



Sheldon Neeley
Mayor

CITY OF FLINT

FLINT PLANNING COMMISSION

Flint Planning Commission Draft Meeting Minutes March 23rd, 2021

Commissioners Present

Elizabeth Jordan, Vice-Chair
Carol-Anne Blower, Secretary
Leora Campbell
April Cook-Hawkins
Robert Jewell
Lynn Sorenson

Staff Present

Bill Vandercook, Zoning Coordinator
Jeffery Schiffman, Lead Planner
Keizy Anpalagan, GIS Technician
Jonathon Mateen, Planner I
Kelly Thompson, Assistant City Attorney
Corey Christensen, Zoning Consultant (ROWE)

Absent:

Robert Wesley, Chair
Harry Ryan

ROLL CALL:

Vice-Chair Jordan called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Roll was taken and a quorum was present.

The meeting was via Zoom and phone conferencing as approved.

Mrs. Thompson read the Amendment to the Open Meeting Act adopted in Senate House Bill 1108 as passed on October 13, 2020, and signed into law on October 16, 2020.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Ryan: absent
Commissioner Campbell: appearing
remotely, City of Flint, MI
Commissioner Blower: appearing remotely,
City of Flint, MI
Commissioner Jewell: appearing remotely,
City of Flint, MI

Commissioner Cook Hawkins: appearing
remotely, City of Flint, MI
Commissioner Sorenson: appearing
remotely, City of Flint, MI
Commissioner Jordan: appearing remotely,
City of Flint, MI
Commissioner Wesley: absent

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

Mr. Vandercook asked to move Governor's orders on open meetings under reports.

Commissioner Jewell made a motion to approve the Agenda of March 23, 2021 with changes and additions.



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ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

M/S – Jewell/Campbell

Unanimously carried by voice vote

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

Minutes of March 9, 2021

Commissioner Jewell made a motion to adopt the minutes with corrections.

M/S-Jewell/Cook-Hawkins

Unanimously carried by voice vote

PUBLIC FORUM:

No one from the public spoke.

SITE PLAN REVIEW:

No site plans were reviewed.

CASE REVIEW:

SPR 20-942 – Greater Flint Mental Health Facilities Board is requesting a Site Plan Review at 1402 S. Saginaw St. Flint, MI 48503 (PID# 41-18-333-038, 41-18-333-037, 41-18-333-032, 41-18-333-034, 41-18-333-045, 41-18-333-046, 41-18-334-045, 41-18-334-044, 41-18-334-043, 41-18-334-042, 41-18-334-048, 41-18-334-041, 41-18-405-009, 41-18-334-025, 41-18-334-026, 41-18-405-003, and 41-18-405-007).

Mr. Vandercook noted that he and Commissioner Wesley went over the conditions that were required for the site plan review. Mr. Vandercook shared that the applicant has met the conditions of the playground, landscape narrative, and parking. Commissioner Jordan confirmed with Mr. Vandercook that an Administrative review has been completed.

SPR 21-944 – Dale W. Pattillo is requesting a Site Plan Review at 2308 Toronto St., Flint, MI, 48507 (PID# 41-19-154-019).

Corey Christensen noted that revised site plans have been received from the applicant and they have met the conditions. An approval will be issued during the week of March 22nd.

SPR 21-945 – Communities First / Glenn Wilson is requesting a Site Plan Review at 2765 Flushing Rd., Flint, MI, 48504 (PID# 40-11-351-001).

Mr. Christensen noted that site plans need to be revised to address the fire truck ingress and egress. The site plans also need to be amended to remove a “not for construction” watermark. A follow-up email was sent to the applicant on March 23rd. Mr. Christensen is awaiting their response.



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SPR 21-946 – Securecann Inc., is requesting a site plan review at 2502 South Dort Hwy, Flint, MI 48507 (PID # 41-20-278-030, 001)

Mr. Christensen noted that a fire apparatus access road needed to be added to the plans and the gate to the rear of the property needed to be included. The City Engineer's storm water calculations also needs to be included. Mr. Christensen noted that neither plans nor communication have been received from the applicant.

Commissioner Jordan opened the floor to Commissioner's regarding questions on the case reviews. Commissioner Jewell asked for the cases that have not been updated to be included in next month's case review. Mr. Christensen agreed.

Commissioner Sorenson asked for clarification on requirements regarding SPR 21-945. Mr. Christensen reiterated that the watermark must be removed because the plans are final.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

PC 21-397 – SOZO Health Inc., requests a Group E Special Regulated Use Permit for a medical marihuana facility at 1101 Robert T. Longway. (PID# 41-07-180-005)

Aaron Rasti provided an overview of the project. Mr. Rasti shared that the project is located at 1101 Robert T. Longway, which was a location for Huntington Bank. Mr. Rasti noted that his company is applying for a special regulated use permit for a medical marihuana provisioning center at the address. There will be no cultivation or processing at the facility. Mr. Rasti noted that SOZO Health Inc., is a vertically integrated operator in Michigan that conducts cultivation and processing elsewhere. Mr. Rasti shared that SOZO Health Inc., has retail provisioning centers throughout the State of Michigan.

Commissioner Jewell noted that the application was not complete as multiple items were not checked, nor is the medical marihuana locational limitation review included. Commissioner Jewell also noted that a staff report was received earlier in the afternoon on March 23rd. Commissioner Jewell asked for additional information about SOZO Health Inc., as a company. Mr. Rasti shared that as a vertically integrated operator, SOZO Health Inc., has facilities in Warren, MI that cultivates medical marihuana. This facility also contains a processing lab, which allows the marihuana to be produced into other products. Mr. Rasti introduced his Chief Strategic Officer, Kristi Kelly, who was also in attendance. Mr. Rasti noted that SOZO Health Inc., started in the marihuana industry in Colorado during the year 2009. Prior to working in the marihuana industry, Mr. Rasti worked in the deregulated electricity industry, which he noted requires a number of federal and state licensing. SOZO Health Inc., began in Michigan in 2017 as the state was switching to a regulated market from the previous patient caregiver model. Mr. Rasti noted that SOZO Health Inc., generates revenue and they are interested in rolling out additional retail locations throughout the state. Mr. Rasti shared that SOZO Health Inc., believes that Flint is a nice market and they are excited about the potential location.



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Commissioner Jewell asked Mr. Rasti to share who owns the property at 1101 Robert T. Longway. Mr. Rasti shared that the property is owned by an entity that purchased it out of foreclosure and now has it listed for sale. SOZO Health Inc., has a purchase agreement with this entity to purchase the building assuming SOZO Health Inc., is approved for a special use permit and site plan review.

Commissioner Jewell asked Mr. Rasti for a verbal walk-through of the facility. Mr. Rasti shared that patients would enter the building and be seated in a nicely sized and secure waiting room area. Within this waiting room area patients will be separated from any retail area activities. This waiting room also has a secure check point. In order to gain entrance to the retail area, patients will first need to present their medical marijuana license card and state identification card to be verified by the system. After checking in, patients will enter the retail area and have the ability to shop the various products, interact with staff, and ask any questions. Once patients have selected their products, they will checkout with a staff member and have their selection packaged as required by state guidelines. Patients will exit separate from the entrance.

Commissioner Jewell asked Mr. Rasti to provide a summary of the security for the facility. Mr. Rasti noted that SOZO Health Inc., follows all security guidelines as laid out by the municipal guidelines in the state requirements. The facility has multiple security features which include security cameras throughout the building, panic buttons that would send an alarm in case of an emergency, and security guards on the premises during and after business hours. Mr. Rasti noted that SOZO Health Inc., utilizes the State of Michigan's seed to sale tracking systems.

Commissioner Jordan noted that the proposed floor plan does not indicate restroom access in the patient waiting room area and would like to know if this was intentional. Additionally, Commissioner Jordan noted that the proposal outlines specific charitable amounts to be contributed to the Flint community and questioned if Mr. Rasti was aware that upon the granting of a license, a yearly renewal would require reporting on local benefit agreements. Mr. Rasti noted that in the communities SOZO Health Inc., is operational in, they have donated more than \$50,000 on initiatives such as food security, housing security, and education. Mr. Rasti shared that SOZO Health Inc., would be more than happy to provide a report detailing local benefit agreements.

Ms. Kelly provided an overview of the floorplan and pointed out an area allocated for a public restroom. Ms. Kelly noted that SOZO Health Inc., has been working with a local architect and engineering firm to develop a more formal set of building plans. SOZO Health Inc., has received constructive feedback about the location of the restroom facilities which will be taken into consideration upon approval from the Planning Commission. Ms. Kelly added that racial justice is also a pillar that has been prioritized as a community initiative. Recently, SOZO Health Inc., volunteered at a local church and helped to convert storage rooms into computer learning labs for children who do not have consistent access to the internet and who are still in online learning environments. Additionally, SOZO Health Inc., has worked with local justice organizations to host expungement clinics for people looking to re-enter the workforce and has the capacity to help facilitate expungements for people who have been convicted of marijuana crimes that are now considered legal. SOZO Health Inc., is also a



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community partner with the marijuana regulatory agency. Ms. Kelly noted that community needs are better identified once he business is fully operational and able to interact with the public.

Commissioner Jewell reiterated that several boxes on the application were not checked, that the medical marijuana locational limitation review was not signed, and a review by office staff was not included in the application packet. Commissioner Jewell noted locational issues which include the Flint Cultural Center Academy located directly behind I-475 by Cesar Chavez Drive; a cross street on East Blvd. which is bike path; a dock 100 feet away from the facility; Vietnam Veterans Park on the other side of the Flint river; and located across the street from the proposed location is the United States Postal Office which is federal property. Ms. Kelly deferred the question about the application form to planning staff, as the applicant was required to leave this area on the application blank for planning staff to complete. Additionally, Ms. Kelly noted that SOZO Health Inc., worked closely with planning staff during the site selection process and it was determined that the site was not in conflict with any of the identified setbacks that were provided. SOZO Health Inc., completed a location confirmation form that was approved by planning staff.

Ms. Anpalagan noted that SOZO Health Inc., has completed that location confirmation and an approval letter was sent on August 5th, 2020. The parcel meets zoning requirements as the location is not within 1,000 feet of a pre-k to 12th grade facility, not within 500 feet of a place of worship, not within 500 feet of a dedicated park, not within 300 feet of a residential zone, and the parcel does not aggregate within the more than four group A or E uses within 2,000 feet. Mr. Vandercook shared that due to an oversight on his side, the application did not indicate on page 9 that the applicant meets all requirements when in fact they do. Commissioner Jewell noted that there is no documentation to that effect.

Ms. Kelly asked the Planning Commission if they would be able to send the confirmation via email. Commissioner Jewell thanked Ms. Kelly for her efforts and noted that the confirmation is needed from staff in writing.

Commissioner Blower addressed planning staff and noted that a boat dock and picnic area on the river adjacent to the property. Commissioner Blower asked if this dock was part of the park system. Ms. Wilcox stated that the dock is part of the Flint River Trail which is exempted by the locational requirement. Commissioner Blower questioned if staff could provide the locational distances from the proposed location to the Flint Cultural Center Academy and Vietnam Veterans Park. Ms. Anpalagan stated that the proposed location is 1,110 feet away from the Flint Cultural Center Academy and 2,573 feet away from Vietnam Veterans Park.

Commissioner Campbell asked for clarification about the exclusion of the Flint River Trail from the locational requirements. Ms. Wilcox stated that planning staff will provide the language from the ordinance to ensure clarity.



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Commissioner Jordan opened the floor to the public for comment. No one from the public was in attendance. There were no emails in opposition or support.

Commissioner Jordan opened the floor to the Planning Commission for comment. Commissioner Jewell stated concerns including the incompleteness of the application for SOZO Health Inc., and the medical marihuana locational limitation review lacking a signature of the property owner. Additionally, Commissioner Jewell noted the locational review did not include the verbal confirmations given during the meeting. Commissioner Jewell stated the possibility of continuing the public hearing during the April 13th meeting which will allow the applicant and planning staff to update the completion of the documents for the application as well as provide an updated staff report. Other Commissioners reported related concerns.

Commissioner Jewell made a motion to postpone the public hearing of PC 21-397 SOZO Health Inc., requesting a Group E Special Regulated Use Permit for a medical marihuana facility at 1101 Robert T. Longway (PID# 41-07-180-005) for the updated completed application and related staff confirmation and clarification.

Commissioner Campbell noted that there have been many staff changes at the City of Flint. In past, the Planning Commission has been very strict in past and would like to stay consistent with the reviewing of medical marihuana applications.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Ryan, Absent
Commissioner Campbell, Yes
Commissioner Blower, Yes
Commissioner Jewell, Yes

Commissioner Cook Hawkins, Yes
Commissioner Sorensen, Yes
Commissioner Jordan, No
Commissioner Wesley, Absent

M/S - Jordan

The Motion Carried
5 yes – 1 no – 2 absent

PC 21-398 - SOZO Health Inc., requests a Group E Special Regulated Use Permit for an adult-use (recreational) marihuana retail facility at 1101 Robert T. Longway. (PID# 41-07-180-005)

The public hearing was postponed due to incorrect public notice information. It would provide time to receive the updated completed application and related staff confirmation and clarification.

REPORTS:

Status of Permanent Marihuana Ordinance:

Mrs. Thompson noted that the three ordinances were approved by City Council and shared that this status update could be removed from the agenda as a standing item. Commissioner Jewell noted that there was to be an update provided on the inappropriate zoning districts in the ordinance and potential amendments to the ordinance. Mrs. Thompson noted that it would be premature to present amendments



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to the zoning ordinance due to the fact that the zoning ordinance has not yet been adopted by City Council.

Status of Draft Zoning Ordinance, Capital Improvement Plan and Staffing Update

Ms. Wilcox noted that there were concerns about the capital improvement plan as presented at the previous meeting due to missing information from several City of Flint departments. Ms. Wilcox shared that the missing information from these departments may be due to the departments not having capital improvements to include. Additionally, Ms. Wilcox noted that the Planning Department is now fully staffed and the City of Flint has a permanent Chief Financial Officer and Director of Public Works which will facilitate a more complete Capital Improvement Plan next year. Ms. Wilcox shared that the budget has been submitted and presented to City Council and the Planning Department is moving forward with the budget process. The plan next year is to begin the capital improvement process earlier and provide more technical assistance to departments.

Ms. Wilcox noted that the new City Planner, Jonathon Mateen, was introduced to the Planning Commission during the last meeting. The Planning Department is also working on getting an intern on boarded to assist with organizing, filing, scanning, and digitizing documents that come in to the City of Flint. Additionally, the Planning Department is utilizing a zoning consultant and is seeking to extend the contract for another three to six months.

Commissioner Jewell questioned if the City of Flint does not have a Capital Improvement Plan for this year. Ms. Wilcox stated that there is a Capital Improvement Plan which includes a spreadsheet that has capital improvements from majority of departments. What is missing from this Capital Improvement Plan is the narrative portion from the departments that responded. Commissioner Jewell asked if arrangements could be made for the Planning Commission to receive the Capital Improvement Plan from planning staff. Ms. Wilcox shared that the Capital Improvement Plan could be provided to the Planning Commission. Commissioner Jordan noted that it would be helpful to provide an official printed version during the next meeting so that a vote may be held. Ms. Wilcox noted that she has reached out to the new CFO and deputy CFO and will reach out to all of the departments to verify information for presentation during the next meeting.

Commissioner Jewell noted a discussion held during the March 9th meeting about strategies to move the draft zoning ordinance forward for review and approval from City Council. Mrs. Thompson shared that Council members should have received a letter from the Planning Commission signed by Commissioner Chairman Wesley. Additionally, Mrs. Thompson noted that with the help of Ms. Wilcox and planning staff, binders are being put together for City Council that contains information from the Imagine Flint website. Jeffery Schiffman also put together a PowerPoint presentation which summarizes some of the information. Mrs. Thompson noted that she along with Ms. Wilcox and planning staff are on the City Council meeting calls to answer any questions about the draft zoning ordinance. Ms. Wilcox noted that the binders will include the standard ordinance format. Ms. Wilcox shared that an electronic copy of the binder could be provided to the Planning Commission.



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Commissioner Jewell noted that a follow up discussion regarding the binders should be added to the agenda for the meeting held between planning staff and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning Commission. Commissioner Jordan agreed.

RESOLUTIONS:

No resolutions.

OLD BUSINESS:

Status of Planning Commission Member Orientation Packets:

Mr. Christensen shared that there has been no update since last month and that he is still waiting to receive the signed copies of the approved marihuana ordinances that have been signed. Mrs. Thompson noted that she was in contact with Council staff and that the signed marihuana ordinances are still being worked on.

I-475 Meetings Update:

Commissioner Jordan noted updates presented during the last Planning Commission meeting which include steps being taken to ensure that both Commissioner Chairman Wesley and Planning Staff had access to the I-475 meetings. Ms. Wilcox shared that Mr. Stephens reaffirmed that Chairman Wesley and Planning Staff will be included in the I-475 meetings.

Commissioner Jewell questioned if Mr. Stephens was aware of the fact that he was on the Planning Commission meeting. Additionally, Commissioner Jewell questioned: What discussions have been held with Commissioner Chairman Wesley since the last meeting; the status of where the Planning Commission is moving forward; if Commissioner Chairman Wesley and a particular planning staff member have been designated to be included in the I-475 meetings; and when the next meeting is. Ms. Wilcox stated that she will make sure Mr. Stephens attends the next meeting and will provide answers to Commissioner Jewell's questions during the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Governor's Executive Order Update:

Mrs. Thompson noted a new directive from the State of Michigan titled the March 19th Gatherings and Facemask Order. This order is set to go into effect in April and alters some of the current restrictions on the number of people allowed in an indoor gathering. Mrs. Thompson shared that the Planning Commission has the option to return to in-person meetings, However, due to indoor gatherings being limited to 25 people the Planning Commission should continue meeting virtually in order to avoid violating the Open Meetings Act requirements for public access.

Commissioner Jewell agreed with continuing Planning Commission meetings virtually and questioned if the Planning Commission had the ability to make that decision and if so, would a statement need to be prepared. Mrs. Thompson stated that no action is necessary if the status quo is being maintained. Commissioner Jewell advised Commissioner Vice-Chair Jordan to review the decision with Commissioner Chairman Wesley, to which Commissioner Jordan agreed.



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Planning Commissioner Reappointment

Ms. Wilcox congratulated Commissioner Jordan on the confirmation of her reappointment to the Planning Commission. Commissioner Jordan noted that in the future, commissioner's due for an appointment should submit a resume even if City Council does not ask for it. Commissioner Campbell asked if this requirement was due to the new charter. Ms. Wilcox answered stating the new charter requires for appointments including staff appointments, multiple member body appointments, and the provision of a resume be attached to the actual resolution.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/S – Campbell/Blower

Unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:26 P.M.