

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

Monday, January 14, 2008

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

ROLL CALL

Present: Christiansen, Gronbach, Kuiken, Scott, Sutton.

Absent: Buck, Ingalls and Pogue.

A quorum of the Commission was present.

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: Building Inspector Koncsol, City Manager Pastue.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION by Sutton, seconded by Christiansen, to approve the agenda. Motion carried, all ayes.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA:

MOTION Sutton, seconded by Scott, to approve the following items on the consent agenda:

- A. Approve Regular Meeting Minutes of October 8, 2007

Commissioner Sutton noted on Page 2, paragraph 4, it should read "administrative", not "administrator."

MOTION by Sutton seconded by Scott, to approve the regular meeting minutes of October 8, 2007 as amended. Motion carried, all ayes.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT - KITCHEN MASTER, 33401 GRAND RIVER

Proponent absent.

Chairperson Gronbach noted the Commission just received the front elevation that evening and therefore did not have time to review it. He further indicated the proponent evidently has not received the comments from LSL indicating items that need to be addressed to complete application and plans.

Commissioner Kuiken asked if the DDA Design Committee had reviewed the plan.

City Manager Pastue and Commissioner Gronbach agreed that a DDA review had taken place two years ago and a recommendation was given to work with Oakland County's Main Street Program. He then noted that current plans were produced by Oakland County.

Chairperson Gronbach introduced Robert Nesbitt from LSL.

Mr. Nesbitt apologized for not having the front façade information included in the packet prior to the meeting. He then spoke to the primary changes proposed for the rear second story portion of the building. He noted adjacent businesses, Kitchen Master and Sliders, were planning to make changes as well. He felt that clarification was needed regarding the proposed signage and fascia changes. He noted the business known as Beyond plans to maintain a prominence on Grand River extending all the way through the building.

Mr. Nesbitt stated how the roof line would retain the recommended flat line with a one-foot parapet. He stated that new awnings would be added to the second story in the building's front and rear and felt the kind of material mandated by Ordinance needed to be clarified on the plans. He then asked it be noted that the 8-foot clearance for pedestrians be maintained. He continued with a review of exterior finish materials to be used on the building. He requested that the proposed change from the Ordinance requiring 75% brick/or stone material in the front to cedar plank/or concrete siding in the back be reviewed by the DDA Design Committee for comment and recommendations back to the Commission. He lastly requested calculations meeting Ordinance mandates also be noted on the drawing regarding the windows and doors proposed for ground and second floor levels.

Commissioner Gronbach thanked Mr. Nesbitt and asked for questions or comments from the Planning Commission members.

Commissioner Kuiken asked if the DDA Design Committee would give the Planning Commission their recommendation explaining how the exterior siding material will fit in with the character of the Central Business District. Mr. Nesbitt answered yes.

Commissioner Christiansen asked for clarification regarding the proposal's age, noting it may have been drafted earlier due to the business names referenced. He then asked for clarification regarding the Beyond portion of the plan.

Mr. Nesbitt agreed that clarification was needed and the drawings may be dated. He noted the drawings suggest that the adjacent businesses are party to this application and if they aren't included in the plan they should be eliminated from the drawing in order to clear up any confusion.

City Manager Pastue stated he understood the proposal is limited to the building structure housing the Beyond business.

Commissioner Scott noted the calculations for the ground floor and upper story window areas required in item No. 5 of the LSL Report does not seem necessary.

Commissioner Sutton agreed and questioned the Planning Commission's authority if the required 70% of the ground floor consist of windows is not met since it is an existing building.

Commissioner Scott expressed concern regarding the narrowness of the Zoning Ordinance concerning use of materials.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Sutton, Mr. Nesbitt stated the requirement in the Code that 75% of a new façade consist of brick or stone was included to ensure use of quality materials and the buildings have a substantial appearance.

Commissioner Sutton advised that this section of the code should be given consideration when reviewing the Master Plan and asked what gives the DDA or the Planning Commission the authority to allow changes that do not meet Zoning Code requirements.

Mr. Nesbitt stated that the Ordinance provides that the Design Committee can approve materials that are different than what the Ordinance allows.

Commissioner Sutton reconfirmed that it is unnecessary for the proponent to provide calculations for window to brick. She stated everything else in the proposal seemed to be appropriate.

Chairperson Gronbach, noted the absence of the proponent, requested the Commission table an approval until City Administration can share LSL's report with the proponent, clarifying the additional information needed, and then forwarding the proposal to the DDA Design Committee for review and recommendation.

MOTION by Christiansen, seconded by Sutton, to table a request for façade improvement at 33401 Grand River until the actions stated by Chairperson Gronbach have been taken. Motion carried, all ayes.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE OUTDOOR DISPLAY, HARVEST FRESH MARKET, 22128 FARMINGTON ROAD

Present: Vincent Ayar, 22128 Farmington Road

Mr. Ayar, representing Harvest Fresh Market, requested approval to display seasonal items outdoors for sale. He provided a review of his request and asked for feedback from the Commission regarding any restrictions.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Sutton, Mr. Ayar stated Harvest Fresh would like to set up displays for every season.

City Manager Pastue confirmed it is not necessary to list items for display. He expressed his concern that the outdoor entryway meets ADA standards. He advised there should be a 36 inch clearance for all walkways.

Commissioner Sutton advised outdoor displays are limited to an eight month period, but not necessarily consecutively. Mr. Ayar stated he would discuss the time period with the store owners and report back to the Commission.

City Manager Pastue and Commissioners discussed the best time to display outdoor items. After some discussion Mr. Ayar agreed with the Commission that the store could clear outdoor displays for a few months in the summer. He commented that Harvest Fresh Market is looking to do more of a seasonal display.

Commissioner Sutton questioned how much the Commission could really do at this meeting given the vagueries and how much they can leave to Administration approval.

City Manager Pastue recommended that the pallets be skirted at the base and up to code. He noted additional information still needed, including the timing of the display, and asked if the Planning Commission was comfortable allowing the City to resolve these issues with the proponent.

The Planning Commission complimented Harvest Fresh Market on their attractive Halloween and Christmas displays and suggested they continue along the same lines with similar future displays keeping a neat and clean appearance.

Responding to a question from Building Inspector Koncsol, Mr. Ayar stated household products would not be displayed other than firewood or fire logs.

Discussion followed regarding the suitability of firewood for outdoor display.

Mr. Ayar was advised that A-Frame signs are not allowed in the City other than in the Downtown area.

MOTION by Kuiken, seconded by Christiansen, to approve a request from Harvest Fresh Market, 22128 Farmington Road, for outdoor display, contingent on the proponent specifying an eight month display period; ensure 36 inch sidewalk clearance; and obtaining Administration approval regarding materials and appropriateness of the displays. Motion carried, all ayes.

City Manager Pastue confirmed Harvest Fresh's display plan would be up for a review by Administration in one year.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR REDEVELOPMENT READY COMMUNITIES (RRC) PROGRAM

City Manager Pastue updated the Commission on the joint meeting between the Farmington City Council, Board of Zoning Appeals and Historical Commission, stating Melanie Piana presented the Michigan Suburban Alliance's Community Redevelopment Program. He stated Council adopted the RRC Threshold Resolution, but is looking simultaneously for resolutions from the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals. He then noted how these resolutions would concur with the program and work with the Michigan Suburban Alliance in addressing the goals identified at a meeting December.

Motion by Christiansen, seconded by Scott, to approve the Resolution of Support for the Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC) Program as presented. Motion carried, all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

COMMISSION COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

City Manager Pastue shared information regarding Commissioner Ingalls absence due to illness.

Commissioner Christiansen asked City Manager Pastue when he anticipated the Commission would review the Master Plan. He responded LSL would be back next month regarding the Master Plan.

Discussion followed regarding future agenda items.

Commissioner Christiansen asked if the plans for the development by the courthouse were on hold. Pastue responded the project has been withdrawn.

Responding to a question from Chairperson Gronbach, Pastue stated Evangelical Homes has expressed interest in the property.

Responding to a question, Pastue stated he has not heard anything further from Walgreens regarding their plans for a site at Drakeshire Plaza.

Chairperson Gronbach asked Pastue if Farmington Hills Planning Commission was interested in a joint meeting. He answered yes, that the Farmington Hills Planning Commission's Chairperson was very interested in a joint meeting.

Pastue commented he will make contact with Steve Brock and continue to work toward planning a joint meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Planning Commission concurred to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary