

**MINUTES
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
FARMINGTON HILLS CITY HALL – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
APRIL 20, 2017, 7:30 P.M.**

Chair Rae-O'Donnell called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. on April 20, 2017.

Commissioners Present: Brickner, Countegan, Fleischhacker, Mantey, McRae, Orr, Rae-O'Donnell, Schwartz, Stimson

Commissioners Absent: None

Others Present: City Planner Sec, City Attorney Saarela, Planning Consultants Arroyo and Tangari

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Brickner, support by Fleischhacker, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR HEARING:

A. SITE AND LANDSCAPE PLAN 55-4-2017

LOCATION:	24505 Indoplex Circle
PARCEL I.D.:	22-23-21-351-028
PROPOSAL:	Addition to existing building in an LI-1, Light Industrial District
ACTION REQUESTED:	Approval of Site and Landscape Plan
APPLICANT:	Craig M. Curran
OWNER:	Kern-Liebers Pieron

Utilizing overhead slides and referring to the April 13, 2017 Giffels Webster review letter, Planning Consultant Tangari gave the background for this application, which was to request site and landscape plan approval for an addition to the building at 24505 Indoplex Circle. The addition would add 15,980 additional square feet of manufacturing space (for a total of 23,780 square feet), and 4,730 additional square feet of warehousing space (for a total of 22,154 square feet). The total square footage of the building would be 45,934 square feet. The proposed uses were principal uses permitted in the LI-1 District.

Planning Consultant Tangari said this was a straightforward proposal with no substantive issues, with outstanding items able to be addressed administratively. The site was located in an LI-1 District, with no residential neighbors. All dimensional requirements were met. The applicants had an excess of parking spaces, and with the addition there would still be a surplus of parking spaces.

Items that could be handled administratively included:

- The wall-mounted light fixtures were required to be shielded such that light did not project directly to the side.
- The Landscape Plan must include a summary table of all trees inventoried.
- The Landscape Plan must show City of Farmington Hills planting details.

- The ordinance required that the species and common name of each parking lot tree be included on the plans.

Craig Curran, 1363 Hampton, Grosse Pointe Woods, was present on behalf of this application. Ryan Kiblawi, Vice President of Kern Liebers Pieron, and James Klinkenburger, Civil Engineer, Nowak & Fraus, 46777 Woodward Avenue, Pontiac, MI were also present.

Mr. Curran said they were seeking to add 20,710 square feet of warehousing area to the existing building, bringing the total square footage to 45,934 square feet.

Mr. Kiblawi explained that they were bringing work that had been outsourced to Mexico back to Michigan, and were continuing to expand their business.

Commissioner Mantey asked how many jobs would be created. Mr. Kiblawi said initially they would be adding 5-7 people, with a maximum of about 20.

Commissioner Orr asked if the addition would be air-conditioned. Mr. Curran said they would not be air conditioning that space. There would be four interior unit heaters.

Chair Rae-O'Donnell asked if the applicants had any comments regarding the Giffels Webster review letter. Mr. Klinkenburger said they could make the necessary corrections as requested.

Commissioner Schwartz indicated he was ready to make a motion.

MOTION by Schwartz, support by Orr, that Site Plan 55-4-2017, dated March 10, 2017, submitted by Craig M. Curran, be approved because it appears to meet all applicable requirements of the Zoning Chapter, subject to the following conditions:

- **Compliance with the items in the March 24, 2017 Engineering review letter.**
- **Submission of a revised site plan for administrative review addressing the items identified in the April 13, 2017 Giffels Webster review letter.**

Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION by Stimson, support by Fleischhacker, that Landscape Plan 55-4-2017, dated March 10, 2017, submitted by Craig M. Curran be approved because it appears to meet all applicable Zoning Chapter requirements, and applicable Design Principles as adopted by the Planning Commission, subject to the following conditions:

- **Missing data be included on the tree survey.**
- **Outstanding items identified in the April 13, 2017 Giffels Webster review letter be resolved.**

Motion carried unanimously.

B. MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

PROPOSED AMENDMENT:

Include the Farmington/Farmington Hills Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) Grand River Corridor Vision Plan as a subplan to the City of Farmington Hills Master Plan For Future Land Use

ACTION REQUESTED: Request authorization from City Council to distribute the plan to reviewing bodies
PROPONENT: Farmington Hills Planning Commission

City Planner Stec explained that the requested action was the first step in the legal process to amend the Master Plan to adopt the Corridor Improvement Authority for the Grand River Corridor Vision Plan as a sub-plan to the Farmington Hills Master Plan. The City was requesting authority from the Commission to request authorization from City Council to distribute the plan to reviewing bodies required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. A draft letter had been distributed to Commission members.

After City Council approval, an electronic version of the letter would be distributed. The reviewing bodies would have 42 days to respond, followed by a public hearing in order to adopt the sub-plan as a Master Plan update.

Commissioner Schwartz noted that he was the liaison to the Corridor Improvement Authority, which had about \$50,000 in assets. Property values were not currently increasing, but the potential for greater action and revenue was there because the Target facility was now out of bankruptcy and a development could go forward. There was also potential for spin-off development from the Beaumont expansion.

Commissioner Brickner noted that he had signed the CIA documents in 2013.

Commissioner Schwartz said tonight's action was one way to keep the ball moving.

Discussion followed regarding potential development in the area. City Planner Stec pointed out that progress had been made in that the Grand River 1 Overlay District had been adopted. Much was dependent upon future development, and it was important to formalize the sub-plan as part of the Master Plan.

Commissioner Orr asked City Planner Stec to keep the Commission informed regarding the office building next to the miniature golf facility at the corner of Grand River and Orchard Lake Road.

Commissioner Orr spoke of his consistent objections to splitting off properties for tax purposes. Part of the difficulty in the Grand River corridor was the many small parcels that made redevelopment difficult.

Chair Rae-O'Donnell indicated she was ready for a motion.

MOTION by Schwartz, support by Brickner, that the Planning Commission recommend approval from City Council to authorize the distribution of the CIA Grand River Corridor Vision Plan to the required reviewing bodies pursuant to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008, with the purpose of the distribution of the plan being to amend the City's Master Plan for Future Land Use to include the Corridor Vision Plan as a sub-plan to the Master Plan.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. CIA GRAND RIVER NORTH FOCUS AREA

Referring to his memorandum dated April 14, 2017, City Planner Stec explained that based on the priorities earlier set by the Planning Commission, information had been provided this evening regarding

the portions of the CIA Grand River Corridor Vision Plan pertaining to the North Focus Area. These were provided for discussion regarding developing zoning amendments to implement that portion of the vision plan, and to give the Planning Consultant direction to begin drafting ordinance language.

City Planner Stec noted that while preparing for this agenda item, he had spoken with the Traffic Engineer. The scoping project for what would happen to M-5 in that area was underway. The expectation was that this would be complete this summer, and they would potentially have a plan for moving forward to MDOT at the end of the year. Did the Commission want to move forward with the zoning amendments or did they want to wait and see what the traffic study recommended?

Planning Consultant Arroyo further explained that the intent was to implement the Master Plan, specifically that area of the Grand River Corridor Vision Plan. The thought was to look at the area, get Planning Commission input, and come back with potential zoning ordinance amendments in terms of an overlay district or even perhaps create a separate zoning district. The purpose of the zoning amendment would be to enable the Grand River Corridor Vision Plan in ways the current ordinance did not. Ultimately the proposed ordinance changes would be the subject of a public hearing, with a recommendation to City Council.

Planning Consultant Arroyo felt there was value in proceeding. There would be changes to M-5, including changes to the right of way, and the changes could potentially open up the area from across the street of the Target development area.

Commissioner Brickner said his understanding of the CIA was to encourage an overlay zoning district, creating a user/pedestrian friendly area. He felt a layered zoning approach would be preferable.

Commissioner McRae asked if anyone had reached out to the property owner of the shopping center.

City Planner Stec said the city's Economic Development Director had been in discussion with the owner, which was currently a bank, but the bank would not be the ultimate developer.

Discussion followed regarding the existing businesses, the potential for mixed development including residential, and the CIA's vision for the area.

Commissioner Stimson suggested reaching out to the Steppingstone School.

Commissioner Schwartz said that a buyer would look at the potential revenue stream from the shopping center property. There were solid businesses, including Target and the movie theater, located there. Putting an overlay district in place might eliminate some perceived barriers to further development and could help facilitate both a purchase and the development of the property.

City Planner Stec agreed, saying that good planning could lay the groundwork for multiple types of development. Perhaps the property could be pre-qualified for the PUD process.

Chair Rae-O'Donnell summarized that the consensus of the Commission appeared to support moving forward with the development of possible zoning amendments to implement the vision plan in the North Focus Area.

D. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MOTION by Brickner, support by Orr, to re-elect the current officers of the Planning Commission for a second term.

- **Chair: Elizabeth Rae-O'Donnell**
- **Vice-Chair: Steven Schwartz**
- **Secretary: Steven Stimson**

Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 23, 2017

MOTION by Fleischhacker, support by Stimson, to approve the meeting minutes of March 23, 2017 as published.

MOTION carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:

Commissioner Mantey noted that manufacturing companies were using fewer people due to technological advances. Perhaps the Commission should revisit the parking requirements for manufacturing uses.

Commissioner Brickner asked what was causing the traffic backups on Orchard Lake Road for traffic heading south from 13 Mile. City Planner Stec said he thought this was utility work.

Commissioner Schwartz asked that the Planning Commission be kept updated regarding decisions being made regarding Orchard Lake Road by the Road Commission and City Council. City Planner Stec said he would update the Commission regarding this via email.

Commissioner Orr also asked for information regarding the responses to and any possible action regarding the deer survey sent out by the City some months ago.

Regarding the North Focus Area discussed earlier, Commissioner Countegan said that he liked the idea of overlay district language. He suggested minimizing conceptual plans, while providing illustrations of elevations showing what buildings could look like.

Commissioner McRae asked if the recent pushback on SAD payments had any impact on policy. City Planner Stec said he would update the Commission on this also.

Commissioner McRae said that multiple road projects in the same area at the same time created gridlock. How were these projects planned?

Future meetings were set as follows:

- May 18: public and regular meeting.
- June 8: Study session for the development of an overlay district to implement the CIA vision plan for the North Focus Area.

ADJOURNMENT:

Seeing that there was no further discussion, Chair Rae-O'Donnell adjourned the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven J. Stimson
Planning Commission Secretary
/cem