

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS
Farmington Library, Liberty Street
Farmington, Michigan
August 11, 2014

Chairperson Bowman called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Farmington City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan.

ROLL CALL

Present: Bowman, Buyers, Chiara, Crutcher, Gronbach

Absent: Babcock, Majoros

A quorum of the Commission was present.

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: Director Christiansen, Building Inspector Koncsol, Sherrin Hood, LSL Planning

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Motion carried, all ayes.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

a. Minutes of Regular Meeting – July 14, 2014

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

Motion carried, all ayes.

SITE PLAN REVIEW – TOTAL SPORTS COMPLEX – 22777 FARMINGTON ROAD

Chairperson Bowman introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Christiansen stated that the Total Sports Complex at 22777 Farmington Road had submitted site plans to expand the parking lot and construct a new entranceway. The property is zoned O-1 Office. The project includes removal of the storage shed in the rear of the site in the northwest corner. The parking lot will be resealed and restriped and new parking spaces will be added on the north and south. A new dumpster is also proposed on the south. An aerial photo was given to the Commissioners with their packets.

Christiansen went over the history of the property stating that it was first developed in 1973 and was the former Farmington Racquet and Tennis Club. In April of 2013 the property went up for auction and Total Sports Complex became the new owner. They repurposed the interior of the building with new sports turf and some interior modifications and opened up as a change of use.

He cited the difficulties with time period construction and stated that parking is not currently meeting demands and needs of the Complex. As an interim step, they formed an agreement with the adjacent swim club to allow a connection that exists between the swim club and Total Sports Complex for overflow parking which supports another 45 spaces but it is still not adequate. The applicant has submitted plans for expansion of parking with a new entryway and dumpster. A survey was attached to the staff report as well as a copy of the old site plan from 1973.

Christiansen then provided the Commissioners with additional information, a copy of the rendering and a big print version. He then stated he had had additional conversation with the applicant last Friday, who then provided an alternative plan for a north parking area adjacent to the LLC. He detailed the new plan with the Commissioners.

The existing parking lot will remain, the barrier free spaces adjusted but still meet Code requirement. There will be parking in the southwest corner, and the drainage and catch basins will not be changed. There will be two areas of added parking. The first area is at the southwest corner. All existing parking will be resealed and restriped. On the north side of the building where the shed is on the northwest corner, it will be removed and the access drive and parking will all be brand new. The existing vegetation will remain but for a small portion that will be removed. The modification that is being offered with the alternative plan is the north turnaround and that there will not be a connection with the LLC Credit Union.

Chairperson Bowman invited the Petitioner to come forward.

Eric Shrewsbury, introduced himself as manager of Total Sports Complex. He stated that Christiansen had basically covered everything. He indicated that parking has become a problem with patrons utilizing residential areas for same and that they are trying to find a way to keep it all on premise. He stated they have a potential 10 year contract with the swim club, 5 year guaranteed, 5 year renewed, to utilize the connection. He also said it will be a shared dumpster with the swim club

Chiara inquired about the 357 number for parking requirements on the drawings and Christiansen responded that those were the ones based on 1973 standards. He also expounded on the reciprocal parking arrangement with the swim club as they are busiest in the summer months and the Complex is at peak use in the fall and winter months so the relationship works well. Christiansen stated there is approximately 185 spaces now and perhaps having an agreement with LLC in the future would give them another 74 spaces.

Crutcher inquired if there is any relationship with the Hunt Club currently and the applicant stated that Tony, the general manager, had been in contact with them and perhaps something in the future may happen and further discussion was held.

Gronbach asked the Petitioner if he felt the additional parking would be adequate or if he entertained the thought of carrying it further east along the north side and add more parking spaces.

The Petitioner responded the goal now is to add 30 to 35 spots and that would accommodate what they have and if growth continues, he may be back before the Commission when that time comes.

Gronbach inquired of Administration if the new dumpster should be enclosed and up to current code and Christiansen responded yes, the Commission could certainly put that condition on the Petitioner.

Buyers asked for clarification of the two plans presented to the Commission, which was the Petitioner hoping to get approved and the Petitioner responded that he would like to go forward with the alternative plan presented as the one with the LLC could not be achieved in the timeline they would like it to happen because of the process of going before their Board, etc, etc.

Buyers inquired if the southwest connection between the swim club is going to be asphalted and the Petitioner responded in the affirmative.

Buyers asked if the new entrance on the north would be utilized by customers and staff and the Petitioner responded yes.

Buyers inquired if there were any north or south elevations showing the new proposed barrier free and Christiansen responded that there is no new entrance on the south and the entrance on the north is shown on the rendering which shows an existing double door which will have an awning and a hard surface put down. He stated there are no changes to the south side. The four areas of change are resurfacing and striping of the existing lot, the two new parking areas on the north and south, the new dumpster on the south, and the canopy and hard surface area to the new doors that will be put in place.

Buyers asked if there were any changes being made to the barrier free entrance on the south and Christiansen responded no changes to the existing but they will make sure it is upgraded.

Christiansen explained since the change of use is permitted, there is no requirement to upgrade unless a code issue arises, but they are instead incrementally addressing upgrades to meet their current operational needs. He went over some of the interior modifications that may be taking place in the future.

Buyers then asked about the tree line that may be removed and its effect on the residents of Pinewood Condominiums, and Christiansen indicated that that area has a lot of undergrowth, underbrush and there is very little being taken out. There are no plans to add anything additional at the present time.

Hood stated there is not really a lot of trees there, but heavy vegetation.

The Petitioner stated he was very cognizant of the vegetation and brush line and the condos and further discussion was held.

MOTION by Crutcher, supported by Chiara, to approve the alternative proposed site plan for the Total Sports Complex with the condition that the proposed dumpster be enclosed to meet the current Zoning Ordinance.

Motion carried, all ayes.

Chairperson Bowman thanked the Petitioner for his participation.

ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT – GRAND RIVER CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT

Chairperson Bowman introduced this agenda item and indicated the Commission's job this evening would be go over the zoning ordinance text amendment and schedule a public hearing. She then turned it over to staff.

Christiansen stated the Commissioners were given the proposed text amendment for the Grand River Corridor prepared by LSL Planning and reviewed and recommended to the Planning Commission by the Grand River Corridor Improvement Authority. He indicated that the GRCIA in both Farmington and Farmington Hills are interested in creating a development plan and then a TIF plan and establishing a tax increment financing district authority within the Grand River Corridor district in both communities so a base level can be established and revenue generated. The development plan was created by LSL and that draft along with a draft TIF plan has been moved forward to Oakland County, who are currently reviewing it. He stated the next move is to put in place an implementation tool to implement the Vision Plan, that tool being a change to the Zoning Ordinance standards throughout the Grand River Corridor districts. He then defined the area of the Grand River Corridor which was shown in a map attached to the staff report given to the Commission which includes a mix of zoning districts such as C-2, C-3, Office, Parking. He indicated the goal of the Grand River Improvement Authority is to create a comprehensive implementation that would be its own district with its own standards that could be laid over the underlying zoning.

Christiansen then stated the purpose at tonight's meeting is to go over the draft of the Grand River Corridor Overlay District prepared by LSL, working together with the GRCIA over the past several months.

Chairperson Bowman thanked Christiansen and turned the agenda item over to Sherrin Hood.

Hood provided a handout to the Commission which is Draft II. She went over the history of the Grand River Corridor Plan and how it has evolved since 2009. She

stated it included a series of strategies to try to improve or encourage redevelopment along the Corridor. She went over the Future Land Use Map and its various components. She stated the Orchard Lake Focus Area is consistent with what is shown in the Master Plan. She briefly went over the CIA/TIF Plan Summary and Action Plan and addressed other sources of funding as well.

She went on to describe the New Form-Based Code, which is really a more flexible code for Grand River, simplified and more understandable, similar to the Central Business District Code. The new code structure will have a regulating plan and she described what you would see in the various categories.

She indicated they are proposing this as an overlay district and not intending to rezone the properties along the Corridor but will apply over the top of the existing zoning districts.

She briefly described some of the standards and requirements of the Corridor, the components of the streetscaping, building placement, perhaps a variation in the setbacks along Grand River, building design and parking and driveways.

She stated one of the next steps would be to refine and adopt the Code, approve concept plans, market the incentives and opportunities, and continue ongoing communication with road agencies, Farmington Hills and Oakland County.

She indicated that the Corridor Improvement Authority meetings were open to the public and Christiansen stated they are held the second Thursday of the month at 8:00 a.m. at City Hall. He then stated that the City Manager has invited the Planning Commission members to attend the City Council meeting on Monday, August 18th, at Masonic Lodge, and the Grand River Corridor Authority will be there and will talk about the vision plan, developing a TIF plan, the overlay district and then moving forward with the redevelopment of the Corridor.

Christiansen stated the action of the Commission tonight was to have this presentation, ask questions, and then schedule a Public Hearing for the Grand River Corridor Overlay District.

Chairperson Bowman thanked Hood for her presentation and noted the progress made since its inception. She then opened the floor up for comments and/or questions from the Commissioners.

Gronbach commented to Hood that he hoped the Orchard Lake focus area would include The Winery and further discussion was held. He also stated that MDOT should be included early on in any plans as they own the road.

Hood said the transportation study would be looking at those issues to bring to MDOT.

Gronbach suggested to get MDOT in on the committees and Christiansen stated that both Farmington and Farmington Hills met with MDOT and further discussion was held.

MOTION by Buyers, supported by Crutcher, to schedule the Public Hearing for the Corridor Overlay District for the next Planning Commission Meeting on September 8, 2014.

Motion carried, all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Laura Myers, 33601 Shiawassee, asked for clarification on the numbers delineated on the handout that was provided by Hood.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS

(None heard)

STAFF COMMENTS

Christiansen reiterated his request for the Commissioners to attend the Monday, August 18th City Council Meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Masonic Temple.
He also spoke about the improvements being made to Council Chambers, including IT.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary