

APPROVED

August 8, 2018

**CITY OF WIXOM
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 23, 2018**

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chairman Carter of the Planning Commission at 7:37 p.m. at which time allegiance was pledged to the American flag.

PRESENT: Phillip Carter (Acting Chairman), Anthony Lawrence, Joe Barts, Peter Sharpe, Sandro Grossi and William Day (7:44 p.m.)

ABSENT: Ray Cousineau (Excused)

OTHERS: Carmine Avantini (CIB Planning), Tim Sikma (Director of Public Works) 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 June 25, 2018 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes:

MOTION and seconded by Commissioners Lawrence and Grossi to approve the June 25, 2018 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

City Manager's Update – July 10, 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. **SPR #05-012-18, City (Wainstock) Parking Lot:** Site plan for the redevelopment and expansion of the City parking lot located behind 49341 – 49500 Pontiac Trail, with frontage on Wainstock Street, Old Wixom Road and S. Wixom Road. The 3.42-acre parcel is zoned VCA, Village Center Area, where municipal parking lots are permitted uses.

Mr. Avantini apologized to the Commissioners for not providing them with a written copy of his review letter and the related documents tonight. He will email that to them after tonight's meeting. He noted that Diffin-Umlor volunteered the engineering services for this project since it owns the house which sits on the edge of the parking lot and they require additional parking. That home will likely be torn down. The City has met with Diffin-Umlor. The challenge with the lot is the space. He has spoken to the City's traffic consultant. There are 170 regular spaces, two electrical charging stations and six Americans with Disabilities (ADA)-compliant parking spaces. The Ordinance only permits parking in the side and rear yards. This site is actually the rear yard for the buildings on Pontiac Trail and the side and front yards for Wixom, Old Wixom Road and Wainstock. The Commissioners will have to determine whether it meets

the intent of the Ordinance. Parking in the side yard should be screened by a 3-foot tall brick screen wall between the side wall and the parking lot. They can also do something like a hedgerow or a wrought-iron fence instead of a brick wall. They have looked hard. With the addition of spaces on Wainstock, it would leave no room for screening in addition to the walkway. Tim Sikma, Director of Public Services, is present tonight and has been involved in these conversations since the beginning. The spaces and aisle width meet the Ordinance requirements. The existing sidewalks are 5 feet. Consideration should be given to rubber bumper blocks to prevent vehicle overhang.

Mr. Avantini is happy with the landscaping. However, the trees should be 2½-inch caliper instead of 2 inches. Acting Chairman Carter confirmed with Mr. Avantini that he is recommending a reduction in the tree size. He asked about the reduced number of trees. Mr. Avantini said that he has struggled with this. When they added the required number of interior trees, they lost too many parking spaces and they really need parking. It does not fit when you apply suburban standards to this site. These sites will never be perfect. The tree caliper size should be part of his recommendation under No. 1. Acting Chairman Carter said that he does not feel comfortable making a decision on this tonight since he does not know what he is agreeing to. Unless it is crucial, he suggests this be tabled until the August Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Avantini said that it is crucial since bid packets are being put together and it is being combined with two other City bids. The Planning Commissioners requested that Mr. Avantini email them the recommendation letter which they were not provided in advance of tonight. Acting Chairman Carter said that he wants to see Mr. Avantini's review letter before acting on this agenda item.

Mr. Avantini said there are 90 spaces and it will more than double to 188. He noted that lot fills up. Some of the parking will be screened by the new building on Wixom Road which will replace the house that will be torn down. The home used to be a residence. It would be screened along Wainstock; however, there is not enough room. They are debating between parallel parking recommended by the traffic consultant and the 90-degree parking wanted by Diffin-Umlor. Mr. Sikma would prefer angled parking angled toward Old Wixom Road. Only southbound Wixom Road vehicles could park on Wainstock. Commissioner Grossi noted that there is nothing posted saying you cannot turn left there. Mr. Sikma noted that you can turn left onto Wainstock. Chairman Day asked why angled parking is desired. Mr. Sikma said it allows for more road space, perhaps another foot. Mr. Avantini said that would lose 6 spaces. Commissioner Grossi noted that Wainstock is not a busy road and that you can pull in and out without much hassle. Chairman Day noted you would pull out onto Old Wixom Road. Mr. Avantini noted that the traffic consultant said that angled parking would be her fallback choice. She wanted the Wixom Road entrance closed. He thinks it is shown as right in, right out on the plan. Commissioner Grossi confirmed that is the entrance behind the veterinarian. He noted there is not enough room to put up hedgerows along Wainstock. He noted there would be less maintenance and it would represent a cost savings. Mr. Avantini noted that it is better to have a larger parking lot that everyone can access instead of making everyone in the VCA develop their own. With any parking lot like this, people will load wherever they need to, regardless of what is designated, and you just work out what is available during that time of the day. Someone may have to wait a few minutes for a delivery truck to leave. They looked at pedestrian circulation including having a well-stripped crossing lane right where you enter Wainstock from Wixom Road. They may want flashing pedestrian signs to slow traffic on Wainstock.

Mr. Avantini noted that a double dumpster enclosure is being provided and there will be mechanical screening. There are some inconsistencies on the lighting plan but nothing that cannot be overcome. Those items will be reviewed administratively. They will use full cutoff LED fixtures which are not adjustable. He will require further details on the lighting plan. He will work out the various signage including 'stop', 'right turn only' and for the charging stations as part of the bid package. There are three clusters of mailboxes on the north side of Wainstock which will be removed. Usually he sits down with

the Postmaster to work that out. This proposal will require the review and approval of all other City departments, agencies and consultants.

Mr. Avantini recommends approval of the site plan conditioned upon: 1) a revised site plan being submitted correcting the keynotes and references on Sheet 4; 2) Planning Commission approval of the reduced number of interior parking lot trees; 3) A Planning Commission determination regarding the need for bumper blocks along Wainstock; 4) the acceptable relocation of the mailbox clusters; and 5) review and approval from other applicable consultants, departments and agencies.

Chairman Day asked whether the area with bumper blocks should be changed to angled parking. Mr. Avantini said that it will be angled parking. Chairman Day said that he thinks with the angled parking bumper blocks would be required. Commissioner Grossi agreed and noted that there are no bumper blocks at the pizzeria and that parking is angled. He asked about plowing and noted that is maintenance. Chairman Day said if it is angled he does not want bumper blocks. Mr. Sikma noted that they are also recommending a charging station behind the auto parts area which will be utilized. There will not be a gain from the charging stations and the electric car owners will swipe their card and pay for it directly themselves. Chairman Day noted that both Royal Oak and Ann Arbor offer free charging for electric cars including most municipal lots.

Commissioner Barts noted that Wainstock will be visible. New buildings are proposed. Now there will be fencing at least on the traffic side since there will not be bushes. That would be heading north. Over here, you have 99 percent of the traffic looking at it. Mr. Avantini asked about putting landscaping and a small fence on the east side near the entrance. There is a utility line on Old Wixom Road where hedges could be placed. Commissioner Barts noted that there is a large greenbelt there so there is some separation. Columns or something ornamental could go there. Chairman Day confirmed that is along S. Wixom Road where the future two-story building will go. Mr. Sikma suggested something bike-oriented which would hook that area into the Airline Trail. He noted that Ms. Barker has been trying to integrate something like that. It could even be sculpture.

Chairman Day asked what is between the parking spaces on S. Wainstock and the parking lot. Mr. Sikma said it is a sidewalk. Chairman Day noted that it would break it up aesthetically to put a masonry half wall all along that edge of the parking lot. Mr. Avantini said there is not enough room for that and a 5-foot walkway. The sidewalk will be impinged on both sides with the angled parking.

Chairman Day noted that there is no way to know what would be developed on the south side. Mr. Avantini said that he looked hard at pushing that over. Wainstock will be a little wider. Hopefully that will encourage redevelopment there. Chairman Day noted that just a sidewalk between two rows of cars without anything breaking it up seems strange.

Commissioners Barts asked whether the sidewalk is a safety concern for the cars coming off Wainstock so people would be forced to walk in the street. They are almost obligated to have a sidewalk there. Commissioner Grossi asked what type of building the future two-story structure might be—office, retail with condo, etc.? Mr. Avantini said they are looking at combined office/retail, small-scale retail but primarily office. A rendering has been prepared. It would have good flexibility. In other communities, the downtowns which are doing well have a mixture of architectural styles.

Acting Chairman Carter asked what materials will be used for the dumpster enclosure. What will it look like? Mr. Avantini said it will be decorative masonry split-face block with a cast stone cap which makes it look like limestone. Commissioner Carter noted that a column on the other side could match that.

Chairman Day noted that any motion should include that the parking along Wainstock will be angled parking without bumper blocks.

Commissioner Grossi asked about the differences between angled, perpendicular and angled parking. Is there a loss of spaces? Mr. Avantini said it was in the 4-6 range. The traffic consultant wanted parallel but this was not desired from a safety point of view. As a fallback she thought angled would be better than perpendicular. Acting Chairman Carter asked whether the approval of the decreased number of parking lot trees equates to a contribution to the Tree Fund. How does that work here? Mr. Sikma noted that the City will plant eight additional trees in a park or other City property. The trees will still have to be planted. He noted that they got a grant from the U.S. Forest Service this year to plant 17 trees.

Commissioner Barts suggested adding to the motion a wrought-iron fence on the columns on the eastbound lot to dress up the appearance from Wixom Road just at the entry. Mr. Avantini noted that the Planning Commission will see the site plan and can work with them then. Acting Chairman Carter noted that the addition of columns on each side of the one in/one out driveway between the veterinarian and the existing house gives them an opportunity to create a buffer space.

MOTION and second by Commissioners Carter and Lawrence to approve SPR #05-012-18, City (Wainstock) Parking Lot’s request for site plan for the redevelopment and expansion of the City parking lot located behind 49341 – 49500 Pontiac Trail, with frontage on Wainstock Street, Old Wixom Road and S. Wixom Road. This approval is conditioned upon: 1) revised site plan correcting keynotes and references on Sheet 4; 2) approval of decreased number of interior parking lot trees noting that a shortfall will be made up on other City properties by planting a comparable number and size of trees; 3) the Planning Commission has determined that there is no need for parking blocks along Wainstock; 4) acceptable relocation of the mailbox clusters; 5) the changing of the 90-degree parking depicted along Wainstock to angled parking to support travel from east to west; 6) that new columns be installed at the east side entry on either side to match the dumpster enclosure appearance and style; and 7) review and approval of other applicable City consultants, departments and agencies.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Call to the Public:

There were no comments made by the public.

Staff Comments:

Mr. Avantini noted that at the last Planning Commission meeting he mentioned the Wilson Marine site. They have made inquiries to Mr. Avantini regarding the deferment of landscaping and lighting work. The Planning Commission previously said the landscaping could be put off until next year but the lighting needed to be done this year. He got another call from the owner saying that financially the lighting is a challenge. They would like to know if they can wait another year to change out the lights. It is a big expense and they need to generate some income first. They are doing a lot of things there. Commissioner Grossi asked whether their lot is sufficiently lit as is. Mr. Avantini said it is the off-site glare that is the problem when you drive by. He will have them put new lights on the building and new pole lights for the parking lot lights. He suggested giving them until June 1, 2019. Commissioner Barts noted that DTE’s rebate program starts over the first of the year so they have missed out. Chairman Day does not have a problem with Wilson’s request as long as their premises are adequately lit currently. Mr. Sikma noted that they will need a water main easement. Mr. Avantini said that their building looks really good when you pull in. They have some nice boats out there. Chairman Day said that they have been in business a long time. Commissioner Grossi said that their parking lot looks nice.

Commission Comments:

Chairman Day apologized for his tardy arrival tonight.

Commissioner Grossi asked about West Road between the railroad tracks and Beck. Mr. Sikma said that they had a pre-construction meeting last Thursday. They will be using the same contractor who is doing Highgate. They will turn it over to the pavers and then move over there. There is a 5-day requirement for putting up one-way traffic signage so everyone becomes accustomed to the new traffic flow. It should be done by the end of October.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Nancy Fisher
Recording Secretary