

PLANNING COMMISSION

March 7, 2019

The City of Portage Planning Commission meeting of March 7, 2019 was called to order by Chairman Stoffer at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. Three citizens were in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chairman Stoffer led the Commission, staff and citizens in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Christopher Forth, Deputy Director of Planning, Development & Neighborhood Services; Michael West, Senior City Planner and Matthew Quardokus, Assistant City Attorney.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Forth called the role: Fries (yes); Patterson (yes); Corradini (yes); Stoffer (yes); Schimmel (yes); Joshi (yes); Harrell-Page (yes); Baldwin (yes); and Pezzoli (yes). All Commissioners were present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Stoffer referred the Commission to the February 21, 2019 meeting minutes contained in the agenda packet. A motion was made by Commissioner Harrell-Page, seconded by Commissioner Corradini, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved 9-0.

SITE/FINAL PLANS:

None.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Final Report: Rezoning Application #18/19-5, 1700 East Centre Avenue. Mr. West summarized the March 1, 2019 final staff report regarding a request from Newells Lane Partners, LLC to rezone property located at 1700 East Centre Avenue from R-1B, one family residential to OS-1, office service. Mr. West indicated the zoning change is being requested to facilitate an office redevelopment project. Mr. West stated the proposed OS-1 district was consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map designations, as well as the evolving land use/zoning pattern along East Centre Avenue. Mr. West also discussed the Zoning Code restrictions and requirements for the proposed office redevelopment project given its proximity adjacent to single family residential zoning. For these reasons, Mr. West indicated that staff was recommending approval of the zoning change.

Chad Vlieg (Newells Lane Partners, LLC) was present to support the rezoning application. Mr. Vlieg stated he has a purchase agreement to sell the property for development of a dental clinic. The public hearing was reconvened by Chairman Stoffer. No citizens spoke regarding the proposed rezoning. A motion was then made by Commissioner Baldwin, seconded by Commissioner Corradini, to close the public hearing. The motion was unanimously approved 9-0.

After a brief conversation, a motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Corradini, to recommend to City Council that Rezoning Application #18/19-5 be approved and 1700 East Centre Avenue be rezoned from R-1B, one family residential to OS-1, office service. The motion included a finding that the OS-1 district is appropriate in this area of the City and is consistent with the

Comprehensive Plan, Future Land Use Map and surrounding land use/zoning pattern along East Centre Avenue. The motion was unanimously approved 9-0.

2. Special Land Use Permit: Cole Buick-GMC-Cadillac, 6600 and 6660 South Westnedge Avenue. Mr. Forth summarized the March 1, 2019 staff report regarding a request from GCG Portage LLC to expand the existing Cole Buick-GMC-Cadillac dealership from 6600 South Westnedge Avenue onto the adjacent property addressed as 6660 South Westnedge Avenue. Mr. Forth indicated the applicant is proposing to remove the drive-thru lanes on the former Old National Bank parcel and establish vehicle display areas along the north and south sides of the parcel. Mr. Forth indicated that no use of the former Old National Bank building was proposed by the Cole Buick-GMC-Cadillac dealership, however, the building would be marketed for a low intensity office user with employee/customer parking reserved along the south side of the building. Mr. Forth indicated the proposal satisfies the 12 conditions outlined in Section 42-261.C.4 of the Zoning Code and was recommended for approval.

Curt Aardema (GCG Portage LLC representative) was present to support the request and explain the project. Mr. Aardema provided a brief history of the car dealership establishment along South Westnedge Avenue back in the 1990s and changes that have occurred in the car dealership industry. Mr. Aardema stated that the former Old National Bank parcel was acquired in 2018 for purposes of expanding the dealership in order to stay competitive. Mr. Aardema indicated the drive-thru lanes along the north side of the former bank building would be removed and converted to vehicle display areas, while the building would be marketed for a low intensity office use.

Chairman Stoffer opened the public hearing. No citizens spoke regarding the special land use permit. A motion was then made by Commissioner Harrell-Page, seconded by Commissioner Joshi, to close the public hearing. The motion was unanimously approved 9-0. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Corradini, seconded by Commissioner Schimmel, to approve the Special Land Use Permit for GCG Portage, LLC (Cole Buick-GMC-Cadillac) at 6600 and 6660 South Westnedge Avenue. The motion was unanimously approved 9-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS/COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Joshi stated she would not be present at the March 21, 2019 meeting.

7:13 p.m. - The Commission took a short recess.
7:15 p.m. - The Commission reconvened the meeting in City Hall Conference Room No. 2

NEW BUSINESS:

1. FY 2019-2029 Capital Improvement Program. Mr. Forth referred the Commission to the FY 2019-2029 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) document that was provided with the agenda materials. Mr. Forth also discussed the previous Planning Commission involvement in the CIP process beginning back in September 2018 with the Open House and the preliminary review of the document that occurred at the February 7, 2019 meeting. Mr. Forth reviewed the proposed FY 2019-2029 CIP document category-by-category with the Planning Commissioners. The Commission and staff discussed various projects

including upcoming local and major street projects, Meredith Street traffic calming project, proposed multi-use trails, construction of a new water tower versus extending a water main under the airport property, Elijah Root Mill Dam, collaborative arrangement between the city and MDNR regarding the State Game area and proposed off-road, multi-use trails. After additional discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Harrell-Page, seconded by Commissioner Baldwin, to recommend to City Council that the FY 2019-2029 Capital Improvement Program be approved. The motion was unanimously approved 9-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the regularly scheduled meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Forth, AICP
Deputy Director of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Services