

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS  
City Council Chambers 23600 Liberty Street  
Farmington, Michigan  
Monday, April 14, 2014

Chairperson Bowman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Farmington City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Babcock, Bowman, Buyers, Chiara, Crutcher, Gronbach  
Absent: Majoros  
A quorum of the Commission was present.

**OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Director Christiansen, Building Inspector Koncsol

Director Christiansen noted the passing of Bill Ingalls. He stated he served on the Planning Commission from 1977 to 2008, thirty-one years.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION by Crutcher, seconded by Chiara, to approve the agenda as submitted.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

**APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA**

**a. Minutes of Regular Meeting – March 10, 2014**

MOTION by Buyers, seconded by Crutcher,  
to approve the Consent Agenda.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

**OUTSIDE DISPLAY AND SALES REQUEST – WE BUY & SELL IT ALL, 30930 GRAND RIVER AVENUE**

Chairperson Bowman introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Christiansen stated this agenda item was a request for outdoor display and sales approval. The applicant submitted plans for the outdoor display and sales to be located within the front yard adjacent to the existing commercial building at 30930 Grand River Avenue. He also cited the newly amended ordinance which governs C-2 districts.

Historically the applicant was before the Commission last year when they were approved for outside display and sales seasonally before the amendment to the ordinance was made. The amendment modifies seasonal outdoor sales and displays to

be allowed only in shopping centers or buildings of 10,000 square feet minimum or located in the Central Business District. Applicants not meeting those requirements could come before the Planning Commission on a case by case basis for site plan review.

Bowman thanked Christiansen for his overview on the agenda item.

Applicant Kimmarie K. Abro from "We Buy and Sell It All" explained to the Commissioners that she was unaware of the new ordinance and had stocked up on items she held in storage to be displayed outside. She presented a picture board of her request of four items to be placed outside adjacent to the building. She indicated it is not going to look like a garage sale or yard sale. She also stated she felt she was grandfathered in and when she went to pay the \$50 fee, she was informed of the new ordinance. She also stated that having a resale shop in Farmington will help the community and that she would gladly give a \$25 gift certificate to people working for the City, indicating that it was not a bribe. She felt it important for her business to be able to display items and that they would not be an eyesore.

Chairperson Bowman thanked her for her presentation and opened the floor to questions or comments from the Commission.

Buyers questioned if the picture board was showing representative items as to what she would like to display and the Petitioner responded perhaps a musical instrument, a lawnmower or bike or weed whacker or edger. She also indicated she would abide by any restrictions the Commission would put on the displayed items.

Buyers inquired if the store had a handicapped accessible front door with a pushbutton entrance and the Petitioner responded in the negative but she would be willing to put one in if necessary.

Buyers also commented on the term "bribe" that the Petitioner had used and indicated that the Planning Commission meetings were transcribed proceedings and it would be difficult for the recordation to pick up sarcasm or jest and that he personally does not accept bribes.

The Petitioner apologized for the use of the term.

Chairperson Bowman asked staff if there was anything they needed to keep in mind as their decision is made.

Director Christiansen responded that in their review of the draft amendment to the ordinance, the basis of the amendment was to uphold the image and character of the community as to where they want displays, where it is appropriate and the basis of amendment was to have criteria established for same.

Gronbach stated he recalled when the Planning Commission reviewed the proposed ordinance an alternative to not meeting criteria would have the Petitioner go to the ZBA.

Christiansen stated that the purpose of the ordinance amendment was to limit outdoor displays and sales to certain areas and the way the amendment was structured, it would allow an individual business that doesn't meet the criteria to file a site plan which falls under the purview of the Planning Commission to review and allow certain exceptions on a case by case basis.

Bowman asked if there were any additional comments.

MOTION by Chiara , to recommend to approve four items for outdoor display from April 1<sup>st</sup> to October 30<sup>th</sup>.

The motion was not supported.

MOTION by Buyers, supported by Gronbach, to deny the request of "We Buy and Sell It All" at 30930 Grand River Avenue, to be allowed outside display and sales, on the basis that Chapter 35, Zoning, of the Farmington City Code, Section 35-102, which deals with outside display and stores states that the exterior items displayed be those that are not customarily sold inside the store, and Petitioner stated they were sold inside, therefore the request would not be consistent with the direction the City seeks to take.  
Motion carried 5 - 1 (Chiara).

Bowman thanked the Petitioner.

### **SITE PLAN REVIEW – STARLITE CELEBRATION, 32305 GRAND RIVER AVENUE**

Chairperson Bowman introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen indicated that there is a new property owner for the banquet hall located at 32305 Grand River Avenue, Starlite Celebration, who is proposing several changes, improvements and upgrades to the existing building and site. There will be interior modifications and exterior changes to the existing building façade, new site landscaping and parking lot upgrades and improvements which require the review and approval of the Planning Commission.

Applicant Manohar Nimmagadda introduced himself and stated that he had had a subcommittee meeting on April 3<sup>rd</sup> where he introduced his plans to Commissioners Buyers and Gronbach who asked him to bring exterior samples of the proposed color scheme.

Christiansen explained the purpose of the subcommittee meeting being to review proposed plans and provide feedback to the Petitioner.

Chairperson Bowman opened the floor for questions from Commissioners.

Crutcher inquired as to what the Petitioner was planning on doing with the site and an explanation followed that the exterior façade would be repurposed, the unhealthy landscaping taken out and replaced, sealcoating of the parking lot and restriping and new colors for the building and further discussion was held concerning the colors.

Gronbach asked if all existing shrubbery and landscaping would be removed and replaced with new and the Petitioner responded in the affirmative. Further discussion was held regarding the details of landscaping and if it would be provided.

Buyers asked about the partial resurfacing of the parking lot and the Petitioner responded that the neighbor that shared same was not interested in resurfacing at this time and further discussion was held on the topic.

Chairperson Bowman inquired of staff if there were any requirements in terms of the color scheme and Christiansen responded in the negative but stated that the Planning Commission has the latitude for deciding on the colors and materials and discussion was held on the different districts that fall under guidelines for design and color.

Crutcher questioned the signage and proposed changes to be made and Konscol responded.

Babcock inquired of a grandfathered status if an overlay district is created by the Grand River Corridor Authority and discussion followed.

MOTION by Gronbach, supported by Crutcher, to approve the proposed exterior renovations for the Starlite Celebration Banquet Hall located at 32305 Grand River Avenue as presented.

Motion carried, all ayes.

Chairperson Bowman thanked the Petitioner for his presentation.

### **SITE PLAN REVIEW – GRAND PLAZA, 30760 GRAND RIVER AVENUE**

Chairperson Bowman introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen indicated that the applicant/petitioner has proposed to remove an existing vacant office building located at 30748 Grand River and to repurpose/redevelop an existing second office building on the site located at 30752 Grand River, said project including the demolition of the existing vacant office building and the repurposing/redevelopment of the existing second office building on the site for commercial use.

The details of the project were discussed, including new windows, new entrance canopy, new brick exterior to match the existing façade of the Grand Plaza commercial center, parking lot resealing and restriping, with additional parking spaces being added,

modifications to the existing front landscaped area, along with new lighting and a new dumpster enclosure.

Director Christiansen went over the details of the project and Chairperson introduced Petitioner Phillip Mansour, owner of the center, who cited the various deficiencies with the site, most specifically parking. He indicated he had been working with Director Christiansen for the past eight months on how to alleviate the parking problem with the existing center for its benefit and how to clean up the image of that area that was in dire need. He went over the plans for the project, including the improvements to the façade which will be brick and limestone on the west and south side and the east elevation being painted with color to match the brick. The parking area will be resurfaced and the other lot will be cleaned up and restriped.

Bowman thanked the Petitioner for his presentation and opened the floor up for questions from the Commission.

Crutcher inquired about the extension of the sidewalk and discussion followed.

Gronbach complimented the Petitioner on implementing the changes and modifications suggested by the Planning Commission in the pre-meeting and his responsiveness to the City's requests.

Babcock inquired about the governing entity of the alley behind the building and changes thereto and Christiansen responded that would require a traffic order and involvement of the Planning Commission and City Council but that none had been requested.

Buyers asked the Petitioner about the intentions for the building to the east and it not being level and the Petitioner replied he was adding a small parapet of wood structure and that the brick will go up from the foundation to the parapet. He also stated there would be two windows added on the west elevation which will lend itself to retail and blend the look of the shopping center.

Discussion was held about the parking lots and resurfacing of same.

Crutcher asked about the tenancy of the new building and the Petitioner responded it would be a single tenant.

Further discussion was held on the topic of the sidewalk in front of Moys and other options to explore.

The Petitioner commented on the lighting on Grand River and discussion followed.

Chairperson Bowman thanked Petitioner for his presentation.

MOTION by Babcock, supported by Crutcher, to approve the site plan for 30760 Grand River, otherwise known as the Grand Plaza, with the condition that if the properties to .Planning Commission to discuss extending the sidewalk.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

### **SITE PLAN REVIEW – WORLD WIDE SHOPPING CENTER, 34701 – 34801 GRAND RIVER AVENUE**

Chairperson Bowman introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen indicated the applicant/petitioner is proposing several changes/improvements and upgrades to the existing building and commercial site at the center. The proposed changes include façade improvements, revised/modified site landscaping, revised/modified parking lot and building lighting and new site and and building/tenant signage.

Scott Monchnik, architect for the project, representative for Barbett Holdings, owner, introduced himself to the Commission. He stated their intent is to upgrade and enhance the existing shopping center including the island landscaping, rework the curbs in disrepair, add additional lighting. He indicated that the colors on the renderings were not exactly right, they would be more earth tones to blend with existing brick.

Bowman thanked him for his presentation and opened the floor to questions from the Commission.

Chiara inquired if there were residential homes all along the back and the Petitioner responded in the affirmative.

Gronbach discussed the proposed site lighting and parking lighting discussed at the pre meeting and discussion followed. Gronbach indicated the floodlights on the property do not meet Code and should be removed.

Christiansen stated that a photometric study of the parking lot area could be done with what is proposed and what exists to determine if flood lights are necessary.

Gronbach inquired about the proposed removal of the large mature trees and discussion followed. He stated concern over replacement landscaping meeting the specifications of the City's requirements and there being verification of same.

Discussion followed on irrigation and the colors depicted on the renderings.

Babcock inquired about the retention of the awning on the west side of the plaza.

Buyers inquired about pillars on the existing site and the width of the sidewalk and further discussion was held.

MOTION by Gronbach, supported by Buyers, to approve the proposed site plan at World Wide Shopping Center, 34701 – 34801 Grand River with the following conditions: that the Proponent resubmit a parking lot lighting plan that indicates proper lighting and addresses the condition that the flood lights along the street side do not meet Code and should be replaced or removed as needed; further, that a more detailed landscaping plan be provided indicating size and specs to meet City Code and include an irrigation plan and reconsideration of the number of trees being removed from the site be reviewed by staff; and that actual samples of color watches be presented to the Planning Commission at the next scheduled meeting.

Motion carried, all ayes.

**PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCE WITH PLANNING COMMISSION ON PUD  
PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN – DOWNTOWN FARMINGTON  
CENTER**

Chairperson Bowman introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen stated that an optional pre-application conference can be held to discuss the appropriateness of the plan and solicit feedback. He stated that City Council heard the same presentation on April 7<sup>th</sup>.

Joe Volpe of Herschman Architects on behalf of Kimco Realty went over the proposed plan indicating that they had a new proposed tenant for the currently vacant space that Office Depot was held, Fresh Thyme. They had been working with them to finalize a lease agreement and have determined the existing building is inadequate for Fresh Thyme's needs. They propose to demolish the existing Office Depot space and adjacent tenant and rebuild back a new building for Fresh Thyme.

Gronbach inquired as to why the need for that and the Petitioner responded due to the multiple roof lines existing and further discussion ensued. Discussion was also held concerning the walkthru between Fitness 19 and the existing property and the cost of removing utilities in same.

Crutcher discussed the possibility of adding another opening between the two if it were feasible and the Petitioner responded that would reduce the square footage.

Further discussion was held as to the reasoning for the PUD.

Christiansen stated they are looking for approval of the preliminary plan and draft development agreement and then a Public Hearing would be scheduled and it would be forwarded to the City Council.

Gronbach inquired if plans were in rough form or specific prototype and the Petitioner responded it is the first run adaptation to this center.

Christiansen detailed discussions held with Kimco and stated Fresh Thyme is a division of the Meijer stores. He enumerated the challenges the current building presents for the proposed new tenant, citing no dumpster or compaction area, among other things.

Further discussion was held concerning cart storage, window tinting, covered walkways, Parking, and possible conflict with Farmer's Market, if any.

Chairperson Bowman clarified the requested action for the Planning Commission and Christiansen responded.

MOTION by Babcock, supported by Chiara, to adopt the draft development agreement and preliminary site plan for the PUD Planned Unit Development Concept Plan, Downtown Farmington Center, and schedule a public hearing for May 12, 2014.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Greg Cowley, resident and business owner, discussed a couple observations that he had made about the decisions made by the various Boards and Commissions in the City and the longevity of their impact on the City and suggested that challenging the investors to upgrade when necessary would be beneficial in the long run and to take advantage of the opportunity for feedback on the projects while they are in the planning process.

Patrick Thomas, 22432 Brookdale, commented on the proposed color scheme of the Starlite Celebration project.

Councilmember Jeff Scott commented on the three items on the agenda that were part of the Corridor Improvement Authority and suggested that the Planning Commission and City Council should make it a point to give the Corridor Improvement Authority a project statement that would mandate review by those bodies.

Babcock commented on the need for City Council to create a TIF so money can be captured.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT**

Special meeting date info was passed out.

Chiara questioned Building Inspector Koncsol about possible remedies to the parking lot in front of ACO and Big Lots.



**ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Chiara, seconded by Crutcher, to adjourn the meeting.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Secretary