Scott said they were planning on addressing the Parking Advisory Committee at their next meeting as well as the Historical Commission at their next meeting so when they come back for the Public Hearing we'll hopefully have their full support.

Crutcher said there's a meeting of the DDA Design Review Committee this week.

Christiansen stated the requested action this evening for the Planning Commission to consider and schedule the required Public Hearing for the April 8, 2019 meeting.

MOTION by Majoros, supported by Chiara, that the Planning Commission move forward with scheduling the Public Hearing for the Planned Unit Development, Blue Hat Coffee, inside the Farmington Masonic Temple, 23715 Farmington Road, at the April 8, 2019 Planning Commission meeting  
Motion carried, all ayes

Commissioner Westendorf resumed his seat in Chambers at 7:45 p.m.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None heard

## **PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS**

Chiara stated he is excited for this project and to utilize that spot.

Perrot said it's basically extending downtown west.

Director Christiansen stated that he wanted the Planning Commission to know that as they continue to move forward with the City of Farmington Master Plan Update, 2018/2019, they are nearing a point in the process where soon that plan will be moved forward to the Planning Commission for your consideration. There have been five steering committee meetings that have been held since October of last year and two open house meetings that have been held as well. The final draft is currently being completed and anticipate that it will be moved forward to the Planning Commission some time very shortly, could be as early as your next meeting for your initial consideration. There are some requirements under State statute under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act for notification of adjacent communities as to the City's exercise in moving forward with updating of the Master Plan. That notification by written correspondence goes to communities and then there's a time period for response. Subsequent to that there's also a requirement for obviously to talk to the Planning Commission to hold the required Public Hearing to consider the draft plan and to be very involved in the process at that point and then to act on the draft however long that takes to do and move it forward to the City Council.

Waun asked for an update on the District Court property.

Christiansen replied that the initial construction and engineering plans have been submitted and they're under review by the City's planning and engineering consultant, OHM Advisors, and working with the developer, Ten Mile Development Group, LLC, which is part of the Boji Development, Inc., so they're working through plan issues right now and they anticipate that will move forward. Boji Development, Inc. does own the property they are now the owners and part of the process is not only the plan review and approval of both construction and engineering plans, but then the approval of permits and also demolition on the site, the existing building, the out building, so all of that is in process right now and we'll continue to keep you updated.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Westendorf, supported by Waun, to adjourn the meeting.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Secretary