

FLINT PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes - *Approved*
May 14, 2019

Commissioners Present

Robert Wesley, Chair
Elizabeth Jordan, Vice-Chair
Carol-Anne Blower, Secretary
Robert Jewell
Harry Ryan
Denise Allen
Leora Campbell

Staff Present

Suzanne Wilcox, Director of Planning & Dev.
Andy Aamodt, Zoning Coordinator
Adam Moore, Lead Planner
Andy Fedewa, Planner I
Reed Eriksson, Assistant City Attorney

Commissioners Not Present

ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Wesley called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. Roll was taken and a quorum was present. The meeting was held in the Committee-of-the-Whole Room, 3rd floor of the City Hall.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

Draft Zoning Code status, Department of Planning and Development budget update, and Medical Marihuana submittal guidelines were added to Reports.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

M/S – Allen/Campbell

Motion to adopt the meeting agenda as amended.

Unanimously carried.

MINUTES:

The Commission examined the minutes of 4-23-19.

M/S – Allen/Jordan

Motion to approve the minutes of 4-23-19 as presented.

Unanimously carried.

PUBLIC FORUM:

No one spoke.

SITE PLAN REVIEW:

There were no Site Plan Reviews.

CASE REVIEWS:

There were no Case Reviews.

PUBLIC HEARING:

PC 19-337: Bob Waun requests a location variance from the medical marihuana facilities setback requirements from 1809 James P. Cole Blvd. (AKA 1611 James P. Cole Blvd.)(Parcel ID # 41-06-452-014) to a park, and residentially-zoned property.

Bob Waun presented for the property owner. He stated Genesee Packaging had been the former tenant of the building but left three weeks after the building was purchased as part of the business' consolidation effort. The owners have been soliciting interest from tenants ever since, but got the most interest from medical marijuana businesses. The owner plans to split the large property into smaller parcels and develop new buildings. When the site was surveyed for medical marijuana use they noticed the distance conflict with the nearby Vietnam Veterans Park. The owner stated medical marijuana is the highest and best use for the site. Mr. Waun stated they bought the property to continue industrial use and medical marijuana facilities are at or are planned for on other sites along James P. Cole Blvd.

Commissioner Allen referenced the exact location of the park. Mr. Waun replied that while much of the parcel is within the 500 feet buffer from the park, a portion to the south-western end is outside.

Andy Aamodt clarified what is entailed in the park buffer and how this portion is also part of the Iron Belle Trail, but not exempt from the buffer because there are park amenities such as a fishing dock or a kayak launch. Adam Moore added that the park buffer exemptions are relevant when there is not a park use greater than 'passive use'.

Commissioner Jordan said that the applicant is talking about the distance to the building but City staff and Planning Commission have consistently required that measurements be from parcel line to parcel line. Applicant replied that the split would be from the building line.

Commissioner Blower asked if everything would be compliant if the proposed division was executed. Andy Aamodt replied that based on all buffer requirements only the south-western end is fully compliant. Commissioner Blower asked why did the applicant not divide the parcel first.

Commissioner Jewell asked for clarification if any of the parcel has been divided yet. The applicant replied no.

Commissioner Ryan asked how much of this is in part of the ongoing River Restoration Project. Adam Moore replied that both parcels that make up the park are utilized by the City and serves as an exit point for boats and kayaks coming downstream. Vietnam Veterans Park is part of the water trail and Flint River Trail.

Commissioner Jewell asked if the applicant had talked to adjacent property owners. Applicant replied that neighbors have been supportive and there are ideas for medical marijuana cultivators near the subject property.

No one spoke in favor. No one spoke in opposition. Fredrick Kreager spoke and said he was neutral, but that redeveloping this area is a good thing. Staff confirmed no feedback was received.

Commissioner Blower restated that property line to property line is the Planning Commission's consistent requirement.

Commissioner Campbell stated she wants the Planning Commission to be considerate of Vietnam veterans honored by the park and Flint River Restoration Project partners who have worked so hard in the area.

Commissioner Jordan cited the application does not meet the fact of finding that “issuance of the variance would still ensure that the spirit of the ordinance is intact,” especially considering this proposal’s significant encroachment into the required buffer.

M/S – Jordan/Allen

Motion to deny PC 19-337, Application for Medical Marijuana Facilities Location Variance, at 1809 James P. Cole Blvd. (AKA 1611 James P Cole Blvd) (Parcel ID # 41-06-452-014).

Unanimously carried.

Variance denied.

PC 19-338: AMAG, LLC on behalf of Fresh Start CDC, requests a rezoning of parcels bordered by Warren St., N. Saginaw St., and E. Newall St. (Parcel ID #'s 40-01-434-001, 40-01-434-003, 40-01-434-004, 40-01-434-005, 40-01-434-006, 40-01-434-007, 40-01-434-008, 40-01-434-009, 40-01-434-014, 40-01-434-015, 40-01-434-017)

Dave McLane, architect, presented the map that shows the parcels currently zoned B ‘Two Family District’, the current D-2 ‘Neighborhood Business District’ parcels that allows for grocery stores, and the adjacent parcels that are not part of the project.

Commissioner Jewell asked for clarification on the applicant’s plan. Mr. McLane replied that after the rezoning all parcels will be combined into one and then the applicant will apply for the Site Plan Review. Commissioner Jewell asked about the viability of a grocery store. Andy Hanousch, Hutchinson Food & Drug, spoke. His family has been in the grocery business for 36 years. Mr. Hanousch presented on the size of the proposed grocery store, which is appropriately sized for a neighborhood, the departments the grocery store will have, and spoke on some of the differences between this project and some of the other grocery stores that have gone out of business. Mr. Hanousch clarified he is a partner in the Fresh Start grocery store project.

Commissioner Jewell asked if Fresh Start has spoken to neighboring property owners. Pastor Patrick Sanders, project partner, replied that they have bought out some of the neighboring property owners for this project and has received a lot of positive feedback from neighbors and beyond. Mr. Sanders added that there has been an MLive article about the project as well and that has created a lot of new, positive feedback and support.

Commissioner Campbell questioned the status of the property, PID #40-01-434-020. Applicant replied that it is not owned by Fresh Start and that they were unable to contact the property owner. Commissioner Campbell asked what would happen to the historic church on the block. Mr. Sander replied that the church is not part of the grocery store but that it will be repurposed. The exact use is still undetermined.

No one spoke in opposition.

Bob Waun spoke in favor as a nearby neighbor down Hamilton St.

Fredrick Kreager said he has a history with the church. He is in favor of anything that can improve the church.

Staff confirmed no feedback was received.

Ryan/Allen

Motion to recommend City Council approval to rezone parcels bordered by Warren St., N. Saginaw St., and E. Newall St. (Parcel ID #'s 40-01-434-001, 40-01-434-003, 40-01-434-004, 40-01-434-005, 40-01-434-006, 40-01-434-007, 40-01-434-008, 40-01-434-009, 40-01-434-014, 40-01-434-015, 40-01-434-017) from 'B' to 'D-2'.

Unanimously approved.

REPORTS:

Draft Zoning Code Update: Staff updated the Planning Commission on presentation dates and idea for public engagement. Planning Commission asked for another update at the June 25, 2019 meeting.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP): Staff proposes to produce a brief CIP update after talking with other City departments. Update will include what has changed and what other departments have produced.

Department of Planning & Development Budget: Suzanne Wilcox confirmed that the DPD budget will remain the status quo.

Medical Marijuana submittal guidelines: Staff is finalizing materials and will present at the next meeting.

Flint City Hard Cider Co.: Staff memo was handed out.

RESOLUTIONS:

There were no resolutions.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business

NEW BUSINESS:

Internal memo about Planning & Zoning staff roles and responsibilities was given to Planning Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT:

M/S – Allen/Ryan

Unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.