

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS  
City Council Chambers 23600 Liberty Street  
Farmington, Michigan  
Monday, July 14, 2014

Chairperson Bowman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Farmington City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Babcock, Bowman, Chiara, Crutcher, Gronbach, Majoros

Absent: Buyers

A quorum of the Commission was present.

**OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Director Christiansen, Building Inspector Koncsol, City Manager Pastue, City Attorney Schultz

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION by Gronbach, seconded by Crutcher, to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion carried, all ayes.

**APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA**

**a. Minutes of Regular Meeting – June 9, 2014**

MOTION by Crutcher, seconded by Majoros, to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted.

Motion carried, all ayes.

**PUBLIC HEARING – PUD PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT PRELIMINARY PLAN AND PUD AGREEMENT – RIVERWALK II (Requested to be Postponed)**

Chairperson Bowman introduced this agenda item and indicated that the Petitioner had requested a postponement of the Public Hearing. She stated that letters had been sent out initially to property owners within 300 feet informing them of the Public Hearing and when it was postponed, those property owners were sent letters indicating same. She then turned it over to staff.

Christiansen thanked everyone for coming to the meeting at the alternative venue which was needed so there would be enough space to accommodate people for the two Public Hearings that were originally scheduled.

Christiansen stated that the Riverwalk II PUD had a preliminary review and discussion at the June 9<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission Meeting. The Public Hearing was then scheduled as required, and a copy of the Public Notice was sent to property owners within 300 feet of the Flanders site and an ad ran in the Farmington Observer. When the Petitioner requested a postponement, a letter was then sent to the property owners advising them of the cancellation.

Bowman indicated that if anyone were present in the audience and wished to speak on the matter, that they would be allowed to as a courtesy to them.

George Wright, 21492 Birchwood, stated he had found out about the cancellation earlier that day. He indicated he lives in Farmington Oaks, just north of where the site is. He said he called City Hall and talked to Kevin at length who provided a great amount of information which he was grateful for. He cautioned the Commission that when Windmill comes back with changes, that they should ensure the original plan for the 1.62 acre playground space will be honored and if they have to reconfigure the street or housing plan that they would try to avert placing houses where there's moving water.

MOTION by Gronbach, seconded by Crutcher, to grant request of Petitioner to postpone the Public Hearing for the Riverwalk II PUD.  
Motion carried, all ayes

**PUBLIC HEARING: PUD PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT PRELIMINARY PLAN AND PUD AGREEMENT – BALFOUR SENIOR LIVING**

Chairperson Bowman introduced this agenda item and indicated it had been reviewed and approved at a prior meeting. The Public Hearing was then scheduled for this evening and Notice sent to property owners within 300 feet. She turned the agenda item over to staff.

Christiansen stated that there was a pre-application conference on the proposed PUD for the Old 47<sup>th</sup> District Courthouse Property held on June 9<sup>th</sup> and the Public Hearing was then scheduled for this evening. Notice was given to property owners within 300 feet of the site. He indicated Balfour Senior Living of Louisville, Colorado had submitted a preliminary PUD plan for the redevelopment of this site and the preliminary plan includes a conceptual plan of the existing conditions, survey of the site, preliminary site plan, landscaping/planting plan, proposed floor plans, proposed building elevations and an aerial photo was also included of the site.

New material for the meeting included a PUD site plan review letter from LSL Planning, a PUD site plan review letter from city engineer consultant OHM, and a draft PUD agreement prepared by City Attorney.

Bowman welcomed consultant Brad Strader from LSL Planning to the podium.

Brad Strader from LSL Consulting, gave a history of his tenure with the City as its planning consultant. He detailed what a Planned Unit Development is and how it came into effect back in the '70s, allowing flexibility in redeveloping properties in return for a benefit back for the City. He further explained that he was asked to review the Petitioner's submittal for consistency with the City's PUD Ordinance.

According to his report, the Petitioner meets at least three criteria. One, they are providing a transitional use between the single family residential to the west of the site and the school property and a good transitional use with the topography to the south, the school property to the south, going towards a more institutional use to the east. He stated under the City's Master Plan a redevelopment of this site was contemplated.

High quality architecture is another criteria that was met, being greater than what is usually seen or required by ordinance.

The landscape plan is the third criteria, which shows much more extensive landscaping than typically seen in a development in Farmington.

He indicated that generally the standards of the ordinance of the site were met for setbacks and height, etc., but a few exceptions need to be looked at and discussed with the Applicants. One is the use, right now the underlying zoning being single family residential although it has not been used for single family residential in the past, it was an institutional use so it really wasn't zoned for what the actual use was. This would be a transitional use to have a combination of assisted care and nursing care housing. The Master Plan for the City indicates there is a need for new housing types in the City that can allow a resident of all ages to live in Farmington.

Strader went on to indicate when there is a Planned Unit Development there is a site plan but also a Planned Unit Development Agreement, which is a written agreement between the City and the Applicant that outlines where there's a modification, the reasons for same and it gives additional ability to the City to enforce the plan as proposed.

The second item mentioned was the amount of parking. He stated it's very difficult to determine how much parking is needed for senior housing. The ordinance was written for old style senior housing and the Applicant is proposing a lot less parking than what the ordinance will typically require. Senior housing parking is dependent on the nature of the senior housing use. He indicated the numbers shown are probably adequate but has some questions to raise with the Applicant such as how the 52 parking spaces was derived and how they see it being managed when the facility opens, how many of the spaces are for employees and how many employees will they have during the turnover of employees between shifts. He asked for further explanation for parking during high demand times such as Mother's Day and Holidays.

He went on to state the landscaping plans were very well done with a lot of details and their concern being on the western property line where there usually is a 20 foot wide buffer with approximately 20 trees, with the Applicant's proposal showing a 10 foot buffer with four trees. He suggested widening the setback out from 10 feet to 15 or 20 feet or put in a wall or other landscaping that will supply a compatible buffer for residential to the west.

He indicated that the OHM engineers also did a report and most of the comments included in that are reminders of what is to be included in the final site plan regarding engineering, storm water and so forth. They also felt that some of the landscaping proposed is in conflict with the utilities. The only difference of opinion is that the OHM report indicated where there are pedestrian crossings in the drives, that they should be identified with a crosswalk or change in pavement type. Strader did not endorse change of pavement due to occupants in wheelchairs or with walkers and canes, and suggested just putting in identifiable crosswalk markings. OHM also wanted clarification of the two sidewalk stubs that go off the property and what they're connected to.

Bowman thanked Strader and asked Commissioners for questions for LSL. Hearing none, she asked the Proponent to come forward.

Victor Saroki, architect for the proposed development, came forward. He introduced Michael Chambrain, CEO of Balfour Senior Housing from Colorado, and also Michael O'Doule, landscape architect and Pat Williams, Civil Engineer with Nowack and Fraus.

He stated the proposal is very similar to what was shown at the June 9<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission Meeting. He provided a brief background on Balfour and their expertise in the senior housing field, citing their facilities as being "upper end" in terms of services, esthetics and the like.

He went into the approach used to design housing to best utilize the site, fit the components of assisted living and memory care and all common areas appropriately on the site. He stated the sequence of approach and design is important.

The details of the project were then gone over with the drawings on a Power Point presentation. He stated there are 50 parking spaces, two barrier-free and a parking area in front for visitors, and parking for employees and visitor parking in the back. He addressed the question of parking by stating that there was sufficient parking for every day usage by employees and visitors and that during the high usage times, valet parking could be provided as a convenience.

When addressing the question of having a wall or continuous landscape, he stated it would be more appropriate to have a continuous arborvitae hedge, 6 feet tall, planted very tightly to provide a larger canopy.

Bowman asked for comments from the Commissioners.

Babcock stated she was concerned with parking. There are only two barrier-free spaces which is deficient by ADA guidelines for senior assisted living facilities and indicated there should be more.

Saroki addressed the question by stating they tried to place the handicapped parking spaces as close to the front as possible and further discussion was held.

Chiara inquired about the lower southwest portion of the property and Saroki stated that is the area where swail is rendering it impossible to build into it or park into it.

Michael O'Doule, landscape architect, came to the podium. He stated he was very excited to be involved with this very high end project with high end architecture and landscaping and they worked very hard to develop it. He went over the details of the landscaping proposed for the project.

Bowman opened the floor for questions from the Commissioners and consultants.

Strader stated parking can be addressed in PUD agreement which can include a landscape agreement stating Applicant is responsible to replace a tree if one dies.

Bowman addressed the comment in the OHM report regarding trees interfering with the utility lines and waterway and O'Doule responded they would not plant trees on top of them.

Crutcher questioned Petitioner on the number of parking spaces and how they would handle the overflow and Saroki stated they felt that 50 spaces was adequate for their daily needs but perhaps they could enter into a shared parking agreement with neighboring properties during the high usage times.

Christiansen asked the Petitioner if there would be shuttle service provided to its residents to go into the community and Chambrain responded in the affirmative and further discussion was held.

Majoros questioned the landscape abutting the residential properties to the west and its proximity to the existing backyards. He also inquired about the possibility of moving the two story portion of the facility to the nonresidential side.

Chiara questioned the accessibility of delivery trucks to the facility as well as snow removal.

MOTION by Gronbach, seconded by Crutcher, to move to open Public Hearing.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

Jared Smith, 24171 Elizabeth Court, spoke about make-up of surrounding homes being 50 percent brick and asked Petitioner to consider a brick façade. He also stated that on the west side 10 feet does not seem sufficient and the installation of asphalt drives will create water problems for residents on the west side and asked Petitioner to consider concrete solution with curbs and eliminating the west side drive entirely and look at possibility of secondary southeast entrance and increase size of green transition space to the west. He also spoke on burying the utilities on north side on Ten Mile. He asked Petitioner to consider Aspens on the north and west side of the property to help with mosquito control. He cautioned that the wall of arborvitaes would deny residents on the west side use of their backyards. He suggested placing a berm on the west side with Aspens on top of the berm to create a more natural barrier.

Bud Holzknacht, 24172 Elizabeth Court, whose home backs up to the property, spoke on the greenery along the property line as well as truck traffic coming in along west road. He asked for consideration to be given to the four homes existing on the west side and their view. He also expressed concern with sewage problems. He asked that residents be updated on the project as it goes on.

Jim Dunfee, 24144 Elizabeth Court, spoke about utility lines and accessibility of same.

Janice Hall, 24157 Elizabeth Court, questioned the Petitioner about capacity of facility both with residents and employees. She also inquired about the ADA parking compliance with handicapped accessible vans being larger.

Flo Holzknacht, 24172 Elizabeth Court, stated she lives in the second house and all the homes have bedrooms in back and feels the accessory road is totally unnecessary and would like the Petitioners to somehow widen the other road and skip the road on the west side.

Mike Decenso, 24180 St. Mary Court, questioned the ability of residents walking in the neighborhood due to the hilly nature of the area. He also questioned if residents would be cooking in their rooms and with the amount of laundry being done in the facility, if it would create an odor issue in the neighborhood. He also asked for clarification on the lighting that will be on the building and Saroki indicated that the lighting will have no spill off, they will be dark fixtures that all shine down with cut off shields. A photometric study will be submitted to the Planning Commission for the site.

Decenso also commented on the two nearby churches and parking during holidays and indicated that his street is used as overflow.

Laura Myers, 33601 Shiawasse, questioned the number of staff to parking space ratio for a 24 hour business and if it would be ample enough during shift changes and for visitor parking.

Bowman asked the Petitioner if based on his experience in the senior housing field if he felt the number of parking spaces for running the facility is appropriate and he responded in the affirmative.

MOTION by Babcock, seconded by Crutcher, to close the Public Hearing.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

(Public Hearing closed at 8:48 p.m.)

Chiara questioned staff on how the project will effect taxes in the City and Christiansen responded that although that is not necessarily in the purview of the Planning Commission, but that the site is owned by the City and the property has been closed for eleven years and fell under Institutional use which is a nontax generating use, and that the redevelopment of the site will put the property back on the tax rolls and further discussion was held.

MOTION by Gronbach, seconded by Chiara, to move that the Planning Commission recommend that the PUD be moved forward for review by the City Council with the understanding that the issues raised this evening will be worked on and upon Council approval will be returned to the Planning Commission for full site plan approval.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

Christiansen thanked the residents for their input at the meeting.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT**

(None heard)

#### **STAFF COMMENTS**

(None heard)

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Secretary