

FLINT ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Meeting Minutes - *Approved*
December 18, 2018

Commissioners Present

Chris Zuwala, Chair
Matthew Telliga, Vice-Chair
John Hardy
Mona Munroe-Younis
Heather Kale
Jerry Kea
Jacqueline Jordan

Staff Present

Corey Christensen, Zoning Coordinator
Andy Aamodt, Planner I
Reed Eriksson, Assistant City Attorney

Commissioners Not Present

Carol-Anne Blower

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Zuwala called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. Roll was taken and a quorum was present. The meeting was held in the Planning & Development Conference Room, South Building, Flint City Hall.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

M/S – Telliga/Munroe-Younis

Motion to adopt the meeting agenda as presented.

Unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The Board reviewed the minutes of 11-20-18 and made no changes.

M/S – Telliga/Kea

Motion to adopt the 11-20-18 meeting minutes as presented.

Unanimously carried.

REPORTS:

There were no reports.

COMMUNICATIONS:

There were no communications.

PUBLIC HEARING:

ZBA 18-2222: Glenn Wilson, of Communities First, Inc. requests a non-use variance to increase the 30' maximum height requirement by an additional 15' at 422 W. University Ave. (Parcel ID 40-12-457-008).

Commissioner Zuwala stated he and Glenn Wilson are acquaintances, but has never discussed this case with him.

Glenn Wilson presented the project. He has had two neighborhood meetings prior to this, where he and the neighborhood discussed structural and height issues. Now they are before the Board to ask for the non-use variance to allow for a 45' tall structure. They are looking to have more neighborhood charrettes

regarding the design. They have also reached out to Saginaw Chippewa Tribe to get their comments because of the Native Burial Ground in the area.

Keith Van Wagoner spoke in opposition.

Paul Herring Jr. spoke in opposition.

Anna Paige spoke in opposition.

Nancy Sinclair spoke in opposition.

Ryan Eashoo spoke in opposition.

Annette O'Malley spoke in opposition.

William Gainey spoke in opposition.

Paul Herring Sr. spoke in opposition.

Ray Sinclair spoke in opposition.

Andre Linden spoke in opposition.

No one spoke in favor. Corey Christensen confirmed staff received three emails in opposition to the request.

Glenn Wilson spoke about the designs. From a privacy perspective, they will incorporate different buffers. They want to build walkable neighborhoods, and this will not be car-centric. There are different design-element ideas the neighborhood gave them.

Kurt Neiswender, the project's architect, spoke. They are currently in a pickle right now regarding the Master Plan and Future Land Use Plan. Regarding height and appropriateness, the future, recommended, Zoning Code will allow 45' height. Design work is being done to figure out if they can fit a four story building under 45'.

Mr. Wilson stated they are actively looking for tracts of land in the downtown area, but have not seen any. They are currently leveraging \$20 million of funding for the project. There will be jobs and there will be retail space jobs. The retail space will be two 1,000 square foot spaces.

Mr. Wilson stated the denial of this variance would actually be a financial burden on his non-profit. They are trying to build quality housing in the community. This will be a both market rate and affordable housing development. Flint has one of the oldest and poorest housing stocks in the state of Michigan. There are other opportunities for green space in the neighborhood.

Commissioner Kea asked about parking standards and setbacks. He pointed out that there are 58 parking spaces on the plot plan and wondered if that will be enough. Corey Christensen explained the setback requirements, and explained that the applicants would need to meet all the zoning standards when they go through the Planning Commission for Site Plan Review.

Commissioner Hardy stressed that the current zoning ordinance does not allow for this structure height. He feels the Board should not vote against the current 30' height standard. Corey Christensen and Reed Eriksson explained that this relief is what the non-use variance request would grant.

M/S – Telliga/Kale

Motion to approve ZBA 18-2222 as presented.

Yes – Zuwala, Jordan, Kale, Telliga

No – Hardy, Kea, Munroe-Younis

Variance denied.

Commissioner Munroe-Younis stated the parcel seems to be better suited for moderate density residential. She considers high density too dense here, and in a historic neighborhood.

Commissioners Kea and Hardy expressed their agreement in Commissioner Munroe-Younis in that the project is too high-density for this parcel.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT:

There was no city attorney report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no new business.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Paul Herring Jr. stated the rules regarding the public hearing should be clarified. He does not want the Board to use their discretion regarding a “spokesperson”.

William Gainey stated he is surprised that some commissioners would still vote yes to a request that has a room full of opposition.

Nick Kedovary stated he is appalled at how the Board operates. He is not impressed that the Board does not have a firm grasp on zoning policies.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/S – Telliga/Kea

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Unanimously carried.