

**CITY OF WIXOM
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2018**

Approved

3.26.18

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chairman Carter of the Planning Commission at 7:32 p.m. at which time allegiance was pledged to the American flag.

PRESENT: Phillip Carter (Acting Chairman), Joe Barts, Ray Cousineau and Sandro Grossi
ABSENT: William Day (Excused), Anthony Lawrence (Excused) and Peter Sharpe (Excused)
OTHERS: Jason Sprague (on behalf of 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 January 29, 2018 Joint Meeting Minutes and the January 22, 2018 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes:

MOTION and seconded by Commissioners Cousineau and Barts to approve the January 22, 2018 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes and the January 29, 2018 Joint Meeting Minutes.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

City Manager's Update -- January 23, 2018
City Manager's Update -- February 13, 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. PUBLIC HEARING FOR SPECIAL LAND USE #17-001: COMMUNITY FINANCIAL CREDIT UNION, 28607 S. WIXOM ROAD, WIXOM, MI 48393:** The applicant is seeking special land use approval for an accessory drive-through window at Community Financial Credit Union located at 29607 S. Wixom Road. The drive-through window is proposed on the south side of the building. Other site improvements include: construction of a new credit union and site landscaping. The Municipal Code, *Section 18.09.020, Table 9.02*, requires approval from the Planning Commission for this request. The property is zoned GPUD, where banks are permitted uses in the district and accessory drive-through windows are allowed as special land uses and the parcel identification number is 96-22-07-426-010.

Mr. Sprague referred to Mr. Avantini's February 16, 2018 review letter which includes five general and four specific conditions. There is only one item relating to the drive through which was not in compliance: the applicant needs five stacking spaces for the drive through in addition to the space for the teller which actually requires six cars. It was not feasible to add that additional stacking space and provide proper vehicular circulation. Accordingly, that requires a waiver. He recommends approval conditioned upon the Planning Commission granting the waiver for the removal of one stacking space.

Doug Clark, The Case Group, 28175 Haggerty Road, Novi. He is the developer. The civil engineer and the architect are also present tonight to answer any questions or address concerns. He believes this is pretty self-explanatory. Stacking more than five cars in a drive through is problematic. Commissioner Cousineau noted that he has some concerns

regarding the site plan which he would like to review and resolve with the applicant. Accordingly, he would like to be able to jump ahead to the second agenda item, the applicant's site plan review. Commissioner Cousineau confirmed with Acting Chairman Carter that three of the four Planning Commissioners would need to approve the applicant's request in order for the motion to be granted.

MOTION and second by Commissioners Cousineau and Barts to hold the public hearing regarding the applicant's request for special land use and defer action on the special land use in order to make it concurrent with Agenda Item No. 2.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

- 2. SITE PLAN REVIEW, SPR #00-009-17, COMMUNITY FINANCIAL CREDIT UNION, 28607 S. WIXOM ROAD, WIXOM, MI 48393:** The applicant is seeking site plan approval for the construction of a new credit union, Community Financial Credit Union, at 28607 S. Wixom Road, which is on the northwest corner of I-96 and Wixom Road in the Assembly Park development. The 3,810 -square foot credit union will be located immediately south of the southernmost entry drive, fronting on Wixom Road. In addition to the building, proposed site improvements include: one parking lot with 20 new parking spaces, including 2 barrier-free spaces; a drive through lane requiring a special land use permit; lighting; and various landscape improvements. Access to the site will be from Assembly Park Drive, an interior service road with connections to Wixom Road. The property is located at 28607 S. Wixom Road, is zoned GPUD and the parcel identification number is 96-22-07-426-010.

Mr. Sprague referred to Mr. Avantini's February 16, 2018 review letter. The applicant's site plan was reviewed for compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and the Gateway Planned Unit Development (GPUD) design standards. Most items are in compliance except for a few things that should be noted. He recommends approval conditioned upon: 1) that full sign details be provided to ensure compliance with the Ordinance; 2) information regarding the screening of any building-, ground- and roof-mounted mechanical equipment and utilities must be provided; 3) that special land use approval is granted; 4) review and approval from other applicable consultants, departments and agencies.

Mr. Sprague asked the applicant to present the proposed building materials to the Commissioners for their review. Commissioner Cousineau asked whether the applicant intends to use split face block.

Jason Covalle, Covalle Group Architects, 2019 Fourth Street, Jackson. The applicant said it is a cut natural stone. Commissioner Cousineau asked whether the samples are representative of the size of the units. The applicant said it is a cultured stone but it is real. It will go on the pillars. There is some wainscoating. Commissioner Cousineau confirmed the brick sample and the colors with the applicant. The applicant also indicated it will use EFIS. It is mostly masonry. The windows will be aluminum. Commissioner Cousineau confirmed the treatment will be the same on all four elevations.

Commissioner Cousineau noted that one of his concerns is the retaining wall which runs along Wixom Road. It is not very long but it is made of wood. He does not like wood retaining walls since they are unattractive and have a limited life span especially if they are improperly installed. However, the Planning Commissioners did approve Aldi's site plan which included a short masonry wall with a decorative wrought-iron fence on the top and considered it a nice feature. Can the applicant consider installing that type of wall in lieu of the retaining wall and continue it solely along the Wixom Road frontage? There is a jog on the property which might be a Michigan Department of Transportation right-of-way. The wall could be started at the end of that jog and be continued north, about 80-90 feet worth of wall.

Greg Petru, KEBS, Inc., 2116 Haslett Road, Haslett. Commissioner Cousineau pointed out the location of the retaining wall on the plans. Mr. Covalle expressed concern about the cost. Mr. Petru asked whether landscaping would still be required if they comply with the request regarding the wall. Commissioner Cousineau said that shrubbery would be nice but it would not have to be anything significant. He would be willing to trade the wall for some of the landscaping. Mr. Pietru asked how tall the Aldi's wall is. Commissioner Cousineau said that it is nine bricks high. Acting Chairman Carter asked Commissioner Cousineau whether he would like to table this agenda item. Commissioner Cousineau said that he believes Mr. Avantini can deal with this administratively to ensure that it is compatible with Aldi's wall. Acting

Chairman Carter confirmed that Commissioner Cousineau wants a wall similar to that of Aldi’s since it will be visible to westbound passengers entering the City.

MOTION and second by Commissioners Cousineau and Grossi to approve Special Land Use #17-001, Community Financial Credit Union’s request for special land use for an accessory drive through window at Community Financial Credit Union to allow for four stacking cars plus one in the stall. The property is located at 28607 S. Wixom Road, is zoned GPUD and the parcel identification number is 96-22-07-426-010.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION and second by Commissioners Cousineau and Barts to approve SPR #00-009-17, Community Financial Credit Union’s request for site plan review conditioned upon the enumerated items in Mr. Avantini’s February 16, 2018 review letter. The applicant must also meet with the City Planner to coordinate installation of a wall similar to that of Aldi’s of a masonry nature with decorative wrought iron along Wixom Road frontage in exchange for a tradeoff of landscaping. Additionally, the wood retaining wall will be changed to another material; i.e., masonry or landscaping boulders or something of a more permanent nature. The property is located at 28607 S. Wixom Road, is zoned GPUD and the parcel identification number is 96-22-07-426-010.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

- 3. SITE PLAN REVIEW, SPR #08-013-17, MOTOR CITY CAR WASH, 49231 ALPHA DRIVE, WIXOM, MI 48393:** The applicant is seeking site plan approval for the construction of a car wash for Motor City Express Operations at 49231 Alpha Drive, which is east of Wixom Road, north of I-96, at the southwest corner of Alpha Drive and Alpha Court in the Alpha Tech Corporate Park. Proposed site improvements include: a 3,882-sq. ft. indoor car wash facility with a 3-station canopied pay area, and 14 vacuum stations; 5 parking spaces including 1 barrier-free space; a dumpster enclosure; and various landscape improvements. Access to the site will be from 2 driveways, one along Alpha Court which is shared with the gas station to the west and for exiting only, and one on Alpha Drive. The property is zoned FS, Freeway Service District, where car washes are permitted uses in that district subject to the standards of *Section 18.06.040.G* and the parcel identification number is 22-08-326-044.

Mr. Sprague referred to Mr. Avantini’s February 29, 2018 review letter. There are a few concerns which for the most part can be handled administratively including certain setback requirements which are not being met. The canopy, vacuum and some of the parking extend into the setback which would require Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) variances for the front and side yard since they are not in a planned unit development (PUD). The applicant could meet the setback if it moves the vacuum and parking spaces. Also, the proposed lighting exceeds the foot candle requirements. The applicant will need to verify it can meet that requirement.

Mr. Sprague recommends approval conditioned upon: 1) submission of a revised site plan, to be reviewed and approved administratively which addresses the above outstanding review comments; 2) the applicant obtaining variances from the Zoning Board of Appeals for the identified setbacks; and 3) review and approval of other applicable City consultants, agencies and departments.

Commissioner Barts confirmed with Mr. Sprague that the applicant can eliminate the need for a variance by the ZBA by relocating some of the devices. Does the applicant want to do that? Mr. Sprague said that has been offered to the applicant as an option since it is only 1 foot away from meeting the requirement. However, the applicant can proceed with requesting a variance if it chooses to do so. Commissioner Barts noted that he would rather abstain from this discussion and voting on this matter since he sits on both the Planning Commission and the ZBA. Commissioner Cousineau noted that if Commissioner Barts abstains and the other Planning Commissioners approve the applicant’s request three to zero, it would be a moot point. Acting Chairman Carter asked whether three Commissioners acting on a 7-person Commission would constitute a quorum. Mr. Sprague said that four votes would be required for a majority.

Shane Burley, Studio Detroit, 2111 Woodward, Suite 1001, Detroit and Mike McPherson, Atwell, LLC, Two Towne Square, Ste. 700, Southfield. Mr. Burley is the architect. Commissioner Cousineau asked the applicants whether they are

willing to relocate some of their site features. Mr. Burley said that he has not seen a planning report as of yet although he thinks there may be room on the site. Mr. McPherson said that there are two setbacks on the north and south sides. He thinks there is a 20-foot greenbelt on the north. They need a 10-foot greenbelt on the south and they have 5 feet. Mr. Burley confirmed that it relates to the canopy which includes the vacuum stations as an accessory structure.

Acting Chairman Carter noted that regardless of what else is done, this will proceed to the ZBA and the Planning Commissioners will be unable to take action due to the lack of quorum. Commissioner Barts said that he can abstain in voting with the ZBA if he votes here in the Planning Commission. Acting Chairman Carter said that he thought Commissioner Barts would be able to act in both the Planning Commission and the ZBA. He would prefer that Commissioner Barts participate in tonight's Planning Commission discussions and also cast a vote with the understanding that he may not be able to vote on this matter if and when it comes before the ZBA. Mr. Sprague noted that if the Planning Commission can alleviate at least two or three of the four possible variances tonight, that would be beneficial. Acting Chairman Carter referred to a front yard setback to Alpha Court, a 20-foot parking setback which is actually 10 feet. Mr. McPherson said that he is aware of the north and south and he intends to seek a variance for that.

Commissioner Cousineau requested clarification on what variances are being sought by the applicant. Acting Chairman Carter said they are: 1) a front yard setback on Alpha Drive for the canopy; 2) a front yard setback on Alpha Court to the north for the building canopy, parking and vacuum area; and 3) a side yard setback to the south for the parking. Acting Chairman Carter confirmed with Mr. Sprague that the parking is just the paved area.

Mr. McPherson said that he had a meeting with the City and spoke to the Building Official about this. He is happy to have this conversation again administratively with the City Planner. Acting Chairman Carter noted that is fine and that if it does not get resolved, it would go on to the ZBA. Acting Chairman Carter inquired about the mechanical unit screening referred to on page 3 of Mr. Avantini's review letter. It was presented to the applicant who agreed to enlarge the proposed shrubbery. Also, Acting Chairman Carter confirmed with the applicant that the drive aisle dimensions will be noted on the prints. Acting Commissioner Carter referenced the 97-105 feet. The applicant said it is trying to maintain separation from the intersection. He thinks that would be a worse traffic situation than having two driveways too close together. There needs to be more distance. Mr. Sprague noted that the parking lot landscaping is not applicable since there are less than 10 spaces although he will need to see information provided on the applicant's revised site plan. Mr. Sprague also noted that the applicant will need to provide additional lighting details confirming that the lighting under the canopy will be decreased. Commissioner Cousineau confirmed with Mr. Sprague that the lighting is greater than that required by the Ordinance and that it needs to be decreased at the pay point at the canopy. Mr. Sprague will provide those specifications to the applicant.

Commissioner Cousineau said that he does not have a problem with the applicant's request except for the ZBA variances. He asked the applicant how the two points of egress to the gas station driveway will stop people from pulling in there as opposed to using a one-way exit. He noted that Culver's has a one-way in driveway and it is used as an exit by everyone. He believes the applicant will have difficulty controlling that traffic. Mr. Burley said that he is proposing an electric lift gate on the southerly drive. The north exit is a single exit drive that is short in length. He showed building material samples to the Commissioners. He noted there will be a lot of lathing with a modern design. The exterior will be a small panel with the remainder ACM, an aluminum composite. It will feature a lot of glass. They shied away from a typical car wash façade.

Acting Chairman Carter asked where customers will dispose of their trash. The applicant said that there will be an integrated trash can on each vacuum unit. Mr. McPherson said that there will be one enclosure with two dumpsters, one for the car wash and one for the gas station. Commissioner Cousineau asked the applicant when it intends to open. The application said as soon as possible, ideally late this summer.

MOTION and second by Commissioners Cousineau and Grossi to approve SPR #08-013-17, Motor City Car Wash's request for site plan approval for the construction of a car wash for Motor City Express Operations conditioned upon the criteria outlined in Mr. Avantini's February 19, 2018 review letter, subject to the ZBA granting the requested variances and the approval of all City consultants, departments and agencies. The requirement for landscaping on the westerly portion of the site is waived. The property is located at 49231 Alpha Drive, Wixom, is zoned FS, Freeway Service District and the parcel identification number is 22-08-326-044.

Administrative Items:**1. HRS Communities – Shannon Morgan – Discussion of a proposed development off Wixom Road.**

Mr. Sprague introduced HRS who does housing developments in several states. They are looking at a housing development along Wixom Road and are here tonight to give a small presentation for the purposes of getting feedback from the Commissioners.

Jeff Katzen, 23370 Commerce Drive, Farmington Hills and David Magnum, Gibbs Planning Group. Mr. Katzen said the site is on Wixom Road on the east side just north of Maple Road. They are a fourth generation builder/developer and have done many projects. Currently, they have a 146-lot development in Westland which is almost complete. He distributed information about his company along with a preliminary site plan to the Commissioners. This development will contain a pocket park along with rear entry garages situated along a central park area. Acting Chairman Carter asked whether the applicant's proposed development in Wixom is the same as the one they are just completing in Westland. The applicant said that it is not and that the Westland homes feature front entry. While the Westland development does have some open space, it is not configured the same. His development in Wixom would be a freshly designed product. They intend to offer a 2-story homes, ranches and/or a one and a half story in order to meet the needs of buyers. They will probably be in the range of 1,700-2,400 square feet. The site does have some constraints including a gas line on the north end of the property which runs through the property as well as that of the subdivision behind it. That is a 45-foot easement which precludes structures on it. He is proposing 18 homes. Acting Chairman Carter confirmed with the applicant that the gas line is situated along the rear entry 'Lane A' designated on the plans and that the gas line must be accessible to the gas company for purposes of maintenance.

Mr. Katzen requested feedback from the Commissioners regarding his proposed plan as well as the rear entry garages. He noted the development will still have open space for a common park which can be passive or active with options for a gazebo, benches, etc. Acting Chairman Carter said that the Commissioners have long desired rear entry garages. Mr. Magnum noted that they are rear garages with a common alley which allows for closer placement of the homes. This means the driveways do not split up every lot. That makes it more walkable and community oriented. They put the extra space (100 feet by 175 feet) toward the central park which can be used to host events and be a generous gathering space. They designed a similar project in Beverly Hills which has homes fronting the green space. There is a gap in the real estate market between homes situated on larger lots and the downtown area but there is nothing in between. It is about building a community more than a subdivision.

Commissioner Cousineau asked for clarification about the exact location of this parcel. Mr. Sprague pointed it out on an online map and noted it is next to a commercial car sales facility. It is about one-tenth of a mile north of Maple Road. It has R-3 zoning which requires 12,000-square foot lots. Commissioner Cousineau confirmed these would be site condos. He asked whether the roads would be private and noted that this is important. He also wonders whether the turning radius on the interior could be a problem. Mr. Katzen noted it is about 11 lots.

Commissioner Cousineau believes that the applicant's biggest challenge will be the surrounding neighbors including those to his east and south since it looks like the setbacks are small. Mr. Magnum noted that the setbacks are 20 feet to the garage with 30 feet required by R-3 zoning. Commissioner Cousineau noted that it is 20 feet to the east property line. Mr. Sprague noted that it is an 80-foot width for a two-story height. The front yard setback is 35 feet and the side yard setback is 6 feet, 16 inches with a 35-foot rear yard setback. Acting Chairman Carter noted that it could be a problem if decks are permitted since those have previously wound up before the ZBA. Commissioner Cousineau asked what the price point will be for the housing. The applicant said that is yet unknown.

Acting Chairman Carter noted that close setbacks will probably require more landscaping. Mr. Katzen said that he always meets with the neighbors to get them onboard. Acting Chairman Carter said that the number one issue will be traffic. Commissioner Cousineau concurred especially for southbound traffic in the morning and northbound in the evening. He noted that there is another impending development which will be situated south of Maple Road on the west side of Wixom Road which will be fairly high density (the school property). Mr. Katzen noted that this sort of development is attractive to millennials and empty nesters. He cited Robertson Brothers' development which contained more ranches than two

stories which he has factored into his plans. The trend is toward walkable downtowns. Commissioner Cousineau noted that adding residential only enhances the downtown district and that long term it could become more of a destination area. He believes the applicant's biggest challenges will be density, setbacks and the surrounding residents. Getting the neighbors to support this will go a long way although they may object because it does not comply with the Master Plan and it exceeds the density.

Commissioner Cousineau asked who the applicant's buyers are. The applicant said that in Westland it is families buying the two-story models. Then there are multi-generational families buying a 3-bedroom ranch with a second floor including a bedroom suite and a second bedroom (for college kids returning home or older parents). Mr. Sprague noted that even though this property is zoned R-3, the development that is proposed is closer to R-4. It is almost 16 units and they are at 18. If they are R-4 PUD, it would be far closer to the Ordinance requirements give or take a few items.

Call to the Public:

There were no comments made by the public.

Staff Comments:

There were no comments made by the staff.

Commission Comments:

Commissioner Grossi noted that he attended the recent town hall meeting at Wixom Elementary before tonight's Planning Commission meeting. It was interesting and there were at least 80 people in attendance. There were a couple comments made about the Planning Commission regarding the Creekside development. Mr. Powell, the Engineer, stated that all of the downtown businesses came to the Planning Commission and said they wanted this development to happen. He does not recall any business from the downtown area coming here and conveying that message to the Planning Commission. It was understood that the applicant would contact the City to see if he could come back to the Planning Commission to present a plan. He said that he came to the Planning Commission and the Commissioners liked it so much they asked the applicant to come back with a plan. He does not recall this.

Commissioner Grossi noted that either Mr. Avantini or Ms. Barker said that traffic lights could alleviate the traffic congestion. He noted that currently it takes 10 minutes to get from Pontiac Trail to Loon Lake Road. Commissioner Barts noted that the statistics cited in the report of the traffic consultant may be valid but you still need to convince the residents.

Commissioner Cousineau noted that Lyon Township wants to know what benefits accrue to the community when developers come in with a higher density development.

ADJOURNMENT:

This meeting of the Planning Commission was motioned and adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Nancy Fisher
Recording Secretary