

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS
Monday, November 10, 2008

Chairperson Gronbach called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Farmington City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan.

ROLL CALL

Present: Bowman, Buck, Christiansen, Crutcher, Gronbach, Ingalls, Kuiken, Scott (arrived at 7:30 p.m.).

Absent: Sutton.

A quorum of the Commission was present.

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: City Clerk Halberstadt, Building Inspector Koncsol, City Manager Pastue.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Buck, seconded by Bowman, to approve the agenda as submitted. Motion carried, all ayes.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Christiansen, seconded by Kuiken, to approve the items on the consent agenda as follows:

- Regular meeting minutes of October 13, 2008
- Farmington Building Department 1st Quarter Report – July 1, 2008 through September 30, 2008

Motion carried, all ayes.

MR. BRAKES AUTO CARE, 22949 ORCHARD LAKE ROAD

Proponent: Jason Fochtman, Jeffery A. Scott, Architects P. C.

PUBLIC HEARING – SPECIAL LAND USE APPLICATION, AUTOMOTIVE DEALERSHIP IN C-3 DISTRICT

MOTION by Ingalls, seconded by Bowman, to open the public hearing to receive comment on special land use application submitted by Mr. Brakes Auto Care, 22949 Orchard Lake Road. Motion carried, all ayes.

Jason Fochtman, representing the proponent, reviewed changes made to the site plan as recommended by the Planning Commission at the October 13, 2008 meeting. He noted the addition of landscape beds and a tree in the back corner of the property. He further noted conversion of parking spaces to automotive sales. He discussed the basis for allocating 20 spaces for automotive sales. He indicated the owner did not want less than 20 spaces as suggested by the Planning Commission due to the need for a large variety of cars to be sold.

Fochtman pointed out a few building mounted floodlights were added after a re-examination of the lighting. He noted curbing in one of the landscape beds was added and the approach was narrowed. He stated the owner plans to sell higher quality used cars.

Richard Lemke, 161 Buddy Lane, Milford, requested the applicant maintain the present foot candle lighting and any future changes to lighting be governed by the Planning Commission.

MOTION by Bowman, seconded by Buck, to close the public hearing. Motion carried, all ayes.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE SPECIAL LAND USE REQUEST AND APPROVAL OF SITE PLAN

Responding to a question from Ingalls, Mr. Fochtman stated signage would be restricted to "For Sale" signs hanging from the rearview mirrors in the cars.

Christiansen confirmed proposed site changes with the proponent.

Responding to a question from Gronbach, Mr. Fochtman stated the only lighting is the front pylon sign. He further confirmed there would be no changes to signage.

Christiansen asked Building Inspector Koncsol if signage on the site is currently permitted or is it grandfathered. Koncsol responded the signage is permitted under current ordinance.

SHood Hood, AICP Senior Planner, LSL Planning, Inc. stated they have reviewed the plans based on comments made at a previous Planning Commission meeting. She stated the proponent has made an effort to comply with suggestions made including the addition of a tree and lighting. She stated the photometric plan is appropriate for the site. She noted the light fixtures would be fully down shielded.

Hood expressed concern that most of the cars on the site are currently parked on the south property lines and not in the spaces that are designated for them. She advised that any changes to address this concern should be made at this meeting.

Hood recommended approval of the Special Land Use conditioned on the following: 1) approval of the site plan, 2) all cars for sale be licensed and operable, 3) no more than 20 cars be stored on the property, 4) sales are incidental to the minor vehicle repair use, 5) most of the cars for sale will come from repair work, and 6) no pennants, balloons, etc. allowed to identify sale of the cars.

Responding to a question from Ingalls, Mr. Fochtman stated there are no plans for a sprinkler system because it would be cost prohibitive.

Christiansen noted the planting beds are hearty and natural irrigation would be sufficient.

Crutcher asked how customers would be directed to cars that are for sale in the rear parking lot. Mr. Fochtman responded customers looking at the cars in front would naturally go to the back to view the remaining cars.

MOTION by Christiansen, seconded by Kuiken, to approve a Special Land Use Application and Site Plan for Mr. Brakes Auto Care, 22949 Orchard Lake Road, conditioned on the following: 1) all cars for sale be licensed and operable, 2) no more than 20 cars be stored on the property, 3) sales are incidental to the minor vehicle repair use, and 4) no pennants, balloons, etc. allowed to identify sale of the cars. Motion carried, all ayes.

CITY-WIDE MASTER PLAN UPDATE

REVIEW OF THIRD DRAFT

Sherrin Hood stated revisions were made to the Master Plan in response to comments made by both the City Council and Planning Commission. She noted Council comments did not result in any major changes. She identified the following revisions made based on Planning Commission comments:

- Numbers were updated with respect to a recently completed parking study for the downtown.
- Increase promotion on ownership of all aspects of residential neighborhoods.
- Correct various terms and references to graphics.
- Change the school site to include a smaller sub-area.

She identified the following revisions based on City Council comments:

- Change wording of goals to make them more action oriented.

- Apply goals established for the downtown to other commercial areas where appropriate.
- Inclusion of sustainability and discussion of low impact design for development.

Hood discussed the schematic plan for the school property including where the primary buildings would be located, the ridge on the property, valuable view shots and pedestrian connections. She stated plans for redevelopment of this site included:

- Retain undisturbed areas maintained as open space.
- Residential development should be provided in clusters.
- Allowing some limited mixed use.
- Providing proper transitions from mixed use to single family detached.
- Pedestrian connections provided.
- Encourage development of a trailhead along the river.

Gronbach noted the location of the public school and old courthouse property is misidentified in the narrative and needs to be changed.

Scott noted the plan makes no mention of maintaining current activity on the site. He stated the development of the property as shown excludes people from taking advantage of the sledding hill because it would require entering onto private property.

Discussion followed regarding maintenance of green space on the school site and preservation of the sledding hill if possible. Discussion continued regarding options to the current sledding hill.

Christiansen recommended the Plan include a mention of the sled hill as part of the overall character of the school property, but not as a requirement for the plan. He noted it is not a city-owned property.

Kuiken stated regardless of where the sledding hill is located the area should be maintained as an open space.

Hood advised the plan could state that in the opinion of the Planning Commission the open space would be best used as a sledding hill with the liability and operation worked out between the City and the future property owner.

Buck noted LSL Planning did a nice job of translating the Planning Commission's discussion into the diagram and bulleted points.

Hood confirmed with the Commission no changes would be made to the school site diagram, but a couple sentences would be added regarding the sledding hill as an asset to the community and should be maintained if possible.

Hood noted changes to the section on Sustainable Design including standards for LEED buildings. She noted the inclusion of a new neighborhood LEED certification. Discussion followed regarding the inclusion of low impact development.

Hood noted small edits were made throughout the Plan. She stated the next step in the process is for the Planning Commission to recommend to Council approval of the Plan for public review. She advised that after the 63-day public review period the Plan would return to the Planning Commission for a review of public comment. A date would then be set for a public hearing.

Discussion followed regarding designation of the school property on the Master Plan map. The Planning Commission concurred to maintain its designation as Public/Quasi-Public allowing flexibility for future use.

Gronbach noted the misspelling of Commissioner Crutcher's name on the Master Plan.

Scott asked if the goal of the Master Plan is to obtain LEED certification or simply subscribe to LEED design principles. Pastue responded a LEED certification is a very high standard and could be cost prohibitive. He stated the objective is to work toward the goals of a LEED certification.

Hood stated the Master Plan should reflect encouragement of achieving LEED principles rather than certification.

CONSIDERATION TO RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL THAT THE MASTER PLAN BE DISTRIBUTED FOR REVIEW

MOTION by Christiansen, seconded by Buck, to recommend to City Council that the third draft of the Master Plan, dated November 4, 2008, including the minor changes as identified, be distributed for public review. Motion carried, all ayes.

Responding to a question, Pastue stated after the public review of the draft Plan a public hearing would likely be scheduled sometime in March. He stated the City Council will also be considering what body, City Council or Planning Commission, would adopt the final Plan.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were heard.

COMMISSION COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bowman noted that at 10 Mile Road and Orchard Lake the water sprinklers are still on at the shopping center.

Gronbach announced the Downtown Development Authority will host a joint meeting on December 2, 2008 regarding historical preservation.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Ingalls, seconded by Bowman, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary