

FLINT PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2020

Commissioners Present

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

Staff Present

Suzanne Wilcox, Director – Department of
Planning and Development
Bill Vandercook, Zoning Coordinator
Keizzy Anpalagan, GIS Technician
Kelly Thompson, Assistant City Attorney
Corey Christensen, Zoning Consultant (ROWE)

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Wesley called the meeting to order at 5:32 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: appearing remotely,
City of Flint, MI
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: appearing remotely,
City of Flint, MI

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

Add under Old Business: update on I-475

Commissioner Jewell made a motion to adopt the agenda as noted with revisions.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

M/S – Jewell/Jordan

Unanimously carried by voice vote

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Status of the November 4th, 2020, Special Meeting

Commissioner Jewell made a motion to approve the minutes *from October 27, 2020, as corrected.*

M/S –Jewell/Ryan

Roll Call:

Commissioner Harry Ryan: Yes

Commissioner Cook-Hawkins: Abstain

Commissioner Campbell: Abstain

Commissioner Sorenson: Abstain

Commissioner Blower: Secretary: Yes

Commissioner Jordan: Vice-Chair: Yes

Commissioner Jewell: Yes

Commissioner Wesley: Chair: Yes

The minutes of October 27, 2020, was approved

Commissioner Wesley noted the minutes of the November 4th, 2020 Special Meeting will be presented to the Board on November 24th, 2020.

PUBLIC FORUM:

None

SITE PLAN REVIEWS:

SPR 20-937: Ashley Furniture (J&S Group) requesting a Site Plan Review at 3701Lapeer Rd. (PID# 41-16-401-015).

Omar Razzak and Stewart Fine Architect presented on behalf of Ashley Furniture (J&S Group). Mr. Fine said the applicant has been working to clean up the site. Commissioner Jordan asked the applicants about a special use permit needed for warehousing. Mr. Razzak said the owner wanted to service by warehousing two other stores from this location. Commissioner Jordan noted the use is not allowed by right in this district and asked if there was an application underway to secure this use. Mr. Fine explained J&S Group had obtained rezoning from D-3 to D-5 to allow the use through the Flint Zoning Board of Appeals at the October 20, 2020 meeting. Commissioner Blower explained it was approved through a Use Variance, not a rezoning.

Commissioners’ discussed Site Plan Checklist items missing on the Site Plan Checklist including:

#15 – Mr. Fine said there will not be an increase in dust and noise on-site

#18 - Mr. Fine noted the dimensions were on the plan on SP 1.1

Mr. Christensen said regarding #18 what was missing was the required setbacks for the district. The required setbacks need to be included and listed on the plan. The information can be copied from the ordinance.

Commissioner Jewell asked if there was a statement on the plan regarding item #15. Mr. Vandercook said no there was not.

#29 Commissioner Jewell noted in the checklist provided utilities are not included. Mr. Fine said the

utilities are on the site plan Commissioner Jewell asked staff to clarify. Mr. Christensen said it was an oversight on his part and if the water and sewer were provided it should be checked yes.

#32 – Mr. Christenson said the driveways were not shown on the site plan within 200 feet of the subject property. Mr. Fine said he believed the driveways were not needed on the plan.

#33 – Mr. Fine noted the dumpster pad would be interior, not exterior.

Commissioner Jordan wanted the applicant to discuss the issue with the fire hydrant ownership brought up by the City Fire Department. Mr. Fine did not know who owned the hydrant.

Commissioner Campbell asked if this was the same issue the Fire Department had noted about the concerns of the Building and Safety Division being addressed. Ms. Wilcox said the issue the Fire Department was referring to was resolved. Mr. Vandercook explained the additional concern that the Fire Department noted was regarding a door that was shown on a prior site plan that exited out the south side of the building. Mr. Vandercook noted the door has been removed from the plan and has been addressed. Mr. Fine said they have addressed this issue so we can be compliant with the building code and we have provided exists out the rear of the building to accommodate missing exits.

Commissioner Jewell noted on page seven of the checklist under article XX25 Off-Street Parking, says shared parking cannot be verified. Mr. Christensen said it is part of a larger strip mall and we cannot verify there if there is enough parking for every tenant within the strip mall.

Commissioner Jewell noted Section 50-132, Off-Street Loading Spaces also has a question mark and says loading spaces must be indicated on the site plans. Mr. Fine said it is shown on the site plan as a loading dock.

Commissioner discussed concerns about staff not being able to calculate parking within the strip mall as noted within the site plan checklist. Commissioner Jordan noted past parking space use was high intensity based on the type of past stores like Farmer Jack and Target. Then said chances are in all likely hood a furniture store/warehouse would not call for more intense parking. Mr. Christensen agreed with Commissioner Jordan's reasoning.

Commissioner Ryan addressed the concerns of Departments over the sprinkler system and stockpiling of furniture within the store. Mr. Vandercook said it is the responsibility of the Building Department to ensure fire codes are adhered to before a building permit being issued.

Commissioner Sorenson asked the applicant how many employees would be at this facility. Mr. Razzak said about fifty.

Commissioner Jordan moved conditional approval of SPR 20-937 with administrative approval for checklist items: 1) #15 needing a statement on the site plan regarding any increase in dust, orders, smoke fumes, etc. 2) #18 show zoning district requirements regarding setbacks and what those setbacks are on the site plan 3) #32 show the existing driveways within 200 feet on the site plan.

Mr. Fine noted the site plan shows that their property is a separate parcel from the strip mall and they did not have to show additional driveways on their plan. Commissioner Jordan asked if staff could confirm and approve administratively there is no need for further 200 feet driveways to be shown on

the plan. Commissioner Jordan requested staff verify. Mr. Christensen said he would.

M/S –Jordan/Blower

The motion carried unanimously.

CASE REVIEW:

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

PC 20-381: Application for Flint Planning Commission to Vacate a Public Alleyway of 1415 – 1419 N. Dort Highway, Flint, MI. (Parcels: 41-08-239-008, 41-08-239-009, 41-08-239-001, 41-08-239-002).

Attorney Robert Rollinger presented the application on behalf of A & S Associates, LLC. Mr. Rollinger noted he had appeared at the September 22, Planning Commission meeting at which time the Planning Commission moved the meeting for further deliberation. This was due to 1) the Commission requesting the application be amended to include the vacation of the alleyway to its terminus at Missouri Avenue. 2) The Commission also requested a letter be sent to Mr. William Kitsonas at 2614 Swayze Street Flint MI. Mr. Rollinger said the letter was sent and received on October 9th, but he had not gotten a response from Mr. Kitsonas. Commission Wesley asked if staff had received any correspondence from Mr. Kitsonas. Mr. Vandercook said no. Commission Wesley asked if staff sent out a notification to the adjoining residence. Mr. Vandercook responded yes.

Commissioner Jordan moved Commission recommend to City Council the approval of vacation of the Alleyway that includes the entire 15-foot Alleyway along with the street address of 14 15 to 1419 North Dort Hwy including the portion of the highway from their towards its terminus at Missouri Street.

M/S –Jordan/Blower

The motion unanimously carried.

PC 20-388: Commissioner Wesley noted PC 20-388 had been postponed until the November 24, Planning Commission, due to staff not sending out a required public notice promptly.

REPORTS:

Status of Permanent Marihuana Ordinance:

Mrs. Thompson said staff is working to have this added to the City Council agenda. Then noted the last extension of the emergency ordinance is set to expire on Christmas day. Mrs. Thompson said she was working with Ms. Wilcox and Angela Wheeler, Chief Legal Officer to have the permanent ordinance considered before Christmas.

Status of Draft Zoning Ordinance and Capital Improvement Plan:

Ms. Wilcox said she has seen some positive movement with moving the ordinance forward. Then she introduced Jeff Schiffman the City of Flint's new Lead Planner and said she was confident they would be able to bring the new code forward to Council. Ms. Wilcox noted she is working with the City Law Department to put the user-friendly guide into ordinance format. Ms. Wilcox explained they could bring the ordinance to Council in its current format in December while contracting to put it into

ordinance format. Ms. Wilcox said the Draft Zoning Ordinance and Capital Improvement Plan are priority projects for herself and Mr. Schiffman.

Ms. Wilcox said she has been reaching out to Eric Scorsone for last year's Capital Improvement Plan for purposes of updating the plan and will continue trying to make contact with him. Ms. Wilcox said she had provided Mr. Schiffman with last year's plan that was approved by the Planning Commission to begin working on as a high priority project. Ms. Wilcox expects to have a Capital Improvement Plan prepared this year to present to the Planning Commission. MS Wilcox noted the Cities Master Plan is out of compliance and is supposed to be updated every five years. Then said in 2018 there should have been an update. Ms. Wilcox said she would like to see the Master Plan as an agenda item for future Planning Commission meetings.

Status of Staffing:

Ms. Wilcox noted Jeff Schiffman was hired as the City of Flint's new Lead Planner. Ms. Wilcox informed the board that Bill Vandercook was promoted to the City of Flint's Zoning Coordinator. Ms. Wilcox said she is currently working with HR to fill Mr. Vandercook's former position, as Planner I, and hoped to have the position filled soon. Ms. Wilcox noted she is working with HR to fill the CD Grants Coordinator position, which is vacant due to the past Grant Coordinator moving to fill the vacated Parks Planner Position. Ms. Wilcox explained HR is also posting for positions within the Building and Safety Division.

Mr. Schiffman gave a summary of his background, and the Commissioners' welcomed him aboard.

Commissioner Jewell asked if it was possible to provide one or two small paragraphs regarding Mr. Schiffman's and Mr. Vandercook's background. Ms. Wilcox said she would provide this information to the Commissioners.

RESOLUTIONS:

Adoption of Revised City of Flint Planning Commission Bylaws:

Commissioner Wesley turned the meeting over to Ms. Thompson. Mrs. Thompson said the Bylaws Planning Committee is proposing a wholesale amendment to the Planning Commission bylaws, as discussed with the Planning Commission at previous meetings. Mrs. Thompson said we added a significant amount of provisions to clarify when conflicts of interest arise and how to handle them. Including having contact with other members and staff during the meeting and when that's appropriate. Mrs. Thompson said some provisions about voting and a revision to the order of business on the agendas were also added. Mrs. Thompson said the revised bylaw was full of helpful information for members and staff. Then said whenever questions come up everyone should refer to the bylaws first. Mrs. Thompson said the revised bylaws were being presented to the Planning Commission tonight for possible adoption.

Commissioner Jewell said the revised bylaws provide a great outline for process and procedures for the Commissioners and staff for roles and responsibilities. Commissioner Wesley commended the work and efforts Commissioners and staff put into revising the bylaws.

Commissioner Jewell made a motion to approve a resolution to adopt the revised City of Flint Planning Commission Bylaws as presented.

M/S – Jewell/Campbell

Roll call:

Commissioner Harry Ryan: Yes

Commissioner Campbell: Yes

Commissioner Blower: Secretary: Yes

Commissioner Jewell: Yes

Commissioner Cook Hawkins: Yes

Commissioner Sorenson: Yes

Commissioner Jordan: Vice-Chair: Yes

Commissioner Wesley: Chair: Yes

Unanimously carried

Mrs. Thompson said she would update the draft to a final version, date, and send it to the Planning Commission members.

OLD BUSINESS:

Bylaws Committee:

Status of Planning Commission Membership Roster:

Ms. Wilcox said she was working on agendas and minutes of the City Council meetings to update the roster. She has a draft roster and has scheduled a meeting with the City Clerk's office on Friday 13, 2020 to receive pertinent information to update. Commissioner Wesley noted the Commission should have the information by November 24.

Planning Commission Membership Orientation Packet:

Ms. Wilcox noted at this time staff was working to clear a backlog of zoning items and organizational deficiencies, but the binder is a priority. Ms. Wilcox said staff is working to provide the Commission with a binder by January 2021. Commissioner Jordan said she appreciated the update and efforts and offered additional assistance with the binders if needed. Commissioner Jewell said he concurred with Commissioner Jordan and was also available for support and assistance.

I-475 Update:

Commissioner Wesley asked Ms. Wilcox to schedule a meeting with Brian Larkin. Ms. Wilcox said she would schedule the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner Ryan asked about the Planning Commissioners members receiving City of Flint business cards. Commissioners discussed business cards previously received and information provided on the card identifying Commissioner role and function. Commissioners asked staff to add this to the list and pursue it on behalf of Commissioners. Ms. Wilcox said we would do some research and determine the protocol for all City of Flint multiple-member bodies and report back to the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/S – Ryan/Campbell

Unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:18 pm.