



Sheldon Neeley
Mayor

CITY OF FLINT

FLINT PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
April 23rd, 2024

Commissioners Present

Robert Wesley, Chair
Carol-Anne Blower, Vice-Chair
Lynn Sorenson, Secretary
Nadia Rodriguez
Mona Munroe-Younis
Jeffrey Curtis Horton

Staff Present

Bennett Bush, Assistant City Attorney
Brian Acheff, Zoning Coordinator
Max Lester, Int. Zoning Coordinator
Dalton Castle, Planner I
Tyler Bailey, Deputy Director of Business Services

Absent:

Joshua Brown
Robert Jewell

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Wesley called the meeting to order at 5:48 p.m. Roll was taken, and a quorum was present.

The meeting was held both in-person in the Dome Auditorium and via Zoom and phone conferencing as approved.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Brown: absent
Commissioner Blower: present
Commissioner Jewell: absent
Commissioner Rodriguez: present

Commissioner Sorenson: present
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: present
Commissioner Horton: present
Chairperson Wesley: present

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

There were no alterations to the agenda.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

Commissioner Wesley asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Blower motioned to accept the agenda as amended. Commissioner Sorenson seconded the motion.

M/S – Blower/Sorenson

Unanimously carried by voice vote

Chairperson Wesley welcomed Commissioner Rodriguez as the newest member of the Planning Commission.



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ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Max asked if there were any nominations for the position of Chair. Commissioner Munroe-Younis nominated Commissioner Wesley for the position of Chair. Commissioner Wesley accepted the nomination.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Brown: absent
Commissioner Blower: yes
Commissioner Jewell: absent
Commissioner Rodriguez: yes

Commissioner Sorenson: yes
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: yes
Commissioner Horton: yes
Chairperson Wesley: yes

N/A – Munroe-Younis/Wesley

6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

The nomination carried.

Max asked if there were any nominations for the position of Vice-Chair. Commissioner Sorenson nominated Commissioner Blower for the position of Vice-Chair. Commissioner Blower accepted the nomination.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Brown: absent
Commissioner Blower: yes
Commissioner Jewell: absent
Commissioner Rodriguez: yes

Commissioner Sorenson: yes
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: yes
Commissioner Horton: yes
Chairperson Wesley: yes

N/A – Sorenson/Blower

6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

The nomination carried.

Max asked if there were any nominations for the position of Secretary. Commissioner Blower nominated Commissioner Sorenson for the position of Secretary. Commissioner Sorenson accepted the nomination.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Brown: absent
Commissioner Blower: yes
Commissioner Jewell: absent
Commissioner Rodriguez: yes

Commissioner Sorenson: yes
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: yes
Commissioner Horton: yes
Chairperson Wesley: yes

N/A – Blower/Sorenson

6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

The nomination carried.



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MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

Minutes of April 9th, 2024.

Chairperson Wesley asked if there were any corrections for the minutes of April 9th, 2024. No corrections were requested.

Commissioner Sorenson made a motion to approve the minutes of April 9th, 2024 as written. Commissioner Blower seconded this motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Brown: absent
Commissioner Blower: yes
Commissioner Jewell: absent
Commissioner Rodriguez: yes

Commissioner Sorenson: yes
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: yes
Commissioner Horton: yes
Chairperson Wesley: yes

M/S – Sorenson/Blower

6 yes – 0 no – 0 abstain

The motion carried

PUBLIC FORUM:

Chairperson Wesley opened the floor for the public forum. Brian acknowledged receipt of communications regarding PC 24-09 and stated that they will be read during public comment for that agenda item.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

PC 24-04: The City of Flint is seeking a recommendation from the City of Flint Planning Commission to City Council for approval to vacate E. Dewey St, between N. Saginaw St and North St.

Brian read the staff report. He explained that since this project was originally to be presented to the Planning Commission, Friends of Berston have acquired the last privately owned property on the section of Dewey St. where the vacation is proposed.

Commissioner Munroe-Younis asked staff about the range from the vacation at which people were notified. Brian explained that all property owners within 300 feet of the vacation were notified.

Brian stated that an individual came into City Hall on April 9th, 2024, inquiring more details about the vacation of Dewey St. The individual expressed neither support nor opposition to the vacation.

The applicants, Matt Heanlein of E&L Construction Group, David Bennett - Architect, and Valorie Horton the Interim Director for Friends of Berston presented their application.



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Mr. Heanlein explained the vacation is necessary for phase two of their larger development. The section of Dewey St. is the intended location for the south side of the site where a baseball field will be located.

Ms. Horton explained she had received the Quit Claim Deed from their lawyer for the last privately owned property on Dewey St.

Commissioner Blower asked if there will still be access to the alley through the first section of Dewey St. by N Saginaw. Mr. Heanlein said the property owners would still have access to the alleyway.

Commissioner Horton asked if the applicants had spoken with residents along the perimeter of the project. Ms. Horton explained that based on their feasibility study they have made several changes to their project and believe it to be well received.

Commissioner Horton asked the anticipated completion date of the project. Mr. Heanlein explained it would be towards the end of 2025.

Commissioner Munroe-Younis asked if the vacation of utilities along Dewey St. would affect adjacent properties. Mr. Heanlein explained that only the vacant properties owned by Friends of Berston would have utilities cut off and that adjacent privately owned properties would be unaffected. A discussion was held between several residents, Mr. Heanlein, and Mr. Bennett about the scope of the vacation and remaining access to the nearby properties. The residents left feeling satisfied with the answers given [audio recording is unintelligible for this section].

Commissioner Blower made a motion to submit a recommendation to the City Council for approval of the vacation of E. Dewey St, between N. Saginaw St and North St. Commissioner Horton seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Brown: absent
Commissioner Blower: yes
Commissioner Jewell: absent
Commissioner Rodriguez: yes

Commissioner Sorenson: yes
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: yes
Commissioner Horton: yes
Chairperson Wesley: yes

M/S – Blower/Horton

6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

The motion carried.



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PC 24-09: Applicant Luke March / Grace Fields Farm, LLC. requests approval of a Special Land Use application to construct three "Hoophouses" on a section of parcels under common ownership including 701 Wolcott St. (40-12-383-027), 633 Wolcott St. (40-12-383-028), V/L (40-12-383-030), 625 Wolcott St. (40-12-383-031), 621 Wolcott St. (40-12-383-033), and 617 Wolcott St. (40-12-383-034).

Max read the staff report. Staff recommended approval of PC 24-09 based on the application meeting all standards of the Zoning Ordinance and being consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Luke March presented his application and explained that he sells the produce he grows at the Flint Farmers' Market. Commissioner Sorenson asked if he sells produce anywhere aside from the Farmers' Market. Mr. March said he does not.

Commissioner Sorenson asked if they are giving away any food. Mr. March says occasionally they give extra food to their neighbors and will donate unsold food they themselves will not eat to Carriage Town Ministries. Commissioner Sorenson asked if they are engaged with any youth groups. Mr. March explained that he is not and although it would be an interesting idea his schedule does not allow for it at this time.

Commissioner Blower asked if there was anything not shown in the measurement details provided on the application for the hoophouses that the applicant would like to share. Mr. March explained the proposed hoophouses are specifically a caterpillar tunnel design which is more suited for the sloped land on which they will sit. Commissioner Blower asked if there will be any additional chemicals involved with the addition of the hoophouses. Mr. March explained they do not use any poisons on their crops and that will not be changing with the addition of the hoophouses.

Commissioner Munroe-Younis raised a concern of soil or mulch overtaking the sidewalk. Mr. March said he has not heard any complaints about this issue but acknowledged that it does occur and indicated he would be more careful moving forward to keep the sidewalk clear.

Chairperson Wesley acknowledged letters from Dan Kusky, James Shuttleworth, and Kevin Wallace speaking in favor of the hoophouses. He then acknowledged a letter from Pamela Fowlkes voicing opposition to the hoophouses.

Commissioner Blower made a motion to approve PC 24-09. Commissioner Munroe-Younis seconded the motion.



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Roll Call:

Commissioner Brown: absent
Commissioner Blower: yes
Commissioner Jewell: absent
Commissioner Rodriguez: yes

Commissioner Sorenson: yes
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: yes
Commissioner Horton: yes
Chairperson Wesley: yes

M/S – Blower/Munroe-Younis

6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

The motion carried.

SITE PLAN REVIEW:

SPR 24-07: Applicant Kimberly Roddy / Flint Children's Museum requests approval of a Site Plan Review application to redevelop the properties located at 605 N. Saginaw St. (PID #40-124-370-007) and PID #40-12-437-002 N. Saginaw St. as this site will be the new location of the Flint Children's Museum.

Brian read the staff report. He noted a condition of approval would be providing an easement to allow access to public utilities for maintenance purposes as well as receipt of approval by the Historic District Commission (HDC). Brian then explained the applicant is seeking three waivers from the Planning Commission for building foundation zone landscaping, parking lot perimeter landscaping, and parking lot interior landscaping.

Kimberly Roddy presented her application. She was joined by Moses Timlin, Shannon White, and Rich VanDever. Mr. Timlin explained they had already been before the Historic District Commission (HDC) however, their application was tabled due to the HDC requesting a more detailed list of materials which has led them to requesting a condition of approval pending receipt of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). Ms. White added that the HDC additionally requested more details on their window design.

Ms. White presented a slideshow on the proposed design of the building.

Mr. VanDever explained the reason for requesting the building foundation zone landscaping waiver is to allow for improved walkability. Brian added that due to site constraints it would not be possible to both have building foundation zone landscaping and provide an ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant walkway.

Commissioner Sorenson asked if there were any planter boxes currently on the building. Ms. Roddy explained there currently are planter boxes on the front of the building, however, they were damaged by a car crash and would be removed in the proposed design.



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Commissioner Blower asked the applicant to explain the intent of the barrier between the green space and the parking area. Ms. Roddy explained there would be a decorative fence to keep children from running out and blocked off in the front to prevent cars from hitting it.

Commissioner Rodriguez asked if there will be designated parking for the upstairs office spaces. Mr. Timlin explained that has not yet been discussed and added that they have exceeded the required minimum parking spaces by two spaces.

Chairperson Wesley asked if there will be separate entrances for the Children's Museum and the office space. Mr. VanDever indicated that entrances to the office space will be keycard only and are located in the front as well as on the side of the building with the entrance to the Children's Museum being separately located in the back of the building.

Chairperson Wesley asked about the signage on the property. Ms. White explained signage for the upstairs businesses will be located on the canopy on the side of the building facing University Ave.

Commissioner Munroe-Younis asked about the current condition of the parking lot. Mr. VanDever explained that the parking lot is in excellent condition. He then pointed to the site plan to clarify with the commissioners where they are requesting waivers from landscaping requirements.

Commissioner Sorenson asked if there would be proper disability access. Mr. VanDever explained there would be curb cuts for wheelchair access.

Commissioner Blower asked the anticipated completion date of the renovation. Mr. VanDever explained their anticipated completion date would be in 2026. Mr. Timlin clarified that they are seeking to have all of their approvals finalized prior to the end of the year. Ms. White said they would need to begin construction this year as their grant funding is dependent on spending funds this year.

Chairperson Wesley asked staff if the HDC can have conditions of approval. Max explained that the HDC does have the authority to provide conditions of approval.

Commissioner Munroe-Younis expressed that there may be options for alternative landscaping that would not impact accessibility such as planter boxes. Mr. VanDever explained the reasoning for waiving the landscaping along Saginaw St. is that the addition of shrubs would be intrusive given the existing adult trees.

Commissioner Blower asked for an overview of the landscaping plan. Mr. VanDever explained they are providing eight islands of landscaping despite only six being required. He went on to describe the various grasses and plants they will be using.

Commissioner Horton asked about the security plan for the building. Ms. Roddy explained there will be security cameras on all the entrances and in the parking lot.



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Commissioner Blower made a motion to approve the waivers for building foundation zone landscaping, parking lot perimeter landscaping, and parking lot interior landscaping. Commissioner Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Brown: absent
Commissioner Blower: yes
Commissioner Jewell: absent
Commissioner Rodriguez: yes

Commissioner Sorenson: yes
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: yes
Commissioner Horton: yes
Chairperson Wesley: yes

M/S – Blower/Rodriguez

6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

The motion carried.

Commissioner Horton made a motion to conditionally approve SPR 24-07 pending receipt of HDC approval, provision of an easement to allow access to public utilities for maintenance purposes, and reviews by the City Engineering and Water Department. Commissioner Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Brown: absent
Commissioner Blower: yes
Commissioner Jewell: absent
Commissioner Rodriguez: yes

Commissioner Sorenson: yes
Commissioner Munroe-Younis: yes
Commissioner Horton: yes
Chairperson Wesley: yes

M/S – Horton/Rodriguez

6 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

The motion carried.

CASE REVIEW:

SPR 23-005: 529 MLK Ave., Conditional Approval Status

Brian explained SPR 23-005 has received approval from the Fire Department.

PC 24-01 3711 Gorey Ave. Conditional Approval Status

Brian explained PC 24-01 has received approval from the Fire Department. He has been in contact with the project architect on receiving their revised plans for signing.

SPR 24-02 3501 N. Saginaw St. Conditional Approval Status

Brian explained ROWE has provided comments on SPR 24-02 which will be routed to the applicant and the project has received approval from the Water Department.



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SPR 24-03 2112 Davison Rd. Conditional Approval Status

Brian explained that SPR 24-03 has received City Engineering approval.

SPR 24-01 1720 E. Carpenter Rd. Conditional Approval Status

Brian explained there are no updates at this time.

SPR 24-04 2926 Robert T. Longway Blvd. Conditional Approval Status

Brian explained there are no updates at this time.

City Council Action on Planning Commission Recommendation

Brian explained the first reading of the 309 West Fifth Avenue ordinance went before City Council however whether or not they made it to that portion of the agenda is currently unknown.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)

Max explained that the April 16th ZBA meeting was cancelled due to no variance requests being received at that time. The May 21st ZBA meeting is set to have two dimensional variance requests heard.

REPORTS:

Redevelopment Ready Communities

Brian explained that the next step for RRC certification is to have online payments which are projected to be available May 1st, 2024.

Planning Commission Expired Terms

Brian said there are no updates on expired terms at this time. He then welcomed Nadia Rodriguez as the newest member of the Planning Commission.

5-Year City of Flint Comprehensive Plan

Tyler explained the City is working with the Crim Foundation on community outreach for the Comprehensive Plan update. He also explained that Kevin Miller, the new Community and Economic Development Program Manager, will be assisting with the Comprehensive Plan update as well as the Capital Improvement Plan.

Commissioner Blower asked if there had been any communication with the City Council. Tyler explained they are waiting to have a thorough community outreach plan before going to City Council.

RESOLUTIONS:

No resolutions were discussed at this time.

OLD BUSINESS:

No old business was discussed at this time.



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NEW BUSINESS:

No new business was discussed at this time.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/S – Sorenson/Munroe-Younis
Unanimously carried by voice vote.
Meeting adjourned at 8:46 PM.