

APPROVED

2.26.18

**CITY OF WIXOM
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 2018**

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:

No additions or changes were made to the agenda.

Approval of the December 18, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes:

MOTION and seconded by Commissioners Lawrence and Carter to approve the December 18, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

City Manager's Update – January 9, 2018

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. **GPUD WAIVER REQUEST FOR SPR #07-015-16: ALDI FOOD MARKETS, 28971 S. WIXOM RD., WIXOM, MI 48393.** Consideration of a dimensional waivers for ALDI Food Market to allow the southernmost section of screen wall, along the Wixom Road frontage, to remain at a height of 15" while the approved detail indicates that a minimum height of 24" would be constructed. The remainder of the wall segments were constructed at the 24" height and for an unknown reason this section was not. The Planning Commission may grant dimensional waivers in the GPUD, Gateway Planned Unit Development District, when meeting the intent of that district. The property is zoned GPUD, Gateway Planned Unit Development where retail food markets are permitted uses in that district. The parcel number is 22-07-200-009.

Mr. Avantini referenced his January 22, 2018 staff report. When projects are completed, the Building Office inspects the building and the site plan. The section facing Wixom Road closest to the corner was installed 5 inches lower. He defers to the applicant to address how this occurred. He does not feel comfortable addressing this administratively since it involves three courses of brick. It needs to be considered a waiver request since it resides within the Gateway Planned Unit Development (GPUD) which is why he brought it before the Commissioners tonight. Commissioner Lawrence noted that it was

supposed to be 24 inches and 19 inches and that Mr. Avantini's letter mentions 5 inches. Is it the wall and the rail is the extra 4 inches? The applicant said that it depends on the side of the wall you are looking at. Commissioner Lawrence noted that three courses of brick comprise a lot more than 5 inches.

Patrick Green, Construction Manager, ALDI Food Markets. He distributed pictures of the wall and brick to the Planning Commissioners for their review. He noted that the intent of the masonry screen wall is to be decorative. The City approved all but one section. As you turn the corner, every section steps down. The intent was to follow the lay of the land. The burden of tearing the aluminum out will break the stone caps when the decorative intent of the wall has been met. There is a 5-inch difference. It is a nice looking wall with extruded aluminum. To take it apart now would require disassembly of the entire wall. Mr. Avantini noted that there is a grade change going from the north to the south and how you go into the site. He measured from the footing to the top of the brick and that is 9 inches. The appearance is different but it is not as pronounced as if it were straight across. Chairman Day noted that it looks short from a Wixom Road view. Mr. Avantini said that the other goal was to screen the vehicle lights from Wixom Road. The applicant said that the foundation of the wall steps down which you cannot see in the pictures since the project is complete. It does flow with the other wall to follow the grade.

Commissioner Sharpe noted that on the east frontage, there is another section which is higher. Is 9 inches a standard drop down? There is one section which is even higher. It steps down by Wixom Road. There is already a change in elevation on that wall. He has never noticed the wall. It does not bother him.

Commissioner Cousineau asked the applicant why the wall dropped in height. The applicant said that was the intent. During construction, all the final grading was done. That 20-foot section was overlooked. Commissioner Cousineau noted that the grade does not change so the footing depth would not change. The applicant said it simply was not caught since he was not onsite everyday although he still thinks it looks pretty good.

Chairman Day said that this is difficult since it is not something that you affirmatively notice but there are things you see without noticing and the City wants to keep this a high-quality development. However, he realizes that redoing it will cause an inconvenience. He is struggling with this. Mr. Avantini noted that this was the only site item which was out of compliance which is highly unusual. It was likely a mistake or oversight which occurred during construction.

Commissioner Barts said that he recalled the discussion regarding the exterior and that ALDI agreed to the Planning Commission's requests. He thinks the applicant has made an effort to be a cooperative citizen. Commissioner Cousineau said that he is impressed with the quality of the construction. However, he does not want to compromise the City's standards. Is this a major site feature that is critical? If this is a significant feature of the site, he would view it differently. He is leaning toward granting the applicant's request but questioned what the basis would be.

Commissioner Lawrence noted that it does not detract from anything in the original development. He supports the applicant's request for a waiver. Chairman Day noted that if the site plan came in this way, the Planning Commission could have approved it. Mr. Avantini noted that when they first reviewed the screening, the applicant voluntarily did the brick wall with the wrought-iron and the cap as opposed to just the fencing or landscaping. The overall appearance of the wall is good. Chairman Day said that he favors granting the waiver request since it does not violate the Ordinance and the applicant has a good corporate record. Commissioner Carter agrees and does not think that the 9 inches will be critical functionally. He is more concerned that adding another three courses of bricks may not look the same in the future.

MOTION and second by Commissioners Lawrence and Barts to grant SPR #07-015-16, ALDI Food Markets' Consideration of a dimensional waivers for ALDI Food Market to allow the southernmost section of screen wall, along the Wixom Road frontage, to remain at a height of 15" while the approved detail indicates that a minimum height of 24" would be constructed. The property is located at 28971 S. Wixom Road, Wixom 48393, is zoned GPUD, Gateway Planned Unit Development and the parcel number is 22-07-200-009.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Call to the Public:

None.

Staff Comments:

Mr. Avantini noted that Mr. Thomas' request for a recommendation to City Council to rezone the Creekside development will be heard at the March 5, 2018 meeting. Legal notice has yet to be published for this hearing. —

Mr. Avantini noted that there is a draft of the Master Plan which will come before the Planning Commission for its review after which it will be distributed to surrounding communities and the County. The City Attorney made minor changes. He can hold the review off until late March so that Chairman Day can be present for that. He may put that on the March 26, 2018 agenda. Mr. Sprague will likely attend that meeting in his stead.

Commission Comments:

Chairman Day noted that he will be absent for the next three meetings due to work commitments and personal travel. Commissioner Barts noted that he will be traveling for work and will be unavailable for the February 5, 2018 and March 5, 2018 meeting. Commissioner Lawrence said that he will not be available for the February 27, 2018 meeting either. Commissioner Cousineau thinks it would be unfortunate if the Chairman were not present for the Creekside and upcoming meetings.

Commissioner Lawrence noted that he received a letter from his neighbors encouraging residents to attend the meeting for Creekside's development rezoning request. There was some kind of information meeting held in January, 2018. Mr. Avantini noted that there is a lot of misinformation regarding this. He acknowledged that traffic will be a big consideration. He will set up a mini training session on the topic of traffic prior to the actual public hearing for the Commissioners' benefit. The developer is aware of the concerns and he has retained a traffic consultant. Chairman Day asked whether this will be addressed in next week's City-wide joint meeting. Mr. Avantini said the different housing types involved in this project, especially large lot, single-family housing, will be discussed. He noted that there is not enough housing and that people currently seeking housing do not want large lot, single-family lots. It is critical to get through the emotional aspects and get to the factual concerns. The developer told him that they can actually improve the traffic flow on Wixom Road and the intersection of Pontiac Trail and Wixom Road even post-development. Commissioner Grossi asked how that is possible. Mr. Avantini deferred to the applicant's traffic consultant. He noted that even though there will be a lot more units, the number of vehicle trips are very comparable, due to the different types of housing being developed here. Commissioner Grossi asked whether there is still an issue with apartments over there. Mr. Avantini said there is nothing else to put next to the railroad tracks. People will not buy homes next to the railroad tracks but they will rent there especially if the units are nice enough. Rental units are a much more viable choice. Commissioner Grossi asked about the percentage of single-family to residential units and noted that Wixom is split at 50/50. Mr. Avantini noted that people are looking for rental units or to downsize. The City does have a high percentage of multi-family compared to other communities. However, the apartments were there before the single-family residential was built. Commissioner Barts noted that there

is a convoluted way to get back into the subdivision as you exit Meijer's onto Grand River and that he has been back there. There is a signal next to The Drafting Table and a parking lot. Has the City had any discussions regarding securing access to that development rather than via Wixom Road? Mr. Avantini said that the Railroad is not giving out new crossings. The City is actively looking to create a connection between Maple Road and Pontiac Trail at the City's western edge abutting Milford Township. It is not just getting the easements but also the construction dollars. The Planning Commissioners will be seeing an industrial park proposal and there is the potential to get State monies in order to make that connection. He has been working with Mr. Sikma and Ms. Barker regarding this. Many years ago, when they looked at the west Oakland corridor study, nobody wanted to host the north/south traffic. The new projects are very challenging since the residents want to penalize them. Chairman Day noted that Wixom has no control over what goes in in Commerce Township or Milford. Mr. Avantini thinks that the one connection would be a major boost and would relieve some of the congestion. He noted that millennials are more open to change.

Commissioner Barts questioned the change in procedure for the tonight's meeting where the Commissioners were asked to reply if they were attending the meeting, as opposed to replying to the email from Ms. Raddatz only if they cannot attend which was the prior procedure. Mr. Avantini said that he would inform Ms. Raddatz to revert to the prior procedure for informing of regrets only.

ADJOURNMENT:

This meeting of the Planning Commission was motioned and adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Nancy Fisher
Recording Secretary