

**CITY OF WIXOM
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2016**

Approved
12/05/16

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Day of the Planning Commission at 7:30 p.m. at which time allegiance was pledged to the American flag.

PRESENT: William Day (Chairman), Phillip Carter, Anthony Lawrence, Joe Barts and Sandro Grossi
ABSENT: Ray Cousineau (Excused) and Peter Sharpe (Excused)
OTHERS: Carmine Avantini (CIB Planning) and Nancy Fisher (Recording Secretary)

Determination of a Quorum:

A quorum of the Planning Commission was present for this meeting.

Agenda:

No additions or changes were made to the agenda.

Approval of the October 24, 2016 and November 2, 2016 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes:

MOTION and seconded by Commissioners Carter and Lawrence to approve the October 24, 2016 and November 2, 2016 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

City Manager's Update – November 22, 2016

Call to the Public:

There were no comments made by the public.

Unfinished Business:

There was no unfinished business listed on the agenda for this meeting.

New Business:

- 1. SITE PLAN REVIEW, SPR #05-022-16, BKG BECK ROAD LLC, 30303 BECK ROAD, WIXOM, MI 48393.** The applicant is seeking site plan approval for erection of a 101,762-square foot speculative light industrial building for BKG Beck Road, LLC at 30303 Beck Road. Proposed site improvements include: a parking lot with 212 spaces, including seven (7) barrier-free and 38 land-banked parking spaces; four (4) truck docks and two (2) loading spaces; a detention basin; dumpster enclosure; retaining walls and various landscape improvements. Access to the site will be from two (2) driveways on Beck Road. The property is zoned M-1, Light Industrial District, where light industrial buildings including warehouse, manufacturing, research and development and accessory office space, are permitted uses in that district. The parcel number is 22-05-426-001.

Mr. Avantini referenced his November 12, 2016 review letter. He noted that the applicant submitted a clean plan; however, the site is a bit challenging as it has different grades. It is located immediately north of the railroad tracks. The Traffic Consultant reviewed the plan and mentioned that some of the turning radii need to be looked at as well as a potential widening of the turn lane. Except for this, the Consultant feels it is acceptable. There are providing sidewalks within the site and at the road frontage.

There is a 5-foot grade difference which presents issues with Americans With Disabilities (ADA) guidelines. He needs to see specification sheets for the masonry materials, waste receptacle, retaining wall and lighting. The Planning Commission needs to decide on the building's design. The walls are already up on the Ryan Court building with the color integrated into the walls which is what the applicant is proposing for the Beck Road site. This is more colorful than the other buildings in that area. This building would be highly visible from Beck Road. He recommends approval conditioned upon: 1) any outdoor storage or overnight parking of trucks or trailers will require special land use approval; 2) the plan will comply with and obtain approval from the City's Traffic Consultant during the construction plan review; 3) manufacturer's specification sheets or material samples must be provided, for administrative review and approval; and 5) review and approval from other applicable consultants, departments and agencies.

Chairman Day asked whether the building materials meet the intent of the Ordinance. Mr. Avantini said the Ordinance gives the Planning Commission the flexibility to make that determination. Some concretes may be acceptable to the Commissioners while others may not. Chairman Day thinks that the elevation is attractive and likes the addition of color. Mr. Avantini noted that he was not sure about the BKG Ryan building but is happier than he thought he would be. He noted that the Beck Road site would be a little different in appearance and that this is just different. Chairman Day thinks it is a nice change from decorative block.

Conrad Schewe, BKG Beck Road, LLC, 30100 Telegraph Road, Bingham Farms. He showed a large-scale depiction of the site. This is the second spec building they have done in Wixom. The first was on Ryan Court. Both sites are triangle shaped. There are some investors who are building institutional-grade light industrial buildings throughout southeast Michigan. There was just one built in Auburn Hills. They have a manufacturer tenant at that location and he expects this location to attract similar tenants. He has reviewed Mr. Avantini's letter and Hubbell Roth Clark's letters and modified the original site plan to accommodate for that. There are some topographical challenges as well as a very large sanitary sewer which is a transmission line and which cannot be graded over. That is why retaining walls are necessary. This constraint drove the layout of the site and building. He needs the building to accommodate at least two users. It meets his requirements in terms of being able to service multiple tenants and it has good truck access. It will be a one-way truck entry from the north and the trucks will back in. The sidewalk on the east side has a 5-foot grade difference. ADA requirements will necessitate an engineering review. He pointed out potential connections on the drawings as well as options. The dumpster and retaining wall materials will be very neutral (beige and tan) in order to fit in. He pointed out the acceleration/deceleration lane on the depiction composed by the engineers including the lane tapers. He will work with the engineers on this. They intend to save as many trees as possible. It should be a very pleasing elevation and the building will be seen on the left as people head north. The prominent view will be from the south/southeast. They will use pre-cast concrete panels and very high energy efficiency materials which will be extremely durable and low maintenance. The building will be able to accommodate second-story office space. The second story panels are very flexible. They hope to secure a second tenant. They will use a galvanized steel awning with 30 feet clear inside. It will be able to accommodate cranes in all the bays or the tenants will be able to back a low boy in. They are trying to appeal to a lot of potential tenants.

Chairman Day said that it looks like an attractive project. Commissioner Carter asked whether the Commissioners need to state that the proposed building materials are acceptable to the Planning Commission. Mr. Avantini said that they would.

MOTION and second by Commissioners Lawrence and Grossi to approve SPR #05-022-16, BKG Beck Road, LLC's request for site plan approval for erection of a 101,762-square foot speculative light

industrial building. This approval is conditioned upon: 1) any outdoor storage or overnight parking of trucks or trailers will require special land use approval; 2) the plan will comply with and obtain approval from the City's Traffic Consultant during the construction plan review; 3) manufacturer's specification sheets or material samples must be provided, for administrative review and approval; and 5) review and approval from other applicable consultants, departments and agencies. The property is located at 30303 Beck Road, Wixom, Michigan 48393, is zoned M-1, Light Industrial District and the parcel number is 22-05-426-001.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

2. **SITE PLAN AMENDMENT, SPR #08-036-15, DIFFIN-UMLOR ASSOCIATES, 49287 WEST ROAD, WIXOM, MI 48393.** The applicant is requesting an amendment to the approved site plan for Diffin-Umlor Associates at 49287 West Road. The Planning Commission approved the site plan at the September 9, 2015 meeting and one of the conditions of site plan approval was "That smooth steel panels be utilized on the north and west elevations, since they will be visible from West Road." The applicants failed to use the required smooth panels during construction of the building and are now requesting approval for the ribbed steel that was utilized. The property is zoned IS, Industrial Service District, where professional offices, and accessory warehouse space, are permitted uses in that District. The parcel number is 22-08-100-056.

Mr. Avantini referenced his November 21, 2016 staff report. When the Planning Commission approved the original plan, it was conditioned upon the use of smooth metal panels on the elevations instead of ribbed panels. However, the applicant used ribbed panels. The Planning Commission must approve this in order to have the project closed out. The applicant has submitted information.

Matt Diffin, 49287 West Road, Wixom. He apologized. They were confused by the Planner's comment regarding the General RV building. They looked at the warehouse portion. He did not think that the panels were actually steel. They received four different bids for the steel work and were worried that flat panel steel would not have any structural strength resulting in waves in some of the panels. The City's Ordinance allows for what was done. The panels are different but have more of a flat surface. Consumers Energy put up a 7-foot chain link fence since the project was commenced which hides much of the panels. They also planted pine trees in that area. Even if they make use of flat panel steel, he does not know whether it will look better. He thinks the current exterior looks good and fits with other existing buildings. Some of those buildings have the same steel that they used.

Chairman Day referred to the November 22, 2016 letter referencing an architectural profile from the steel company. Who agreed it was a close match? The applicant said that they did. Chairman Day said that the applicant realized it was a potential issue and did not contact City staff. Mr. Avantini noted that the Building Inspector told the contractor that the materials were not in compliance. Then he caught them putting them in. Chairman Day noted that when this was originally discussed, visibility from West Road was mentioned. The applicant now claims that the visibility is not as bad because of the Consumers Energy fencing. Mr. Avantini said that the Consumers' fence is awful. However, because they are considered an essential service, they do not have to gain approval from the City. Even vinyl-coated chain link is better than the bright aluminum metal fence which Consumers used. He tells applicants to work things out at the pre-construction meeting so it does not have to go before the Planning Commission. He thinks that this building turned out nicely and does not think it is a huge detraction. Chairman Day is unsympathetic to this type of request since it could have been taken care of in advance. However, the applicant says that they were making an attempt to comply with the requirements. The applicant said that the SIP panels are 18 inches which is flat paneled steel and has

seams with a very similar appearance. Chairman Day noted that while cost is not the only consideration, the Planning Commission does not want to place undue burden on applicants.

Commissioner Carter asked Mr. Avantini whether it was the intention that the wall be a single, continuous sheet with no variance. Mr. Avantini said it was not and that typically with metal panels there will be breaks although they are not terribly obvious. However, they are not as pronounced as the ribs are. If he were reviewing it now, he would have recommended having the smooth panels all the way around the building. It is almost all or nothing—all ribbed or all smooth panels. Commissioner Carter noted that it is unfortunate how it worked out and that no one caught it until the end of the process. He thinks that the trees and the fence will help and that it is acceptable all things considered.

Commissioner Barts confirmed with the applicant that they are a civil engineering business. He noted that this is a bad position for the Planning Commission to be in with this coming back before them. It was very clear in the original Minutes. There are architectural features which could have been incorporated in order to be in compliance. The building looked nice. He is annoyed especially since the applicants are a civil engineering firm and should have known better. It is what it is but he does not want to give the impression that people can do other than what they have agreed to. He does not believe there was not an alternative that they could have come up with or discussed with the City. The applicant said it was in the contract with the steel manufacturer. Commissioner Lawrence noted that the flat siding has a seam every 18 inches. He asked about the spacing for the ribs. The applicant said it is fairly flat for 12 inches; then there is a rib. Commissioner Barts noted that General RV's building is considerably different.

Mr. Avantini noted that he understands the development and review process and would like to think it was an accident and not done intentionally. However, he is a little concerned that the applicant tried to find a remedy to meet the original criteria which could create a bigger problem than what is up there now. Chairman Day wants to make sure that the Planning Commission stands behind the requirements that they set for this and future projects.

Mr. Avantini said that if he had to do this over, he would not have recommended smooth steel on two sides. He would have recommended it all the way around but asked whether that would have presented a challenge to the construction process and whether it was feasible. It is a complicated issue and is not straightforward. There may have been communication glitches. However, it is now erected and there is not an alternate solution for that.

Commissioner Barts said that he attended the original meeting, the project looked interesting and the Planning Commission was happy to approve it. To see it come back up, he would not have noticed a difference although it is a different design than other buildings in the community. He would not vote to hold it to the line since there are alternative methods that could have been employed but he sympathizes with things.

MOTION and second by Commissioners Grossi and Carter to approve SPR #08-036-15, Diffin-Umlor Associates' request for an amendment to the approved site plan for Diffin-Umlor Associates at 49287 West Road for the building to remain as constructed. The property is zoned IS, Industrial Service District, where professional offices, and accessory warehouse space, are permitted uses in that District. The property is located at 49287 West Road and the parcel number is 22-08-100-056.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

3. APPROVAL OF 2017 MEETING DATES

MOTION and second by Commissioners Lawrence and Carter to approve the 2017 Planning Commission meeting date schedule as published.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Call to the Public:

None.

Staff Comments:

Mr. Avantini noted that a hearing will be coming up regarding At Home's special land use. However, he is getting some pushback on the design guidelines in the GPUD and is currently awaiting revised plans. He made it very clear what is required in terms of the building's appearance from I-96. He anticipates receiving a site plan for the next piece across from the single-family development to the east of Cambridge Lane. That site has some drainage and wetland issues.

Mr. Avantini said that he is making changes to the Master Plan and will present those at a future Planning Commission session. He will also be coming back before the Planning Commission with the concept drawings for the property next to the Poota mini-mart which he would like to incorporate into the Master Plan.

Commission Comments:

Commissioner Carter wished everyone a safe and happy holiday weekend.

Chairman Day noted that the Building Department did realize something was not right regarding the Diffin-Umlor building; however, that was reported to the applicant's contractor. In the future, those types of complaints should go directly to the developer/building owner and not to the contractor since they only have an interest in moving forward on the project. Mr. Avantini noted it was not the end result but the process. At the pre-construction meetings, he stresses with the applicants the need to keep the City in the loop on potential deviations from the approved plan.

ADJOURNMENT:

This meeting of the Planning Commission was motioned and adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Nancy Fisher
Recording Secretary