

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS
City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street
Farmington, Michigan
July 9, 2018

Chairperson Crutcher called the Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan, on Monday, July 9, 2018.

ROLL CALL

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

A quorum of the Commission was present.

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: Director Christiansen, Recording Secretary Murphy

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Chairperson Crutcher stated that anyone who wishes to participate in Audience Communication should fill out a form and hand it to Recording Secretary Murphy who will give it to the Chair to call that person up.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

- A. June 11, 2018 Minutes
- B. June 25, 2018 Minutes

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

REQUEST TO SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARING – SAMURAI STEAKHOUSE RESTAURANT, 32905 GRAND RIVER AVENUE

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

Christiansen stated this item is a request to schedule a Public Hearing with the Planning Commission for a proposed PUD, Planned Unit Development, for the redevelopment of the former Ginger's Café site located at 32905 Grand River Avenue in the Central Business District. Article X, PUD, Planned Unit Development, Section 35-135 through procedure of the Zoning Ordinance requires that a Public Hearing to review the requested PUD and concept plan be scheduled in accordance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act.

The Applicant has submitted a PUD concept plan for the redevelopment of Ginger's Café, again located at 32905 Grand River Avenue, which was reviewed by the Planning Commission at the June 11, 2018 meeting and minutes of that meeting are attached with your staff report.

The Applicant is requesting the Planning Commission this evening to schedule a Public Hearing to be held at the August 13, 2018 meeting to review the conceptual preliminary PUD plan.

MOTION by Majoros, supported by Chiara, to schedule the required Public Hearing for the Samurai Steakhouse Restaurant, 32905 Grand River Avenue, at the August 13, 2018 Planning Commission meeting.

Motion carried, all ayes.

PUBLIC HEARING AND REVISED CONCEPTUAL/PRELIMINARY PUD PLAN REVIEW – AC ACQUISITIONS, LLC, MAXFIELD TRAINING CENTER, 33000 THOMAS STREET

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

Director Christiansen stated this item is a Public Hearing and revised conceptual/preliminary PUD plan review with the Planning Commission on a proposed PUD planning and development plan for the redevelopment of the former Maxfield Training Center.

At the March 13, 2017 Planning Commission meeting the Commission held a preapplication conference, a discussion and review with the Applicant on a proposed PUD Planned Unit Development concept plan for the redevelopment of the former Maxfield Training Center. A copy of the minutes from that meeting are attached with your staff packet.

The Planning Commission scheduled and held the required PUD Public Hearing at the April 10, 2017 meeting as requested. A copy of those minutes from that meeting are also attached with your staff packet.

A second Public Hearing was held at the May 8, 2017 Planning Commission meeting, minutes from that meeting are also included.

The Applicant, AC Acquisitions, LLC, of Farmington Hills, Michigan, has submitted a revised conceptual preliminary PUD plan for the redevelopment of the former Maxfield Training Center site. The revised plan includes a conceptual preliminary site plan,

preliminary proposed floor plans, preliminary proposed building elevations and a preliminary proposed landscape plans. Also attached with your staff report and packet are aerial photos and surveys of the site. The following additional information is also attached: The PUD site plan, planning/conceptual plan review letter from OHM Advisors dated July 3, 2018; a PUD site plan engineering conceptual design review letter from OHM Advisors dated July 3, 2018. The Applicant is in attendance this evening at tonight's meeting to present the conceptual PUD plan to the Commission.

Chairperson Crutcher thanked Christiansen and called the Applicant to the podium.

David Cohen, representing AC Acquisitions, came to the podium. He spoke about the company's background and some recent developments that they have done,

He indicated the Maxfield Training Center site is very interesting to them as it is an urban core which is something that they look for in a lot of their developments, where people want to live, to stay in urban settings where they have walkability and access to retail shopping and food.

He stated the site is rectangular in site and is approximately three acres and what they are proposing are three buildings that comprise a total of 115 units. In an effort to maintain the urban feel of the downtown Farmington, two of the buildings will be very close to the street on Warner and the back building will be at the back end of the site which will allow views overlooking the park and the landscaping on the back side of the site. What they didn't want to have was the feeling of a large asphalt parking lot in an urban area and that is how the plan evolved.

In addition he indicated they have a robust landscape plan that provides a lot of landscape for not only along the front end of the property in addition to a pathway that will be landscaped and lit which allows public access to the park.

The property will consist of 115 units ranging from studios all the way up to two bedrooms, with square footages running from 450 square feet up to 993 square feet. This will offer a lot of different living options for many different types of people, whether there's a roommate situation, couples, married people, single people and also allow the ability to offer a wider range of pricing options that multiple income levels can also live in this property. He stated their goal was to create in an urban area that allows multiple income types and people at different places in their lives which most urban areas have.

The units will include large windows. He pointed out the front, back and side elevation of one of the buildings on the screen, indicating they are four story buildings with surface level parking, ample parking where there is at least one parking spot for every bedroom

within the development. The units will have large windows to allow natural light, gourmet kitchens, high end fixtures, an open, efficient modern floor plan with washers and dryers in every single unit which he things will provide a very nice living environment for people who want to live in downtown Farmington.

He indicated the floor plans are very efficient, there aren't a lot of wasted corridors or walls, they are open floor plans which maximize the living area for the residents' enjoyment.

He stated that that is a good overview of what they're proposing on the site and thanked everyone for their time.

Chairperson Crutcher thanked the Applicant for his presentation.

He then called Matt Parks from OHM Advisors to the podium to discuss the engineering report prepared by his firm.

He stated that this being a conceptual site plan they will be doing a brief overview of what they find and that detail will be better described in the next phase.

He indicated the letter is broken up into site plan comments and some preliminary detailed engineering comments. In general he stated there were no major showstoppers from an engineering standpoint. He indicated they've been through the site before as far as utilities, water, sewer, storm water, road access and the developer did a fairly good job of laying things out, however they did find a couple items pertaining to circulation, trash receptacles and general auto turn templates that need to be attended to.

One of the big things that stood out is that they would like to look to the Applicant to improve on is the proposed connection or lack thereof in the plan for the church parking lot on the west side. Right now the Applicant has just shown the improvements on their property and bifurcating the church parking lot and they felt there needs to be an effort made to look into how to maximize or ways to improve that space, further buffering to the west and just helping the general circulation and he feels there needs to be some coordination that needs to happen with the parking lot on the west side.

Utilities were in generally good shape, the Applicant did a good job in laying out both water, sanitary sewer as well as storm water management, the Applicant shows an extensive detention system on site underground, that storm water is collected, detained and then released at a restricted rate to the City's storm sewer south which will prevent any storm water runoff going to the north, that there are ongoing erosion issues to the north.

Parks stated he did make a recommendation that the Applicant look at looping the water main a little bit different, that there is a potential opportunity to extend the looping a little further and extend it to the existing water main on the east side.

He indicated the renderings did show a pretty good visual, that there are a lot of existing utility poles along Thomas Street in the frontage and he thinks need to be relocated and would be looking for more information on that.

As far as the pedestrian sidewalk, that they are looking for a little bit more defined walkways, that they are hoping as far as the public benefit and part of the community plan in general, a little bit more of an obvious connection to Shiawassee Park, and that it absolutely needs to be ADA compliant and more well defined and more pedestrian friendly.

He stated there are additional comments in their letter that are more detailed but that those are the high points.

Crutcher thanked Parks for his presentation.

Marguerite Novak, planner at OHM Advisors, came to the podium to discuss the site plan aspect. She stated there are some areas that need to be addressed according to the Zoning Ordinance. In terms of zoning, in general with a PUD designation and underlying zoning being Central Business District, the site plan generally meets requirements with the exception of a few minor discrepancies on the landscaping design and the building design as well as accessory structure design.

In terms of plan compliance, the largest point to be made here was compliance to the Downtown Area Plan, the Downtown Master Plan.

The proposed development supports the vision in terms of land use to the site as high density residential, but falls short of meeting the goals to improve the pedestrian orientation environment of the site.

The proposed layout includes the existing pedestrian connection already to Shiawassee Park but does not include accessibility enhancement to Shiawassee Park nor the connection to Riley Park that was outlined in the Downtown Area Plan and the Downtown Master Plan.

She stated that they would defer to the Planning Commission on the determination of all of the recognized benefit of the development and the comments in the letter are intended to provide direction to the Planning Commission.

Chairperson Crutcher thanked Novak and opened the floor to questions from the Planning Commission.

Majoros asked before they open the Public Hearing he would like clarification from Director Christiansen as to whether the Planning Commission would be moving something forward to Council tonight or what is the action required from the Planning Commission.

Director Christiansen replied the item before the Commission this evening is a two-part item, it is the presentation/consideration of a revised updated conceptual updated PUD plan submitted by the Applicant for consideration by the Planning Commission, that plan having been reviewed by City consultants, OHM Advisors, and they provide their engineering and planning review which is open for questions. The second part of the purpose of the item this evening is the required Public Hearing. The PUD Ordinance requires the third step in the PUD process in the City of Farmington, a Public Hearing be held. He stated a Public Hearing was held back in April 2017 requested by the Applicant. A second Public Hearing was held in May as well, the Applicant was not able to make that May meeting but it was held anyways and the Applicant agreed to have another Public Hearing and due to the substantive changes with respect to the revised, updated, conceptual PUD plans submitted by the Petitioner, another Public Hearing is required. So the second portion of this meeting is to hold that Public Hearing, to take public comment and at the end of that public comment there is no further action required this evening by the Commission. Those comments will be taken by the Commission, by the City, by the developer and continue then to move forward in the process but no action is required on the part of the Planning Commission this evening. It would at the end most likely a postponement of any further action to allow those comments to be considered and for re-engagement either at the next available meeting or at a date unspecified at this time.

Majoros stated that if there are enough substantive changes, is this going to require Public Hearings until eternity or when is it deemed that this needs to move forward.

Director Christiansen replied that there is an application submitted by the Petitioner to the City as required and the Commission considering that application can take action on that application when they feel that they want to because they deem it necessary. He stated this is the third step and this is the conceptual plan and Public Hearing and that the Commission can take action on the plan before you if you so choose and that the Planning

Commission's action on the preliminary plan would move forward to the City Council for their consideration and also their consideration of the draft PUD agreement. He stated again the purpose this evening is for Public Hearing as the second part and probably the primary and if the Planning Commission chooses to take action that is up to them, but there is no request for action this evening, just the Public Hearing.

Chairperson Crutcher then opened the floor for further questions from the Commissioners.

Perrot asked the Applicant if it was their intention to develop this site and then sell it or to develop it and then manage it.

Cohen responded that their primary goal would be to develop the property and then manage it and hold it for a long period of time, develop the property and place what they would call a permanent or long term debt on it at a level that could be serviced by the property's income and then hold it for, typically they hold properties for over a decade, would be their track record.

Majoros then asked if public comment would be taken first and then the Commission be allowed to question staff and develop and OHM.

Director Christiansen stated it might be more prudent for the Commission to ask questions right now with the developer and the consultants prior to the Public Hearing but that is totally up to the Commission.

Chairperson Crutcher stated he would like to open the floor for questions from the Commission first and then proceed with the Public Hearing.

Majoros asked the Petitioner to come to the podium and stated there is a lot of dialogue from the public about homes, condo versus apartment, and being the developer there is obviously a lot of economics behind what is being proposed and asked the Petitioner to give a succinct answer to the Commission and the public about how the economics work of apartment versus condominium and what you see in the market, why these aren't owned versus rented.

Cohen stated to address it from a highest and best use standpoint which is how they typically approach a development as far as what's the best thing we can put here, what's the highest and best use, the two products looked at were multi-family rental and condominiums for sale, and that was a discussion that was held with their advisors. After doing a lot of market research, they did feel either one would be successful at that location

but felt that the overall need and ability for long term success or lack of short term failure would be with a multi-family rental development.

Majoros asked if the Petitioner had any sense what his company is investing from today to when this project is done, what is the costs that will be invested in this project.

Cohen responded that the total cost would be between 14 and 15 million dollars.

Majoros then stated that from the May 2017 meeting until today, that the architectural style of the development has changed from a contemporary look to a more traditional, and what is the rationale for that change.

Cohen replied first of all that the scope of the development changed drastically as they were looking to do a large parking structure and building on top of that, and when they came back with this plan the main reason for this change of the architectural design was actually due to some of the public comments received at that meeting where there was a lot of expression of trying to mix in better with the existing product type in the historic neighborhood so the main purpose of that was to fit in with the neighbors.

Majoros asked if he felt that architectural style would be a help or a hindrance in getting occupancy and Cohen stated he felt it plays a part, that the design of any building plays a part in what occupants are looking for. Some of the color schemes and material used in the renderings showcased today were preliminary, that they are still working through some of the color issues and so forth. Cohen went on to state from an exterior point of view, it certainly has a little more traditional feel sitting with the properties but the interior is going to have a very modern layout, high ceilings, big windows, that he thinks will be very attractive to many different renters.

Majoros asked if there had been any consideration given to the previous public comment concerning the step down from residential one to two-story homes to now four-story, was there any consideration given to that or was it just did not work economically for the developer, that there couldn't have been a larger structure bordering the existing apartments which are five-stories or maybe a two-story at the further end to have a more harmonious blend to what abuts it on the west side.

Cohen asked for clarification of Majoros' question.

Majoros then asked instead of all four-story, could there have been some esthetic step down so that as it sits on the far west side where you've residents and buildings that are one to two-story, you wouldn't have the perceived big monolithic structure over here and then something else right next to it.

Cohen replied that they could have designed the building that had step down which they consciously did not partially in an effort to give it an urban feel, an extension of the downtown, part of the PUD was systemized behind that.

Kmetzo asked Cohen if he had received a copy of the OHM reports and he replied in the negative.

Kmetzo then asked Christiansen if they would be provided a copy of the OHM letters and he responded that their consultants were given a copy and that was shared with them when it was completed and when it was distributed.

Kmetzo wanted to know if any of the recommendations in those letters had an impact on the developer's plans and decisions to be made.

Cohen responded the main takeaway specifically was enhancing the path back to the park, that that is something they do intend to implement, make it ADA compliant and well-lit and landscaped because it's important for the entire community that there is a quality passage of access from that side of the property to the park and doing it in a way that it's more difficult for them to put that right through the middle of their site plan, so putting it on the end allows them to maintain the integrity of the development without having a walking path going right down the middle. But certainly elaborating more on the specific lighting, signage, landscaping, benches that will go along that path is certainly something they will incorporate into further development of their site plan.

Chairperson Crutcher stated that this is conceptual at this point and Cohen replied that they will look to their landscape architect to see exactly where they are placing exactly benches and lights on the path and will probably increase the scope of it to help everybody in providing quality access to the park.

Crutcher then stated that the parking issue with the church lot is not incorporated into the concept plan and Cohen replied that is correct, that the site plan presented today is solely focusing on the land that they're acquiring, not taking into account any landscape additions to their property. Typically they will do some sort of joint landscape divider providing an esthetically pleasing dividing structure, whether it be landscaping, what has to be done with neighboring properties, but that they haven't approached that yet with the church and that they will do so to make sure the transition looks the way it should.

Crutcher stated that that is an opportunity if those things are combined, that that may help alleviate some of the traffic concerns that are coming up.

Cohen agreed and stated they would want to meet with the church to discuss that further.

Crutcher asked if this is going to be a market rate development and Cohen replied correct, 100 percent.

Gronbach stated that before this moves forward the circulation plan should be looked at in much more detail and that this is the first time they have seen the consultants' comments and they really haven't had a chance to sit down and go over the drawings either, that this was a general presentation and typically a developer would present the plans that the Commission would go over in much more detail and specifically with regard to the parking and the circulation.

Crutcher stated that and in addition to the connection with Shiawassee Park.

Majoros stated that the assumption is that would be a lot of discussion with the City just about not just the church parking lot but Warner Street, you know a lot of the public comment from before was about traffic flow and has there been a more formal parking study. He said looking at this as a distinct property, look at the church parking lot, look at Warner, look at comments, look at school, look at flow, you could do one-way, I assume these are all things that are questions for the public about traffic flow or safety and parking. And you assume that you get to the point where it is ready for more in depth study that there would be a look at parking and traffic flow in a more aggregate look is what I think I would want to see and I think what the public would want to see as well.

Crutcher asked if there were any more questions or comments from the Commissioners.

Waun stated that with the parking and using Descharmes as an example of this, your one bedroom and your loft apartments, can you give us any data or statistics on how many residents there would be per unit. I would imagine the lofts would be a single person with one car, so something that could alleviate the concerns over parking.

Cohen responded that typically they look at it as one bedroom per person so obviously in some cases you could have a one-bedroom unit with two people sharing one bedroom and then there are cases where you have a person with a two-bedroom unit and is there alone, and maybe has a home office or something. And typically we see numbers like that cancel each other out and end up with about one person per bedroom. And we have more parking spaces on our site than we have bedrooms. So in our opinion we have ample parking on our site for any potential resident that would be living in our building. In addition to that with a development like this where parking is a little bit tight and you don't have acres to put additional parking and no one would want that on this site, we also have assigned parking so every unit will have an assigned spot so they'll be tracked and then we do have approximately 32 carports that we do offer some covered parking options. You lose some parking spots when you put in carports, that's why we didn't make the

entire parking lot a carport, we wanted to be able to maximize the amount of parking we had.

Chairperson Crutcher then asked that he is assuming some of the parking would be available for visitors and Cohen responded yes, there will be some additional parking for visitors.

Crutcher then asked if any of that would be available to the public and Cohen responded the on-site parking is not meant for individuals who are not either a guest or resident of the building. There is not a mechanism in place today to necessarily police that. There are parking spots but we want to make sure that we offer our residents and their guests parking.

Crutcher asked if part of the Applicant's calculation included on street parking and Cohen responded that none of their parking numbers took into account on street parking.

Crutcher then stated that the church parking lot as well as the Maxfield Training Center are being used by the public and that is our existing parking situation.

Cohen replied that parking has been a big discussion with this development.

Crutcher stated that parking and traffic is going to be an issue.

Cohen responded that one thing he can say is that in their original development plan they had over 200 units so from a traffic standpoint, cutting down the amount of bedrooms and people living there should decrease the traffic in that area substantially.

Crutcher then suggested addressing the connection with the church parking lot may be another way to alleviate the problem with parking.

Chairperson Crutcher then asked if there were any further comments or questions from the Commission. Hearing none, he asked if there was a motion to open the Public Hearing.

MOTION by Majoros, supported by Waun, to open the Public Hearing.
Motion carried, all ayes.

(Public Hearing opened at 7:40 p.m.)

PUBLIC HEARING

The following people spoke at the Public Hearing against the project:

Donald Munter, 33309 Oakland, Farmington, Michigan
Doug Gress, 42912 Cardinal Way, Novi, Michigan, representing First United Methodist Church.
Joyce Hagen, 24091 Tana Court, Farmington, Michigan
Rick Gundlach, 23700 Warner, Farmington, Michigan
David Judge, 23708 Warner Street, Farmington, Michigan.
Jill Keller, 23617 Warner, Farmington, Michigan.
Kathy Steinke, 33221 Shiawassee, Farmington, Michigan
Jane Gundlach, 23700 Warner, Farmington, Michigan
Chris Schroer, 23620 Warner, Farmington, Michigan
David Simowski, 23625 Warner Street, Farmington, Michigan.
Cathy Rozenberg, 33218 Oakland Avenue, Farmington, Michigan
Greg Collins, 33632 State Street, Farmington, Michigan

The following people spoke at the Public Hearing in favor of the project:

Susan Lightner, 34503 Lytle, Farmington Hills, Michigan
Tom Buck, 23848 Whittaker, Farmington, Michigan
Dr. Natalie Nedanovski, 23334 Farmington Road, Farmington, Michigan

MOTION by Majoros, supported by Chiara, to close the Public Hearing.
Motion carried, all ayes.

(Public Hearing closed at 8:45 p.m.)

Chairperson Crutcher declared the Public Hearing closed.

Director Christiansen stated that there is no further action being sought by the Planning Commission this evening and what is most prudent for the Planning Commission to move to take no further action or to postpone further action on the proposal to the next available meeting and/or date uncertain.

MOTION by Majoros, supported by Kmetzo, that the Planning Commission postpone any further activity on the Maxfield Training Center until a further meeting can be formally scheduled at the next meeting or subsequent thereto when staff and City feel it's appropriate, and would also add that as we did as the May 2017 Planning Commission meeting, acknowledge the comments made by the public at the hearing today, that

responses will be prepared that are either from OHM, from staff or from the developer, so that the Planning Commission can either agree to move forward or deny this project.
Motion carried, all ayes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS

None heard.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Gronbach, supported by Majoros, to adjourn the meeting.
Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary