**FLINT PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Meeting Minutes**

**November 22, 2016**

**Commissioners Present Staff Present**

Robert Wesley, Chair Corey Christensen, Zoning Coordinator

Robert Jewell Kevin Schronce, Lead Planner

Denise Allen Reed Eriksson, City Attorney

Patrick Ryals

Elizabeth Jordan, Vice Chair **Commissioners Not Present**

Harry Ryan Leora Campbell

Carol-Anne Blower, Secretary

Phyllis McCree

**ROLL CALL:**

Chairman Wesley called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Roll was taken and a quorum was present. The meeting was held in the McKenzie Room, 2nd Floor, City Hall.

**ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:**

Commissioner Jewell requested that the status of Commissioner Blower’s appointment to the ZBA be added to reports, an updated staff organizational chart be added to reports, and the status of Bacco Farm’s appeal to the ZBA be added to reports.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:**

***M/S – Ryals/Allen***

Motion to adopt the meeting agenda as amended.

***Unanimously carried.***

***MINUTES:***

The Commission examined the minutes of 10-11-16.

Commissioner Jewell drew attention to the fact Bacco Farms has applied for an appeal and requested that the commissioners take the minutes home and review them and postpone approval until the next meeting.

***M/S – Jewell/Allen***

Motion to postpone approval of the minutes until the next regularly scheduled meeting on December 13, 2016.

***Unanimously carried.***

**PUBLIC FORUM:**

There were no public comments.

**SITE PLAN REVIEW:**

**SPR 16-867: General Motors (Addition to a manufacturing facility)**

Applicant: Brian Becker, GM Global Facilities Construction

Location: 3248 Van Slyke Rd., Parcel ID # 40-26-400-001

Contact: Craig Westrick

Brian Becker gave an overview of the addition to the west side of the plant. There will be new material delivery docks. There will be no changes to employee parking. 30-40 employees will be moved to the new section. There will be new bathrooms installed within the required distances and new fire exits as well as better fire protection materials. Craig Westrick emphasized there are no additional employees, they are just transferring employees from the existing plant to the new addition.

Commissioner Allen pointed out there will be a lot of LED lighting on the addition. Brian Becker responded they will be low energy high efficiency lighting. Craig Westrick added that they are primarily parking lot lights and lighting for truck traffic. Brain Becker explained that LEDs are standardized across the plant and all lights point down and not up.

Commissioner Jewell drew attention to number 35 on the staff review checklist. There is no proposed vegetation but the site plans include a “lawn area.” Commissioner Jewell asked the applicants to describe what the “lawn area” is. Brian Becker replied they are trying to keep it all hard surface. They store a lot of trucks and load up every paved surface they can find. If the Commission would like a green belt they can incorporate it into the plant. Commissioner Jewell asked for clarification on what the “lawn area” is. Craig Westrick replied that this will probably be a paved area or something similar to the paint shop where they have large stones for maintenance purposes. Commissioner Jewell asked for further clarification. Brian Becker responded that there will still be a separation space between the building and the drive for snow plowing. This separation space will probably be filled with rocks to keep the snow plows away. There will be no bushes or landscaping. If this is an issue for the commission they are willing to include greenery. Commissioner Wesley says they should refer to the “lawn area” as a “hard surface.”

**M/S – Jordan/Ryals**

Motion to approve SPR 16-867, addition to GM manufacturing facility, 3248 Van Slyke Rd., Parcel ID # 40-26-400-001.

***Unanimously carried.***

**SPR 16-868: Center for Hope (Additions to and partial demolition of an existing community facility)**

Applicant: Catholic Charities of Shiawassee and Genesee Counties

Location: 901 Chippewa, Parcel ID # 40-12-428-001

Contact: Jim Hall

Lisa Easterwood introduced herself as the civil engineer and introduced Jim Hall and Terry Mayberry as well as the architects Jim McClain and John Asselin.

Lisa Easterwood pointed out that this plan was brought before the commission the previous April and it was approved at that time. After the plan was approved there were some issues that required modifications. The largest modification is the removal of the structure along 5th Avenue.

Lisa Easterwood outlined the changes that were made from the previously approved site plan. The three story structure is being removed. The parking lot has been expanded but will not take up the entire space once occupied by the three story school. They redesigned the entrance and added a delivery ramp on the west side of the building. Trash was moved slightly to the north. They added a smoking shelter on the south west of the parking lot. A sidewalk was extended from the proposed entrance to the fifth avenue sidewalk. They redesigned the landscaping to incorporate the demolished building. Lisa Easterwood pointed out that with the new plan there is less need for parking. There is an agreement with the neighboring church regarding parking spots. Everything else is remaining the same from what was previously approved. The handicap parking count will remain the same.

Commissioner Jewell asked if there were any changes to the utilities and if there are any changes to the building heights since they are nonconforming. Lisa Easterwood replied there will be no changes; the nonconforming height will be grandfathered in.

Commissioner Jordan asked for the rationale behind the demolition. Jim Hall replied there have been several tenants that dropped out and due to insurance issues there was a change in tactics to bring in tenants and they have been unsuccessful in maintaining financial stability. Consequently they have made the decision to “right size” the facility. Commissioner Jordan emphasized the historic nature of the structure and is curious if there is a way to repurpose the structure for multi-family housing. Jim replied this had already been considered. There is a long process involved and multi-family housing does not seem to fit with where they want to be at this time. Commissioner Jordan pointed out that removing the building would foreclose the possibility of ever recovering the building. Jim Hall replied that the renovations required are too extensive and do not make financial sense.

Commissioner Jordan drew attention to the smoking shelter and noted it is very close to the sidewalk area, she asked if there was any consideration to moving that so pedestrians don’t have to walk through smoke. Jim Hall replied that the client base comes in from the sidewalk off 5th Avenue and the place they chose is the best place to keep second hand smoke away from their clients.

Commissioner Allen requested clarification on the signage. Lisa Easterwood replied they are considering a sign at the corners of 5th Avenue and Chippewa. They will apply for the sign permit at another time.

Commissioner Jewell asked if they have a smoking policy. Jim Hall replied they do not allow smoking in doors. Commissioner Jewell asked about smoking outside. Jim Hall replied they have entertained the idea of forbidding smoking outside but this has not happened yet. Commissioner Jewell appreciates Commissioner Jordan’s concern and drew attention to the commission’s job of protecting the public health.

Commissioner Allen asked about the location of all existing and proposed utilities. Lisa Easterwood replied that existing utilities are on the second sheet of the site plans. There are existing storm sewers for parking lot water, and this storm system will remain. They will be tapping into the water pipes along Chippewa. Lisa Easterwood explained they will be removing the fence along 5th Avenue and fixing the sidewalk so it is level with the road. Commissioner Wesley asked if that would be a hazard but noted it was already approved at the last meeting. Lisa Easterwood explained that the curb for 5th Avenue and the sidewalk will be separated by a green space.

Kevin Schronce commented that staff had looked into the historical significance of the structure. This demolition is privately funded. It is important to take into account existing conditions and redevelop existing structures. Kevin Schronce emphasized the importance of noting historical significance. Commissioner Jordan asked about State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Kevin Schronce replied that there is no local or state protection on this structure.

Commissioner Jordan expressed concerns through the lens of the master plan and the fact the future land use is City Corridor and it is not typical for there to be expansive lawns along this avenue. Whether or not a structure has legal protections, one of the goals of the Master Plan is to protect historic structures. There has been success in redeveloping old structures such as Oak Park School. Swayze Courts was mentioned as preserving a structure and helping the homeless. Commissioner Jordan emphasized that if the Commission proceeds with demolishing this it is 90 years of history that cannot be brought back.

**M/S – Allen/Ryals**

Motion to approve SPR 16-868, Center for Hope, additions to and partial demolition of an existing community facility, Catholic Charities of Shiawassee and Genesee Counties, 901 Chippewa, Parcel ID # 40-12-428-001.

**Yes: H. Ryan – ward 1, P. Ryals – ward 2, R. Wesley – ward 5, R. Jewell – ward 6, D. Allen – ward 7.**

**No: E. Jordan – Ward 9.**

**Motion carried 5-1.**

**CASE REVIEWS:**

There were no case reviews.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

There were no public hearings.

**REPORTS:**

Commissioner Jewell requested that staff communicate to the ZBA the Planning Commission’s findings regarding Bacco Farms. Commissioner Jewell drew attention to the fact this is an appeal process and is not a re-application. Kevin replied that the packet provided to the ZBA will be the same as the packet received by the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Wesley asked about the staff listing that had been requested. Kevin Schronce passed out papers with the name of staff members, their title and job description. He explained this is a brief synopsis of what tasks each employee has. Commissioner Jewell requested staff phone numbers and asked why last names were not listed. Commissioner Allen asked if the staff listing could be revised for the meeting on December 13th.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

Kevin Schronce announced the ZBA appointment was approved and he passed out copies of the resolution. Commissioner Blower will be at the next ZBA meeting. Bacco Farms is on the ZBA agenda for the 20th. Kevin Schronce emphasized that the minutes will be very important to review.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Kevin Schronce passed out the timeline for the Capital Improvement Plan. He explained that he sat down with the city’s chief financial officer and agreed on what the timeline will look like. He doesn’t foresee a significant amount of increase in capital improvements due to the water crises and the state of capital resources. There has been significant grant funding acquired and provided by the State and Federal Government in the past. Kevin Schronce explained that he will come to the commission in February to present the initial draft and discuss any changes. Commissioner Jordan asked his thoughts on how the Rebuild Flint the Right Way framework might be tied into the CIP. Kevin explained the timelines will not align. They have been meeting with the MOTT Foundation about doing a formal RFP on what the cost will look like and it will take time to develop and release.

Kevin Schronce provided an update on Choice Neighborhoods. There is a push to apply to MSHDA next April for low income housing tax credits. There will potentially be a site plan coming before the Planning Commission as a result.

Commissioner Wesley asked if there is anything else to discuss. Steven Branch introduced himself as the Mayor’s Chief of Staff and explained he is here to observe the meeting and report back to the Mayor.

Commissioner Ryals announced his retirement from the Planning Commission after March 2017.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

There is no new business.

**ADJOURNMENT**:

M/S – Jewell/Allen

***Unanimously carried***