

PLANNING COMMISSION

August 15, 2019

The City of Portage Planning Commission meeting of August 15, 2019 was called to order by Chairman Corradini at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. Seven citizens were in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Christopher Forth, Deputy Director of Planning, Development & Neighborhood Services and Randy Brown, City Attorney.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Forth called the roll: Myer (yes); Fries (yes); Baldwin (yes); Pezzoli (yes); Schimmel (yes); Corradini (yes); and Joshi (yes). A motion was then made by Commissioner Baldwin, seconded by Commissioner Joshi, to approve the roll excusing only Commissioner Patterson. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Corradini referred the Commission to the August 1, 2019 meeting minutes contained in the agenda packet. A motion was made by Commissioner Myer, seconded by Commissioner Baldwin, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

SITE/FINAL PLANS:

None.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Special Land Use Permit Amendment: Presidential Brewing (Outdoor Beer Garden), 8302 and 8232 Portage Road. Mr. Forth summarized an application submitted by Jake Lohse requesting to amend the Special Land Use Permit that was previously approved by the Planning Commission in June 2018 to include an outdoor beer garden along the north side of the existing Presidential Brewing Company site located at 8302 and 8232 Portage Road. Mr. Forth indicated the west nine holes of the previously approved 18-hole outdoor miniature golf course have been removed and will be replaced with an outdoor bar, seating areas, gazebos, a fire pit, outdoor games and a stage for outdoor music entertainment. The applicant has indicated the remaining east nine holes of the miniature golf course will be refurbished and incorporated into the outdoor beer garden. Mr. Forth stated staff has concerns about the noise impacts on the adjacent residences and had discussed this issue with the applicant. Finally, Mr. Forth stated staff is recommending approval of the proposed amendment subject to five conditions and any additional comment brought before the Commission during the public hearing.

Commissioner Fries noted he has prior experience with noise issues and indicated his noise meter recorded a dBA level of 72 during the meeting. Commissioner Baldwin asked if a roof, in addition to a back wall, would be installed on the outdoor music stage. Mr. Forth indicated a roof was not mentioned in the applicant's material but the applicant could provide any additional input regarding a roof over the music stage. Commissioner Joshi asked about a berm and other screening along the north property line. Mr. Forth indicated there is a very dense vegetative screen that already exists along the north property line. Installation of a 6-foot high berm would require removal of the existing vegetation and would require 40 horizontal feet of land area.

The applicant, Jake Lohse, was present to support the amendment. Mr. Lohse explained the type of music and would not include heavy metal type. The stage was purposefully placed along the north property line to direct the sound away from the adjacent residents. Furthermore, Mr. Lohse stated the stage would include a roof and Thursdays would be the primary night for outdoor music. Commissioner Schimmel asked the applicant how many nights per week would there be outdoor music. Mr. Lohse responded there may be outdoor music once a week and maybe not even once a week. Commissioner Myer asked when the music will end. Mr. Lohse responded by saying 9:00 p.m. Commissioner Joshi asked the applicant if he considered another location away from the adjacent residents. Mr. Lohse responded by saying it would be costly but could move the stage to a location other than where the new cooler will be located. Commissioner Fries acknowledged the sound will be amplified and suggested a sound engineer be consulted to help determine the noise impact rather than the Commission. Commissioner Pezzoli asked the applicant if he has set-up a radio at the location of the proposed stage at a sound level similar to live music then consult with the neighbors. Mr. Lohse stated he has not but did attempt to make contact with the adjacent neighbors but was only able to speak to one.

Chairman Corradini opened the public hearing. Linda Weimann, 8329 Oakside Street, indicated she lives behind Erbelli's and it can be loud at night. Mrs. Weimann stated she doesn't want to hear music at night and is opposed to outdoor music. Eric Hyland, 2315 Prosperity, stated he doesn't believe the outdoor beer garden is a problem. He indicated he hears more noise from RJ's Bar and Grill and supports the proposed Presidential Brewing outdoor entertainment. Steve Knipfel, 2224 Prosperity, stated he also supports the business and beer garden proposal. He indicated that when the building/property was vacant, it was an eyesore and drug use necessitated several police responses. Mr. Knipfel stated people would buy their medical marijuana from the business next door and walk over to the Presidential Brewing site and start smoking. Commissioner Schimmel asked Mr. Knipfel if the situation has improved. Mr. Knipfel indicated it has greatly improved after Presidential Brewing occupied the site.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Schimmel, seconded by Commissioner Joshi, to close the public hearing. The motion was unanimously approved. Chairman Corradini asked if the Commissioners had any further comments. There being none, a motion was made by Commissioner Fries, seconded by Commissioner Pezzoli, to approve the Special Land Use Permit for Presidential Brewing Company (outdoor beer garden), 8302 and 8232 Portage Road, subject to the five conditions outlined in the Department of Community Development report dated August 9, 2019. The motion was approved 7-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. FY2018-19 Planning Commission Work Program Final Update and Proposed FY2019-20 Work Program. Mr. Forth provided a brief overview of the completed FY2018-19 work program and the proposed FY2019-20 work program. With regard to the proposed FY2019-20 work program, Mr. Forth noted new activities include update of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan, update of the Major Thoroughfare Plan and continued assistance with Redevelopment Ready Communities certification. The Commission accepted the final update of the FY2018-19 work program. A motion was then made by Commissioner Joshi, seconded by Commissioner Baldwin, to approve the FY2019-20 work program. The motion was approved 7-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS/COMMISSIONERS:

Chairman Corradini asked each Commissioner if they had any closing statements or comments:

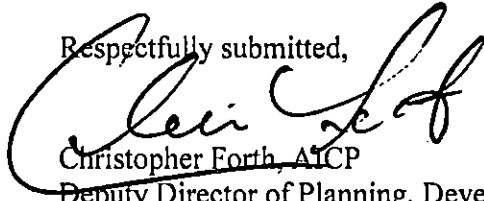
- Commissioner Fries noted redevelopment of vacant properties, such as the one now occupied by Presidential Brewing, with activities for residents is good for the community.
- Commissioner Pezzoli concurred with the statements made by Commissioner Fries.

- Chairman Corradini also concurred with Commissioner Fries statements. Chairman Corradini reminded the Commissioners who may be interested in attending the 2019 MAP conference to submit their application forms to the Department of Community Development.
- Other Commissioners did not have any closing statements or comments.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the regularly scheduled meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher Forth, AICP

Deputy Director of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Service