

**CITY OF WIXOM  
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017**

Approved  
2/27/17

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:** Peter Sharpe (Excused) and Ray Cousineau (Excused)  
**OTHERS:** Carmine Avantini (CIB Planning), Deb Barker (Economic and Community Development Director) 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 January 23, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes:**

**MOTION** and seconded by Commissioners Lawrence and Carter to approve the January 23, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.

**VOTE:**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Correspondence:**

There was no correspondence to be reviewed.

**Call to the Public:**

There were no comments made by the public.

**Unfinished Business:**

- 1. PREMIER INTERNATIONAL, 46903 WEST ROAD, WIXOM, MI, 48393:** The applicant is seeking special land use approval for the outdoor storage of wood pallets. A public hearing was held at the January 4, 2017 meeting and the request was tabled until the February 6, 2017 meeting so the applicant could look for ways to eliminate or minimize the amount of outdoor storage being requested. The Municipal Code, Section 18.09.020, Table 9.02, requires approval from the Planning Commission for this request. The property is located at 46903 West Road and is zoned M-1, Light Industrial, where outdoor storage is allowed as a special land use in that district. The parcel number is 96-22-09-102-015.

Mr. Avantini noted that he did not receive anything new from the applicant although the applicant is present tonight.

David Strach, 46903 West Road, Wixom. They had a lot of construction activity this past year. Since the last Planning Commission meeting, he has removed the outdoor storage trailer and cleaned up the construction debris in the yard. He distributed a Google map depicting the location of the pallets and parking spots. He proposes fencing off three parking spots. The space size will be 36 feet along the back curb and 20 feet, the length of the car space. They propose a fence with yellow slats that is 12 feet tall

and aesthetically pleasing within which to stack pallets. Chairman Day confirmed with the applicant that he is no longer requesting the trailer for outdoor storage of recycling.

Chairman Day asked Mr. Avantini whether the Fire Department has reviewed the applicant's proposal. Mr. Avantini noted that there is an 8-foot height limit on fencing and that anything over 12 feet must gain approval by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Typically, the City does not allow for slats and he would prefer a black vinyl chain link fence with meshing especially since slats do not seem to stay in place and can move either move or break. The applicant said that there are other options to make it aesthetically pleasing. He thought this would be the most robust and most aesthetically pleasing solution.

Chairman Day noted that he would have a hard time approving this until the City consultant has a chance to look at it in detail. Mr. Avantini noted that the applicant already has an enclosure he built for the compactor. He asked the applicant whether he has explored taking out the island behind that enclosure to extend those walls back, which would provide room for storage. The applicant said there is a curb there and a gate and that adding anything else would take it right to the door. He asked Mr. Avantini whether he is referring to the rear of the property. Mr. Avantini said that it runs north to south. On the back side, there are pallets. Why not take the island out and extend the walls back to where the overhead door is, even if it is extended on only one side? It would put the pallets closer to the applicant's building. The applicant said that he thinks it is about 3 feet to the side door. He will look into it to see whether that will work.

Mr. Avantini noted that the special land use requirement limits the stacking of any materials to 12 feet in height. The Planning Commission has previously allowed this for tractor trailers but not for materials. The closer the applicant can get it to the building, the more hidden it will be. He would rather see 2 to 3 feet of pallets visible closer to the building than out in the middle of the parking lot. Commissioner Carter said that sounds like an interesting idea. He thinks the enclosure is attractive and continuing that would make it look like it was always planned that way. The island and tree would have to come out although they usually try to save trees. The applicant said that he could try to move tree if possible.

Mr. Avantini said that he thinks it is great that the applicant is making strides and they are moving in the right direction. Chairman Day concurs but is not comfortable until the applicant's latest proposal has been thoroughly vetted by Mr. Avantini and the City. He recommends adjourning this matter to the Planning Commission's next meeting on February 27, 2017 and having the Fire Department review this in the meantime. Commissioner Carter is concerned that it will last the life of the property regardless of whether the current applicant occupies that property or not. He noted that a chain link fence could impact a future tenant.

Commissioner Barts said that he reviewed the Commissioners' past discussions and that he still feels that the applicant's current building will not hold all the pallets. Also, is there not a side yard setback? It is not a structure but a permanent enclosure that the neighbor will have to look at. The quantity of the pallets the applicant has will not be contained within that enclosure. The applicant noted that he got rid of the trailer. He has been getting pallets delivered more frequently and in lower quantities. He is minimizing the space he is requesting. Commissioner Barts noted that this would be a longstanding agreement that would be maintained in perpetuity. It seems like there are other options with the rear of the property which would not affect the applicant's neighbors and which would provide the applicant more space and would solve the applicant's problem long-term. The applicant noted that he is currently to the setback on the rear of the property. It will not be 400 pallets. He went from 8 spots to 3 when he got rid of the trailer.

Commissioner Grossi agrees with Mr. Avantini regarding the enclosure against the building. He asked whether there is a wooden fence with a gate on the front side and whether that could be extended forward.

That would sacrifice a few parking spots on the neighbor's side on the west. He asked the applicant whether he could sacrifice a few parking spots against the building. The applicant said that he could try. Commissioner Grossi noted that he drove by the applicant's site today and it seems like he could have far fewer pallets stacked there.

Mr. Avantini asked the applicant whether if this matter is tabled to the February 27, 2016 meeting that would give him enough time to work on this. The applicant told Mr. Avantini that he would meet him at the property next week.

**MOTION** and second by Commissioners Lawrence and Grossi to table Special Use #16-008, Premier International's request for special land use approval for the outdoor storage of wood pallets until the Planning Commission's February 27, 2017 meeting to allow the applicant and the City Planner to develop a solution. The property is located at 46903 West Road, is zoned M-1, Light Industrial and the parcel number is 96-22-09-102-015.

**VOTE:**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**New Business:**

- 1. 3515 W. MAPLE ROAD, CONCEPTUAL PLAN DISCUSSION.** Consideration of conceptual layout for a single-family residential development at the former Walled Lake School District property on the south side of Maple Road, east of Wixom Road. The proposed development is for 40 single-family residential units utilizing alley-loaded garages for 19 of the lots. This project abuts Maplewood Lane to the east and Norton Creek to the south. The subject site is zoned R-3, One-Family Residential where single-family residential is a permitted use in that district. The purpose of this Conceptual review is to give the applicant an opportunity to discuss the characteristics of the site and obtain informal feedback and direction from the Planning Commission. The parcel number is 17-31-401-012.

Mr. Avantini referred to his review letter dated February 2, 2017. This is the property on the south side of W. Maple Road to the west of Wixom Road. Chairman Day noted that there was a typographical error in the description where it indicated that the property is to the east of Wixom Road, when it should read west. Mr. Avantini indicated that the School District no longer needs this property and that he and Ms. Barker have met with a number of people regarding proposals for this site. They have encouraged the individuals they have spoken with to do something different than what other builders have previously done in the City. The market is demanding housing for empty nesters (young professionals or people at or nearing retirement). The applicant is showing traditional porches on the front and garages in the rear with a permanent connection. There could be second floor in-law apartments. They will have smaller yards with a small courtyard area. When you are driving down Maple Road, you will see the front of the house with the porch. There will be two entryways into the development instead of multiple driveways onto Maple Road. None of the houses will have garages facing the road. He asked the applicant whether they can find a way to access all the units via alleyways and make a connection to the property to the south. They will need to build a bridge across Norton Creek. He noted that Mike Powell is here tonight representing the applicant.

Chairman Day said that he loves the alleys and the garages. He hopes they are not showing him what he wants to see and that the plans will actually come to fruition. He thinks it would be a great looking addition to the community.

Mike Powell, Powell Engineering, 4700 Cornerstone Drive, White Lake. He noted that the prospective owner, Michael Thomas, is also present tonight. Mr. Thomas focused on the architecture so that people will see beautiful homes without garage doors so that neighbors can say hello to each other on their balconies. They tried to provide an alleyway in every place that was possible. However, to build an alleyway just for those homes would involve the creation of more infrastructure. If the alleys are not properly done, the garbage truck will not be able to gain access. They are proposing a walkway between two homes for a pedestrian path above Norton Drain which will have to gain Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) approval. There is a gas easement along the back side of some units which could create issues with providing an alley at those locations. There is also a grade change in that location. He proposes that the grades would drop off to meet those by the gas lines. They do not have alley access to each of the lots but they do have rear entry garages. He solicited the input of the Planning Commissioners.

Chairman Day asked what size homes are planned for this development. Mr. Powell noted that the lots are 50 feet by 120 feet and that they will have courtyards. Mr. Thomas estimated the homes to be in the 1,600-2,150 square foot range. The materials would be a mix of masonry, stone and Hardie Plank with less masonry on the sides. They will have a very nice storybook, cottagey elevation with lots of details and curb appeal. Chairman Day asked Mr. Thomas whether he has done a similar development previously. Mr. Thomas said that he has done single- and multi-family developments in the 5,000-20,000 square foot range on lakes but not as much with smaller homes. He was in Charlotte, North Carolina and saw these sorts of developments there prior to the recession. He had some money invested in that.

Chairman Day said that he likes the idea and it is what he has been looking for. Commissioner Lawrence asked whether these would be private residences or site condos with common areas. Mr. Powell said they would be site condos that are private residences and they will have a great deal of open space. The homeowner's association would be responsible for the common areas. The exterior skin of the structures would be individually maintained by the homeowners. Commissioner Lawrence said that he likes the concept and is familiar with a similar development by the name of Saratoga located just south of Thirteen Mile Road on Novi Road although he thinks those homes may be larger.

Commissioner Barts asked the applicant whether there is a large tree line at the back of the development. The applicant said that there is one along the drain. Commissioner Barts asked about the large parcels which go along the tree line. Chairman Day said that he likes the size and thinks there is a market for this. Commissioner Carter likes how Units Nos. 1-5 and 16-20 are further away from Maple Road and have less visibility from Maple Road. He noted there is an unidentified shaded area on the plans with a wavy pattern. The applicant said that is a patio area where the homeowners can cook and grill outdoors.

Mr. Avantini pulled up an online photo of Disney's Celebration home development in Florida and showed this to the Planning Commissioners.

**Call to the Public:**

Ken Ross [no address given]. He asked what VCA means. Chairman Day informed him that it means Village Center Area.

**Staff Comments:**

Mr. Avantini noted that Robertson Brothers has provided its plan for the remaining buildout of the townhouses and distributed handouts to the Planning Commissioners depicting Robertson's proposal. He thinks that Robertson could reconsider the use of the space next to the liquor store. He noted that they have made changes to the layouts and outlined how this differs from what was initially approved. They have altered the layout and instead of running the units in a north-south direction, they created a center courtyard and pushed the rest facing Chambers and the credit union. They also eliminated a lot of the

open lot parking. Each unit will have space for 2 garage spaces and 2 outside the garage. There is a loop for Fire Department access. He thinks it is more attractive this way. Chairman Day noted that the rear elevation is pretty plain. He would like to see more detail and style. Commissioner Carter said that it appears that the newer layout provides larger trees which is nicer. He noticed that there are four more units than were originally planned. He asked whether the units are smaller as a result. Mr. Avantini said that they should be approximately the same. The parking area is smaller. Commissioner Grossi confirmed the location of the common area with Mr. Avantini. Commissioner Lawrence noted that the applicant greatly decreased the asphalt area.

Mr. Avantini noted that the Building Department has received more applications including for the Menards' outlots and he anticipates receiving plans for those in the near future. Commissioner Grossi asked how many more outlots there are. Ms. Barker said that there is one under contract and one close to being under contract which leaves two outlots. Chairman Day clarified that there were six outlots to begin with and that two have already been developed. Ms. Barker noted that Menards is thinking about keeping one of the outlots (the one in front of the warehouse on the north side) because they might need to expand it.

**Commission Comments:**

There were no comments made by the Commissioners.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

This meeting of the Planning Commission was motioned and adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Nancy Fisher  
Recording Secretary