

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS
23600 Liberty Street
Farmington, Michigan
December 12, 2022

Chairperson Majoros called the meeting to order in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan, at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, December 12, 2022.

ROLL CALL

Present: Crutcher, Majoros, Mantey, Perrot, Waun, Westendorf
Absent: Kmetzo
A quorum of the Commission was present.

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: Director Kevin Christiansen; Recording Secretary Bonnie Murphy, Brian Belesky, Audiovisual Specialist.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Crutcher, seconded by Perrot, to approve the agenda.
Motion carried, all ayes.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

A. November 14, 2022 Minutes

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

PROPOSED BUILDING FAÇADE MODIFICATION – MERLE NORMAN, 23348 FARMINGTON ROAD

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

Director Christiansen stated this item is a review of a proposed building façade modification to the existing Merle Norman, 23348 Farmington Road. The proposed modification consists of a new awning for the building unit that they are located in. At their 12-8-22 meeting the DDA Design Committee reviewed the proposed façade modifications and awning provided comments to the Planning Commission and a copy of their minutes are attached in your packets.

The building is located in the Central Business District where nonresidential and mixed use are allowed with Planning Commission approval and subject to conditions. He stated that Marygrove Awning has submitted plans for the project and the Applicant is at meeting Puts map on screen

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The minutes of the DDA Design Committee were put on the screen with their comments along with a copy of Section 35-40 of the Zoning Ordinance regarding awnings and canopies. Signs are permitted but subject to Chapter 25, but awnings are considered structures and require Planning Commission review and approval. Christiansen went over contents of packet information on the screen and turned it back to Chairperson Majoros.

Chairperson Majoros invited the Applicant to the podium.

Karen Gera, 23448 Farmington Road, came to the podium. She stated that it's her understanding the awning is considered a sign because it's under an overhang and is asking if they don't use the logo that it still be approved as she is trying to improve her storefront which has been present at this location since 1970 and feels that is the best way for her to contribute to the Streetscape in presenting her store. She stated she is meeting specs with her proposed changes.

Director Christiansen stated if the awning does have a logo, it is considered signage and a condition should be added that the signage does meet the ordinance requirements.

Majoros asked if the application with logo treatment is consistent with the sign requirements according to the ordinance and Christiansen replied it is within the sign regulations.

Commissioner Westendorf asked if there would be lighting and the Applicant replied there would be lighting from inside the store from the floor, spotlights.

Majoros asked if there would be a variance required and Christiansen replied that the measurements are within the guidelines and no variance would be required. He then asked about the cloth material as opposed to vinyl of the awning and is there any recommendation and Christiansen replied that both materials are permissible as long as they are Code compliant.

The Applicant stated that cloth will maintain its dark color of the awning and Christiansen cited some examples of cloth awnings in the downtown.

Majoros asked if the address would still be visible after the installation of the awning and Christiansen replied they will work with the Applicant to ensure that as all addresses must be visible in accordance with Public Safety requirements.

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MOTION by Waun, supported by Perrot, to move to approve the building façade modifications for Merle Norman, 23348 Farmington Road, with the condition that the awning as shown on submitted plans complies with all ordinance requirements including clearance and any sign on awning and as far as existing wall sign meets Chapter 25 of the Zoning Ordinance and that the existing address located on the property be adjusted as necessary to remain visible.

A roll call vote was taken on the foregoing motion with the following result:

AYES: Crutcher, Majoros, Mantey, Perrot, Waun

NAYS: Westendorf

Motion carried, 5-1 (Westendorf)

REQUEST TO SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARING AND SPECIAL LAND USE SITE PLAN REVIEW – SHELL GAS STATION, 37375 GRAND RIVER

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

Director Christiansen stated the owner of the existing Shell Gas Station, 37375 Grand River Avenue, Freedom Road Investment, LLC, is proposing changes and improvements and upgrades at the site. The project is to remove all existing structures on the site and construct a new gas station facility, a new fuel canopy with six fuel islands and a 4,766-masonry service station building, new dumpster enclosure and replacement of site retaining wall on the east and south side of the building and requires the review and approval of the Planning Commission. They are zoned C-3 and gas stations require a Special Land Use permit with site plan review as well as a public hearing to be held. Additional information included for the Planning Commission is a Special Land Use site plan review letter from OHM dated December 9, 2022 as well as an engineering review letter dated December 9, 2022 from OHM and Austin Downey from OHM is present at tonight's meeting. He stated Mr. Jack Knowles, Applicant, is present this evening to present the Special Land Use Application and to request the required Public Hearing. He then went over the materials on the screen for the Commission with an historical overview of the property and stated there is a narrative attached with the materials and turned it back to Chairperson Majoros.

Chairperson Majoros invited the Applicant to the podium.

Jack Knowles, Grand Convenience, Inc., 3420 Woodlea Drive, Ann Arbor, 48103. He stated Kevin has been terrific to work with and thanked the Commissioners for their participation. He stated he knows everyone knows this site, and that they will be happy when we're done with these improvements and that he appreciates the history that Christiansen provided as his history with the property only dates back to three months ago when he got involved. He said Grand Convenience purchased the property in 2015. He stated the plan is to take out everything that is there and start over fresh with a nicer,

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much more attractive and functional facility. One of the most noticeable things about this site are the different grade levels between this site and the adjacent office building, this site sitting 6 to 7 feet higher than the adjacent building. The retaining wall that surrounds the site on the southeast side will be replaced, it is failing, and parking is restricted in the adjacent lot due to the condition of the retaining wall, so that will be replaced by a Geotech firm. He said they are aware that gas stations in the C-3 District are considered Special Land Use and feel that they meet all the criteria for the requirements set forth. He said all oil and gas operations are regulated by the State and there are no plans to remove the tanks as they are meeting all of the testing requirements done on a regular basis by the State. He said there is a narrative attached for the site plan itself that provides information.

Chairperson Majoros opened the floor for questions from the Commissioners

Commissioner Crutcher asked if there would be EV chargers at the site and Knowles replied no, the owners don't feel the need is warranted yet.

Majoros asked if there was a fast-food franchise associated with the C-store and Knowles replied it is take out only convenience food that is found in the C-store. Majoros then asked if extra islands will be added and Knowles replied yes, two.

Crutcher then asked if the turn radius will be affected with the two additional islands and Knowles replied it works, dimensionally, but that was one issue brought up on OHM review to meet MDOT access standards for the fuel truck to come on site and stated that will have to be recalculated and further discussion was held.

Knowles then stated with the elimination of the car wash from the site, they're actually reducing conflict points on the property.

Commissioner Perrot stated in terms of traffic flow and the location of the underground tanks, there is limitation on the site as far as alternatives, and Knowles replied yes.]

Knowles then asked the Commission if they were so inclined, he would like the Public Hearing scheduled for the February meeting as he has a scheduling conflict in January.

Chairperson Majoros opened the floor for a motion from the Commission.

MOTION by Westendorf, supported by Crutcher, to move to schedule the Public Hearing for the Special Land Use and Site Plan review for the Shell Gas Station, 37375 Grand River Avenue, for the February 13, 2023 Planning Commission Meeting.

Motion carried, all ayes.

DISCUSSION OF 2024/2029 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

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

Director Christiansen stated this is the annual calendar of the Capital Improvement Program, which is part of the City's Master Plan implementation tool, six-year project, to include nonrecurring purchases greater than \$10,000, identifying short and long terms projects and identify financial resources for same. The action tonight is to appoint a Planning Commission member to the Steering Committee as their representative, with meetings commencing shortly.

Chairperson Majoros stated he'd be happy to do it again, it's an interesting process.

MOTION by Perrot, supported by Crutcher, to retain Chairperson Steve Majoros as the Planning Commission representative for the 2024/2029 Capital Improvement Program Steering Committee.

Motion carried, all ayes.

2023 SCHEDULE OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

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

Director Christiansen presented the 2023 schedule of Planning Commission meetings.

MOTION by Waun, supported by Perrot, to adopt the 2023 schedule of Planning Commission meetings as presented.

Motion carried, all ayes.

UPDATE – CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Director Christiansen gave an update on the continuing development projects in the City.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT

Director Christiansen expressed his appreciation to the Planning Commission for their hard work during this past year, 2022, and is looking forward to 2023. He then wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

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Chairperson Majoros thanked Christiansen for being a good ambassador for the City.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Perrot, supported by Crutcher, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary