

PLANNING COMMISSION

February 4, 2016

The City of Portage Planning Commission meeting of February 4, 2016 was called to order by Chairman Welch at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. Approximately 10 citizens were in attendance.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Forth called the role and the following Commissioners were present: Patterson (yes), Stoffer (yes), Welch (yes), Bosch (yes), Dargitz (yes), Somers (no), Schimmel (yes), and Richmond (yes). A motion was offered by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Dargitz, to approve the role excusing Commissioners Felicijan and Somers. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Welch referred the Commission to the January 21, 2016 meeting minutes contained in the agenda packet. A motion was made by Commissioner Dargitz, seconded by Commissioner Patterson, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

Commissioner Somers arrived at approximately 7:25 p.m.

SITE/FINAL PLANS:

1. Final Plan: Whisper Rock (Phase I), 2275 West Centre Avenue. Mr. West summarized the staff report dated January 29, 2016 regarding a request from AVB II, LLC to construct Phase I of Whisper Rock within the Oakland Hills at Centre Planned Development (PD). Mr. West stated Phase I includes the construction of a private internal street network and 45 attached residential condominium units divided among 18 two-unit attached buildings and three, three-unit attached buildings. Mr. West stated that City Council approved a tentative plan amendment for the Oakland Hills at Centre PD in January 2016 and the final plan for Whisper Rock (Phase I) has been designed in substantial conformance with the approved tentative plan/narrative. Mr. West summarized the project including proposed access, sidewalks, storm water management and the location of wetlands along the south and east portions of the property. Mr. West stated staff was recommending approval of the final plan subject to MDEQ approval of the grading and storm water overflow into the wetland area and finalization of the detailed engineering plans.

Mr. Jack Gesmundo, representing AVB, LLC, was present to support the application and explain the development history of the Oakland Hills at Centre PD. No citizens spoke regarding the proposed project. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Stoffer, seconded by Commissioner Bosch, to recommend to City Council that the Final Plan for Phase I of Whisper Rock, 2275 West Centre Avenue, be approved subject to MDEQ approval of the grading and storm water overflow into the wetland area and finalization of the detailed engineering plans. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Height Modification: Trade Centre III Office Building, 650 Trade Centre Way. Mr. West summarized the staff report dated January 29, 2016 regarding a request from H & G, LLC to construct a five-story office building at 650 Trade Centre Way to a height of 78-feet (measured at the top of the mechanical screening wall). Mr. West discussed the 2012 conceptual plan amendment for the Trade Centre Commercial Planned Development, which included a height modification to construct a four-story Trade Centre III Office building with a maximum height of 65-feet. Mr. West stated that applicant was now requesting approval to construct the building one-story and 13-feet higher than the 2012 approval. Mr. West discussed previous developments along Trade Centre Way including the three-story and four-story office buildings to the west and the two four-story hotel buildings to the east, the presence of the City of Kalamazoo wellfield site to the north and setback and elevation differences between the proposed office building and single family residence located to the north and west. Mr. West indicated staff was recommending approval of the height modification with a finding that the request satisfies requirements contained in Section 42-350(B)(6) and Section 42-414.G.

Mr. Greg Dobson, representing H & G, LLC, was present to support the application and explain the development history of the Trade Centre Commercial Planned Development. Mr. Dobson discussed the proposed building elevation and the setback distances and elevation differences between the proposed building and the nearest single family residences located in excess of 600-feet away. The public hearing was opened by Chairman Welch. No citizens spoke regarding the proposed height modification. A motion was made by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Stoffer, to close the public hearing. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Stoffer, to recommend to City Council that the Height Modification for Trade Centre III Office Building, 650 Trade Centre Way, be approved to allow construction of the building to five-stories and a maximum height of 78-feet (top of mechanical screening wall). The motion included a finding that the Trade Centre III Office Building will be setback at least 78-feet from the outer boundaries of the zoning lot and the location, setback distances and topographic differences will mitigate potential impacts on adjacent single family residentially zoned properties to north consistent with Section 42-350(B)(6) and Section 42-414.G of the Land Development Regulations. The motion was unanimously approved 7-0.

2. Final Report: Rezoning Application #15/16-2 (expanded), Admiral Avenue/Dorset Street. Mr. Forth summarized the final staff report dated January 29, 2016 involving the Planning Commission expanded rezoning consideration of 480 Admiral Avenue, 6979 South Westnedge Avenue and 12 properties located along the east side of Dorset Street. Mr. Forth discussed the original request from Mr. Chad Scott to rezone 480 Admiral Avenue, the petition signed by several Dorset Street property owners to rezone seven Dorset Street lots and the previous Planning Commission discussions regarding this application and the decision to expand the rezoning consideration. Mr. Forth briefly discussed the existing zoning, existing land use and Future Land Use Map designations and then explained the staff recommendation regarding the rezoning and the rationale for the recommended zoning arrangement. Mr. Forth referred the Commission to a communication and attachments from Mr. Chad Scott (owner/applicant, 480 Admiral Avenue) that was included in the final agenda packet.

Chairman Welch reconvened the public hearing and the following citizens spoke in regard to the expanded rezoning consideration: 1) Mr. Greg Radd (Nederveld Associates, representing the applicant of the 480 Admiral rezoning request); 2) Mrs. Patricia Dueweke (606 Dorset); and 3) Mr. Bryan Cederberg (612 Dorset). Mr. Radd discussed the applicant's voluntary request to down-zone the property from I-1/RM-1 to R-1T in order to construct one to two duplexes along the northern portion of the property. Mr. Radd reaffirmed the presence of wetlands and poor soils along the southern portion of the parcel and the restated development was only planned for the northern portion of the property, at the east end of Cameo Avenue.

Mrs. Dueweke discussed the Future Land Use Map designation of the Dorset Street lots and adjacent 480 Admiral Avenue parcel and stated she supports the staff recommendation of R-1A for these properties since that zoning designation is most consistent with the Future Land Use Map and established single family residential neighborhood. Mr. Cederberg indicated he also supports the staff recommendation and the R-1A zoning best represents the established single family detached residential land use pattern in the adjacent neighborhood. No additional citizens spoke regarding the proposed rezoning. A motion was made by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Stoffer, to close the public hearing. The motion was unanimously approved 8-0.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Stoffer, seconded by Commissioner Dargitz, to recommend to City Council that Rezoning Application #15/16-2 be approved with the following changes:

- 480 Admiral Avenue be rezoned from I-1, light industrial and RM-1, multiple family residential to R-1A, one family residential;
- 514, 520, 526, 532, 606, 612 and 618 Dorset Street be rezoned from R-1T, attached residential to R-1A, one family residential;
- 502 and 508 Dorset Street remain zoned R-1A, one family residential (No change);
- 6843, 422 and 426 Dorset Street (rear portions) be rezoned from I-1, light industry to R-1A, one family residential. Front portions of properties remain zoned R-1A (No change);
- 6979 South Westnedge Avenue be rezoned from I-1, light industry and RM-1, multiple family residential to R-1A, one family residential and the western portion of the parcel remaining zoned B-2, community business.

The motion included a finding that the rezoning recommendation establishes a zoning pattern that is most consistent with the Comprehensive Plan/Future Land Use Map designations and that best reflects the historic land use pattern within the Cameo Avenue/Dorset Street single family detached residential neighborhood. The recommended R-1A zoning for 514, 520, 526, 532, 606, 612 and 618 Dorset Street would not create any nonconformities and would most accurately reflect the historic use of these properties as single family detached residences. A rezoning of 480 Admiral Avenue from I-1 and RM-1 is appropriate as the current zoning is not compatible with the neighborhood, nor consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. While the requested R-1T zoning can be considered appropriate given the existing zoning pattern and would result in a reduction in intensity of land uses, R-1A zoning is recommended. The recommended R-1A zoning for this parcel allows the property owner future single family development options, consistent with the adjacent single family detached residential land use pattern, and is most consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The recommended R-1A/B-2 zoning pattern for the city-owned parcel at 6979 South Westnedge Avenue would better reflect the park/recreation designation of this property while protecting adjacent commercial and office uses from additional land use restrictions related to screening, setbacks and building height. Finally, no change to the R-1A zoning for 502 and 508 Dorset Street, and a zoning change to R-1A for the rear portions of 6843, 422 and 426 Dorset Street would reaffirm the predominant single family detached residential zoning and land use pattern within the Cameo Avenue/Dorset Street neighborhood. The motion was approved 6-2 with Commissioners Bosch and Schimmel voting in opposition.

3. Final Report; Rezoning Application #15/16-4, 1521, 1603 and 1615 East Centre Avenue. Mr. Forth summarized the final staff report dated January 29, 2016 regarding a request from Full Circle Communities to rezone 1521, 1603 and 1615 East Centre Avenue from R-1B, one family residential, RM-1, multiple family residential and OS-1, office service to PD, planned development. Mr. Forth summarized the proposed tentative plan for Selinon Park that would consist of 74 affordable apartment units within three buildings across the property. Mr. Forth discussed the historic district house and property located at 1521 East Centre Avenue and stated the Historic District Commission met yesterday (February 3rd) and is supportive of the

project subject to some minor conditions. Mr. Forth then reviewed the final analysis section of the report and indicated staff was recommending approval of the PD zoning and associated tentative plan/narrative and requested modification from Section 42-374.C (mixture of at least two housing types).

Mr. Carl Kunda, Full Circle Communities, was present to support the rezoning application and explain the planned development project. The public hearing was reconvened by Chairman Welch. No citizens spoke regarding the proposed rezoning. A motion was then made by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Stoffer, to close the public hearing. The motion was unanimously approved 8-0.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Stoffer, to recommend to City Council that Rezoning Application #15/16-4 be approved and 1521, 1603 and 1615 East Centre Avenue be rezoned from R-1B, one family residential, RM-1, multiple family and OS-1, office service to PD planned development. Additionally, the requested modification from Section 42-374.C (mixture of at least two housing types) also be approved with a finding that the standard is not in the best interest of the residents of the PD and is not inconsistent with the interests of the entire city as outlined in Section 42-375.L. The motion also included a finding that the PD district and proposed land use is appropriate in this area of the City and will provide assurances to surrounding property owners on the specific type of development that will be built on the property while providing design flexibility to the developer. The PD district and associated tentative plan/narrative submitted by Full Circle Communities for the Selinon Park Planned Development is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan/Future Land Use Map designations and surrounding zoning/land use pattern along East Centre Avenue and will provide affordable housing options for residents with low incomes, physical and sensory impairments and other special needs. The motion was unanimously approved 8-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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