

MINUTES
ANN ARBOR CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
BUSINESS MEETING

7:00 p.m. – August 7, 2007

Time: Chair Pratt called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Place: Council Chamber, Second Floor, 100 North Fifth Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, Emaus, Mahler, Pratt, Westphal

Members Absent: Potts, Woods

Staff Present: DiLeo, Foondle, Thacher

INTRODUCTIONS

Eric Mahler, recently appointed member of the City Planning Commission, introduced himself and stated that he was an attorney with a background in labor employment law. He had a Master's degree in public administration, he said, and was interested in planning issues.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a. Minutes of June 5, 2007.

Moved by Borum, seconded by Bona, to approve the minutes as presented.

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, Emaus, Mahler, Pratt, Westphal
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Potts, Woods

Motion carried.

b. Minutes of June 19, 2007.

Moved by Bona, seconded by Emaus, to approve the minutes as presented.

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, Emaus, Mahler, Pratt, Westphal
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Potts, Woods

Motion carried.

c. Minutes of July 5, 2007.

Moved by Bona, seconded by Carlberg, to approve the minutes as presented.

Carlberg asked that the last sentence of Commissioner Bona's comments on page 3 be changed from "517" West Washington to "415" West Washington.

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, Emaus, Mahler, Pratt, Westphal
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Potts, Woods

Motion carried.

d. Minutes of July 10, 2007.

Moved by Carlberg, seconded by Borum, to approve the minutes as presented.

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, Emaus, Mahler, Pratt, Westphal
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Potts, Woods

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Borum, seconded by Carlberg, to approve the agenda.

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, Emaus, Mahler, Pratt, Westphal
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Potts, Woods

Motion carried.

REPORTS FROM CITY ADMINISTRATION, CITY COUNCIL,
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES MANAGER, PLANNING COMMISSION OFFICERS
AND COMMITTEES, WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

Pratt stated that the public could visit the City's website at www.a2gov.org and then go to Discovering Downtown for a status report on the various committees of the Ann Arbor Discovering Downtown work effort. He stated that most committees had completed their work; however, there were a couple of items that would be considered by City Council in September. Implementation efforts on rezoning and design guidelines were underway, he said, noting that a third public meeting on design guidelines would be held in early September. He also noted that adjustments regarding parking in the downtown were currently being considered.

Pratt announced that the next Ordinance Revisions Committee meeting would be held at 3:00 p.m. on August 9 in the Fifth Floor Conference Room, City Hall.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS SCHEDULED FOR NEXT MEETING

Pratt announced the public hearings scheduled for the meeting of August 21, 2007.

REGULAR BUSINESS

a. Public Hearing and Action on Ann Arbor Township Parcels Annexation and Zoning (10 sites) and Pittsfield Township Parcel Annexation and Zoning (1 site), 7.75 acres total, 135 Barton Drive, 1400 Warrington Drive, 2930 Glazier Way, 213 Pineview Court, 192 Riverview Court, 580 Rock Creek Drive, 3081 Dover Place, 448 Huntington Place, 310 Huntington Drive, 3671 Riverside Drive, 2950 Shady Lane. A request to annex these parcels into the City and zone them for single-family residential use – Staff Recommendation: Approval

DiLeo explained the proposal.

Karen Dec, owner of 135 Barton Drive, present this evening with her husband, said the staff report indicated that the sewer line in Barton Drive currently extended within three houses of their property and that it could easily be extended to their house and their neighbors' houses. However, she said, she was informed by City engineers that this could not be easily done without re-laying the sewer line for Barton

Drive because the pitch was so low and the gravity would be insufficient. This would require installation of a pumping station, she said, and that the City would not favor a pumping station for three houses. She said the staff report also referenced a water service extension project, but said they were already connected to the existing water main in Barton.

Noting no further speakers, Pratt declared the public hearing closed.

Moved by Carlberg, seconded by Bona, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Ann Arbor Township Annexation (135 Barton Drive) and R1C (Single-Family Dwelling District).

Pratt asked the property owners if there were any issues with the septic field.

Jeff Dec replied that their septic field was fully operational.

Pratt said the reference to the water main project in the staff report was more of a general comment regarding a transmission main. He stated that he would likely follow up with Systems Planning staff to learn more about the sewer main issue.

Bona asked for clarification on the City's policy regarding failed septic systems.

DiLeo stated that all septic systems were under the jurisdiction of the County Department of Environmental Health, regardless of whether the property was in the City or township. If a septic system were to fail, she said, the first step would be to contact the County to discuss options. She said the County viewed the City's sanitary sewer system as the best option and, if sanitary sewer were available, the County would not issue permits for a new or repaired system. If no sanitary sewer were available, she said, the County would first look to see if the sewer could immediately be extended, and then look to see what could be done either on a short-term or long-term basis. She said the City was involved in working with the County and property owners on a site-by-site basis.

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, Emaus, Mahler, Pratt, Westphal
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Potts, Woods

Motion carried.

Moved by Borum, seconded by Westphal, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Ann Arbor Township Annexation (1400 Warrington Drive) and R1A (Single-Family Dwelling District).

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, Emaus, Mahler, Pratt, Westphal
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Potts, Woods

Motion carried.

Moved by Emaus, seconded by Mahler, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Ann Arbor Township Annexations (3671 Riverside Drive, 192 Riverview Court, 213 Pineview Court, 3081 Dover Place, 2930 Glazier Way, 580 Rock Creek Drive, 310 Huntington Drive, 448 Huntington Place) and R1B (Single-Family Dwelling District).

Pratt recalled that he advocated for R1A zoning on previous zoning requests in this area north of Geddes. It was his belief that R1A zoning was more appropriate for the character of this area and said it appeared that very few parcels would become nonconforming as a result of the zoning. He said he would not support this motion because it recommended R1B zoning. He noted that Council recently passed the Nissle property zoning, giving it an R1A zoning classification, rather than the R1B recommended by Planning Commission. He said it was possible that Council might look at these parcels in the same way.

Bona stated that of these eight parcels, four of them would become nonconforming if zoned R1A. She expressed her support for R1B zoning.

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, Emaus, Mahler, Westphal
NAYS: Pratt
ABSENT: Potts, Woods

Motion carried.

Moved by Carlberg, seconded by Emaus, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Pittsfield Township Annexation (2950 Shady Lane) and R1D (Single-Family Dwelling District).

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, Emaus, Mahler, Pratt, Westphal
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Potts, Woods

Motion carried.

b. Public Hearing and Action on Gift of Life Site Plan, 3.52 acres, 3861 Research Park Drive. A proposal to construct two additions in two phases totaling 23,237 square feet – Staff Recommendation: Approval

Thacher explained the proposal and showed photographs of the property.

Robert Kerr, of Metro Group Architects, representing the petitioner, stated that the Gift of Life was moving from its current location on Platt Road to this new property. Construction on the interior of the building has begun, he said, and they hoped to begin the first building addition soon. He stated that the engineering for both phases would be done at the same time.

Tom Beyersdorf, executive director of Gift of Life, stated that they were an independent, non-profit organization whose purpose was to recover organs from deceased individuals and make them available for transplant. He said they have existed for 35 years in Ann Arbor and were now in need of additional space. He said they have grown steadily over the years and anticipated that they would continue to grow.

Noting no further speakers, Pratt declared the public hearing closed.

Moved by Bona, seconded by Carlberg, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Gift of Life Site Plan and Development Agreement.

Carlberg was happy to see this expansion, stating that this organization was a valuable community resource. She was interested in the appearance of the detention pond from Research Park Drive and hoped the petitioner would provide native plantings and create an attractive landscaped area. She stated that the rear of the site was adjacent to an unattractive property and asked if the petitioner were amenable to planting low-maintenance vegetation that would not require mowing and that would create a habitat amenity.

Beyersdorf said they were interested in a landscape feature on the site and that they endorsed these suggestions.

Emaus stated that a seed mixture that would help absorb water and allow infiltration would be highly desirable in this location, stating that it was fairly close to Mallets Creek. He noted the semi trailer truck shown in the photograph at the northwest corner of the site and its proximity to a large canopy tree.

Kerr stated that there was a loading zone in this location, but that they did not expect very many large semi-trailer trucks; rather, most deliveries would be made from Fed Ex or similar-sized trucks.

Bona asked if street trees were shown on the landscape plan.

Earl Ophoff, of Midwestern Consulting, representing the petitioner, stated that the street trees were not shown on the plan. He said they chose the option of paying the street tree escrow to the City.

DiLeo stated that staff would work with the City Forester and the petitioner as to the location of the street trees and provide an update to the Planning Commission.

Bona asked that a creative note be added to the site plan that indicated the placement of the trees between the curb and sidewalk if they were to be planted by the petitioner. She asked about the parking, noting that there were 135 employees and 144 spaces would be provided. She wondered if the petitioner anticipated the need for the 30 parking spaces that were proposed to be deferred.

Beyersdorf explained that the employees worked three different shifts 24 hours per day.

Kerr stated that they did not expect to need the deferred parking spaces with the first phase expansion and would wait to see what the second phase would bring.

Bona supported deferred parking, stating that it was better to not have extra pavement if it were not needed. She asked about the sidewalk that came to the site from the street. It did not seem to go anywhere, she said, noting that it did not really connect with the entrance to the building and people

would have to cross the pavement at an angle. She asked if the petitioner would be willing to incorporate a pavement change to make the sidewalk more obvious.

Ophoff stated that the location of the sidewalk was related to the existing landmark tree. He said they could make the change in the pavement.

Pratt stated that normally there was additional space between the parking and retaining wall along the back side of the detention basin. He suggested that the material of the wall may need to be more sturdy because of the adjacent parking.

Kerr stated that there would be about 10 to 12 feet between the parking and the wall.

Pratt asked if the detention basin was reviewed by the County Drain Commissioner's office.

Ophoff stated that this was not under the County's jurisdiction because the basin discharged into the City sewer.

Pratt asked if the City followed the rules of the Washtenaw County Drain Commissioner.

DiLeo replied yes.

Pratt wanted to make sure that the basin allowed adequate water quality upon discharge by using infiltration. He also wanted to make sure that the abandoned sewer pipe under the basin was removed.

Kerr stated that it was going to be removed.

Pratt asked that the site plan be changed to say "removed" instead of "abandoned."

Pratt asked for an understanding of what specific items were part of the plan that would exceed the energy efficient requirements.

Kerr stated that they were re-using an existing building, all 25-year-old mechanical equipment would be replaced with new energy efficient units, the two new additions would have higher standards of insulation, higher energy efficient light fixtures in the building would be used, and they would be detaining water on the site that had never been previously detained.

Westphal stated that this would be a good improvement in this area. He appreciated the removal of the curb cut and concurred with the benefit of deferred parking.

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, Emaus, Mahler, Pratt, Westphal
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Potts, Woods

Motion carried.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

COMMISSION PROPOSED BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Pratt declared the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Mark Lloyd, Manager
Planning and Development Services

Jean Carlberg, Secretary

Prepared by Laurie Foondle
Management Assistant
Planning and Development Services