

**CITY OF WIXOM
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 5 2016**

Approved
12/19/16

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, Peter Sharpe, Ray Cousineau and Sandro Grossi

ABSENT: None

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:

MOTION and seconded by Commissioners Cousineau and Sharpe to add as Agenda Item No. 2 discussion of At Home's exterior elevations.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Approval of the November 21, 2016 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes:

MOTION and seconded by Commissioners Carter and Cousineau to approve the November 21, 2016 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

There was no correspondence to review.

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. PUBLIC HEARING FOR SPECIAL LAND USE #16-007: AT HOME RETAIL STORE, 10800 ASSEMBLY PARK DRIVE, WIXOM, MI 48393:** The applicant is seeking special land use approval for a retail business with 60,000 square feet of gross floor area or more. The Municipal Code, Section **18.06.020, Table 6.02**, requires approval from the Planning Commission for this request. The property is located at 10800 Assembly Park Drive and is zoned GPUD, General Planned Unit Development District, where retail businesses greater than 60,000 sq. ft. are allowed as special land uses in that district. The parcel numbers are 96-22-07-426-012 and 96-22-07-200-014.

Mr. Avantini noted that his November 14, 2016 letter recommends approval; however, the applicants are still working on the changes to the site plan. Since the special land use and site plan go together, he suggests tabling the special land use and holding the public hearing at the next meeting along with the revised site plan.

MOTION and second by Commissioners Sharpe and Lawrence to table Special Land Use #16-007, At Home Retail Store's request for special land use approval for a retail business with 60,000 square feet of gross floor area or more, pending submission of the revised site plan and approval by the City's staff and various departments. The property is located at 10800 Assembly Park Drive, Wixom, Michigan 48393, is zoned GPUD and the parcel numbers are 96-22-07-426-012 and 96-22-07-200-014.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

2. **DISCUSSION OF EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS FOR AT HOME RETAIL STORE, 10800 ASSEMBLY PARK DRIVE, WIXOM, MI 48393.** The property is located at 10800 Assembly Park Drive and is zoned GPUD, General Planned Unit Development District and the parcel numbers are 96-22-07-426-012 and 96-22-07-200-014.

Mr. Avantini noted that there are two At Home representatives present tonight, Don Nicolini and architect Tony Callaway, both of whom flew in from Texas. They are attempting to merge together the corporate image, the GPUD design standards and the primary building materials into the south elevation facing I-96 in order to give it an appearance similar to that of the front of the building. They require feedback from the Planning Commission in order to develop revised plans.

Tony Callaway, Callaway Architecture and Don Nicolini. Mr. Callaway said that he is the architect for this project as well as the applicant's prototype architect. He showed a large-scale depiction of the building's elevations. He has been involved with the applicant for the last 3 years. Mr. Nicolini is the applicant's Vice President and is responsible for working with the real estate group, identifying sites and working with City governments. At Home was previously known as Garden Ridge, a retailer with 37 years of experience. Garden Ridge was purchased by an investment group 3-4 years ago and was completely rebranded. He has developed a prototype building design for them which has gone thru an evolutionary process over the last few months. The applicant has stores in 28 states and they have built 24 stores in the last year alone. He expects to build another 27 stores this year. He met with Mr. Avantini this afternoon. The depiction he showed the Commissioners is of the Bloomfield Hills store which is their prototype. It includes a main entry and shadow house. They added awnings, side pilasters with a wide entry, a 46-foot tall entry with illuminated glass at night (for customer safety and security) and will light the parking lot and buildings. They have iconic sconce lights featuring dark and light grey colors.

The big question concerns the side of the building facing the highway. From a retailer's standpoint, they are concerned about duplicating a major entry element on the side because of the small amount of parking on that side. They want to have a good appearance on that side and propose more of a pilaster piece but expanded with side elements. He noted that Mr. Avantini suggested increasing that. He pointed out the overlay sketch he showed the Commissioners. He proposes modifying the elevation to raise the entry element with two side pieces and using the corporate sign, adding awnings and a shadow box which breaks up the large wall. He would like to put their tag line on the side as well. That would carry all of the entry elements around to the side. However, they do not want a pseudo entry which competes with the main entry but rather something which compliments it.

Chairman Day noted that in terms of the building's appearance from the highway, he would like to see glass in the center section which could be clearly differentiated from a doorway which will give it a nicer

appearance at night. Mr. Callaway said that the only place where there is visibility into the store is at the entryway and they focus heavily on the entry piece. Chairman Day noted that the glass could break up the expanse of brick and act like a window into the store. He thinks people passing by would find it appealing and that it would draw them in. He believes that having that internally lit at night would be attractive. Mr. Callaway noted that the applicant's CEO is very actively involved in the design process and he tries to avoid windows into the space. To do glass on that side completely changes the layout and people looking in would see 10 to 12-foot shelves.

Commissioner Cousineau asked whether there will be lighting on the south elevation. Mr. Callaway said that there will and he pointed out the sconce lighting on the depiction. He wants to have a good foot candle level on the building. The corporate logo will be back lit as well. Chairman Day asked whether the applicants have any other stores in the area which have been constructed from the ground up. Mr. Callaway said that there are not and that they are just second generation stores. The Bloomfield Hills store is a prototype and would give the Commissioners a very good idea of what the Wixom store would look like. It is located at Telegraph just north of Square Lake.

Commissioner Carter asked about the glass doors to the right of the corporate logo on the south elevation. Mr. Callaway said that those are exit doors just to the side and that they can be moved. Commissioner Carter noted that every building face has exit doors. Mr. Callaway noted that it is a 108,000-square foot building and there will be exits on each side. The only ingress for the general public will be the main entry. Mr. Avantini said as an alternative to a window which would go all the way through, what about a shadow box? Chairman Day said it could be like an old department store display and it would be effective as a visual. Mr. Callaway said that as motorists come under the overpass, it would provide a very strong emphasis on the front of the store. Chairman Day noted that this whole development is a very important part of the community's image. Commissioner Barts referred to the adjacent General RV development.

Mr. Callaway said that the original plan included pilasters like the Fort Worth store. Now, they are large and wide on both ends. Commissioner Sharpe is impressed that the applicant could make the changes so quickly. He thinks it looks good. Commissioner Lawrence thinks the silver light is a remarkable improvement and gives a good look. He likes the back lighting and thinks it will be a good front for the freeway. He thinks the applicant nailed it. Mr. Callaway noted that they have added another \$75,000-\$100,000 with the proposed changes.

Commissioner Carter asked whether the parking on the south side is for employees. Mr. Callaway said that it gives access to the back and provides circulation. Their tag line and logo signs will be illuminated from that side. They use Tiltwall which is concrete wall panels. They are proposing the use of Quick Brick which is a concrete-type material with a very strong appearance. Quick Brick is manufactured by Castle Brick. It comes 4 inches by 16 inches. It is a very good module and can accommodate cold temperatures. He showed the Commissioners material samples.

Mr. Avantini noted that he and the applicant have gone back and forth on the materials. The applicant is concerned because the colors represent their corporate image. They need the ability to use a unit which has the appearance of brick or utility brick which will integrate the color into the brick. He is familiar with this type of material since it was used for the Home Depot in Fenton. He noted that you cannot tell that is not a brick building. Mr. Callaway showed samples of the applicant's corporate colors (two shades of grey) and noted that they want the material to match their corporate colors and have the appearance of brick. The Quick Brick is 12 inches deep, 4 inches high and 16 inches tall. Chairman Day confirmed with the applicant that it is not a face. The applicant said that it is an integrated colored block material. He noted that the Bloomfield Hills store has EFIS. Chairman Day requested that the Commissioners have an opportunity to personally view a material sample for the proposed brick. Mr. Callaway said that he

will check with the manufacturer. Chairman Day said that he does not want it to look like block. Mr. Avantini said that the applicant is going with a somewhat smooth surface which is 4 inches as opposed to 8 inches. Mr. Callaway noted that they want it to have some sort of texture to it. Mr. Avantini said that the real challenge will be getting the colors correct with a masonry unit which has the look and feel of brick. He thinks that this is the best alternative. Chairman Day wants to make sure it will look as it is being represented since it sits at the entryway to the community, it is a huge building and will be there for a long time.

Call to the Public:

None.

Staff Comments:

Mr. Avantini noted that the At Home project will be on the next meeting's agenda as well as a preliminary site plan review for Milana Estates, 37 units next to Cambridge Lane.

Commission Comments:

Chairman Day asked who At Home is required to notify in terms of a public hearing. Mr. Avantini said anyone within 300 feet of the property (Menards and Culver's).

ADJOURNMENT:

This meeting of the Planning Commission was motioned and adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Nancy Fisher
Recording Secretary