

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS  
City Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street  
Farmington, Michigan  
February 9, 2015

Chairperson Bowman 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, Chiara, Crutcher, Gronbach

Absent: Babcock, Buyers, Majoros

A quorum of the Commission was present.

Christiansen stated that tonight's meeting is being live streamed on Cable Channel 15.

**OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Director Christiansen, Building Inspector Koncsol, Attorney Saarela

Brad Strader, LSL Planning, Caitlyn Malloy-Marcon, LSL Planning

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION by Chiara, seconded by Crutcher, to approve the agenda as submitted.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

**APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA**

**a. Minutes of Regular Meeting – December 8, 2014**

MOTION by Gronbach, seconded by Crutcher, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion carried, all ayes.

**FINAL SITE PLAN REVIEW – PUD PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT: THE TILE SHOP**

Chairperson Bowman stated that it was exciting to see three items on the agenda for final site plan review on three separate PUD projects in Farmington. She then turned the agenda item over to staff.

Christiansen indicated that this agenda item is the final site plan review for the redevelopment of The Tile Shop at the Grand River/Halstead Plaza. He detailed the history of the project through its various stages culminating in its presentation at tonight's meeting. He listed the different items in the presentation including an aerial photo of the site, building elevations, a review letter from LSL dated February 3, 2015,

and a review letter from OHM dated February 4, 2015. He also stated the Applicant was in attendance at the meeting for questions.

Brad Strader, LSL Planning, went over his review letter of February 3, 2015. He explained the PUD process as being a provision in the Zoning Ordinance that allows flexibility to the Applicants in order to provide enhancements to the City in the redevelopment of the site. He detailed the different areas of the Grand River/Halstead PUD stating that there are several key elements that tie it together, those being the overall landscape plan, the shared parking, the shared access to reduce the number of driveways, and the signs and lighting for the site.

He then went over the details for The Tile Shop site indicating they were modest changes, mostly paint on the exterior, improvements in the landscaping, and repair of the masonry wall on the exterior of the site. He also cited the conditions of approval they were recommending.

Chiara questioned the discrepancy in the number of cherry trees depicted and what what was proposed and Strader indicated that item would be better addressed by the Applicant.

Christiansen then indicated that the review letter from OHM dated February 4, 2015 is specific as to site comments they are proposing as to detailed engineering comments that need to be addressed or satisfied when construction drawings are prepared and presented to the City for permits.

Chairperson Bowman asked the Applicants to come forward.

Lonnie Zimmerman, from Siegel Toumaala Architects, 29200 Northwestern Highway, came forward stating he was the architect for the exterior changes to The Tile Shop as well as the office building on the adjacent parcel, but not involved in the Suburban parcel. He indicated he had nothing to add in addition to Mr. Strader's comments but that Tom Duke was present to address the tree issue.

Tom Duke, 37000 Grand River, indicated that the initial plans for the site and the trees did not mirror the spacing for the cherry trees across Grand River, and that they changed the plans to make the spacing exactly the same so it presents an elegant entrance into the City.

The floor was opened up for questions from the Commissioners.

Gronbach asked the Applicants about the exterior changes that had originally been presented for The Tile Shop and the current ones being proposed and the Applicants described corporate changes being responsible for the difference and the delay and further discussion was held.

Gronbach then asked about color changes to the building and Zimmerman presented a color board depicting what is being proposed. He then inquired if the entire building would be repainted and Duke replied in the affirmative, indicating that it will be a huge improvement with new and improved signage.

Christiansen went over the history of the redevelopment of the Grand River/Halstead Plaza and stated that approval by the Planning Commission would lock in the site plan and any changes made thereafter would have to come back before the Planning Commission for their approval.

The changes from the preliminary draft and the proposed version were discussed and Zimmerman added that another improvement made was the rear lighting situation where the lights would be installed on the Tile Shop side of the 8-foot wall where the light source will not be seen but present for security purposes.

Strader summarized his findings in his report by saying that there are adequate changes to the building thus far, that he is suggesting tying in landscaping in the crosswalks and addressing the width of the crosswalks, and working with MDOT to tighten up driveway for safety, those would be the suggested conditions.

Christiansen stated that the conditions of OHM are summarized on page 5 of their review letter.

MOTION by Gronbach, supported by Chiara, to approve the site plan for the PUD Planned Unit Development: The Tile Shop, with the provision that the approval is for the existing building as proposed in the plans, with the understanding that the proponent is discussing possible modifications and if so would come back before the Planning Commission; that the landscape plan for the site is satisfactory and does meet City Code but that the modification of the tree plans adjacent along Grand River will mirror or match that across the street; and further, that the proponent coordinate with the other PUD plans for pedestrian access and crosswalks across the site and that the proponent review with administration and MDOT to modify and adjust the driveway discussed on the east end of the property and that the approval is also subject to the engineering comments of the OHM letter submitted.

Motion carried, all ayes.

Bowman thanked the proponents.

Christiansen thanked the Commission for their hard work, and thanked Mr. Duke and his consultants for breathing new life into an underutilized property and making it new again.

**FINAL SITE PLAN REVIEW – PUD PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT: POTLURI GROUP, LLC**

Chairperson Bowman introduced this agenda item and turned it over to staff.

Christiansen stated this is the final site plan review for the construction of a three-story mixed use office building at the Grand River/Halstead Plaza. He went over the history of the agenda item starting with the land division into four different sites, with the Potluri Group obtaining this site, and its progress through the preapplication conference, Public Hearing, City Council approval and now back before the Planning Commission for final site plan review.

Brad Strader from LSL Planning went over his report of February 3, 2015. He detailed the changes he would suggest, addressing an additional waste receptacle that may be needed if a restaurant comes onto the site, making the crosswalks wider to assure they are free and clear, discussion of the sidewalk on Freedom Road, welcoming signage, and a possible access easement with gas station for the future.

Gronbach questioned the cross access with the former Shell station and the grade difference and how it could be achieved. He then addressed whether there was a need for a sidewalk on Freedom Road.

Christiansen stated that sidewalks were part of the overall connectivity plan but that a performance bond could be put in place if needed in the future and further discussion was held.

Chiara inquired about the former Shell Gas Station site. Koncsol responded that he has been in contact with the new owner who wants to repurpose the site, possibly as a gas station, and stated that there are deficiencies on the site that have to be addressed.

Christiansen indicated the final site plan review letter from OHM dated February 4, 2015 provides detailed engineering review and comments.

Bowman invited the Applicants to come forward.

Lonnie Zimmerman, from Siegel Toumaala, 29200 Northwestern, architect for the project, came forward with Danesh Potluri of the Potluri Group, owner of the parcel.

Zimmerman presented the materials that are being proposed for the building including the same dark grey glass that appears on the Lotus Building across Grand River, natural stone with terra cotta panels and granite panels, stainless steel, with a black cap across the top to serve as a screen for the mechanicals.

He indicated Mr. Potluri's company, Digital Terrain, will take the top floor of the building, there will be leased office space on the second floor, and retail on the ground level. He

went over the details of the building itself which includes an interior corridor to help facilitate loading and unloading conspicuously. Further discussion was held.

The floor was opened for questions from the Commissioners.

Chiara inquired as to connectivity to the gas station site and the possibility of an easement was discussed.

Gronbach asked if the administration had reviewed the building from a height perspective in terms of being within reach of fire safety equipment and Christiansen responded that the building was reviewed with the Fire Marshall as well as Building Officials to make sure there were no issues.

Danesh Potluri gave the Commissioners a brief history of his arrival in Michigan and his company.

MOTION by Chiara, supported by Crutcher, to approve the final site plan review for the three story retail office building in the Grand River/Halstead Plaza, to include the conditions outlined in the review letter of February 3, 2015 from LSL Planning as well as those stated in the review letter from OHM dated February 4, 2015.

Motion carried, all ayes.

Christiansen thanked everyone for working together on the project and the Potluri Group for their interest in the City of Farmington.

Bowman thanked the Applicants as well.

### **FINAL SITE PLAN REVIEW – PUD PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT: RIVERWALK OF FARMINGTON**

Chairperson Bowman introduced this agenda item and went over the history of the project culminating in the final site plan review.

Christiansen detailed the Riverwalk of Farmington project that will be put in at the former Flanders site. He stated that the City Council had approved it at their November 17, 2014 meeting and it was now before the Planning Commission for their review. He indicated the materials provided to the Commission including a review letter from LSL Planning, dated February 3, 2015, and a review letter from OHM dated February 4, 2015, outlining their recommendations.

Caitlyn Malloy-Marcon, from LSL Planning, went over the review letter for the Commission. She stated there will be 33 planned units as well as a park put on the site. She indicated the Applicants have complied with the request for sidewalks to be put in and the requested number of trees. She stated the City will own the park and be responsible for the maintenance of it.

Bowman invited the Applicant to come forward.

Stuart Michaelson, 31333 West Thirteen Mile, Farmington Hills, came to the podium to allow questions from the Commissioners.

Bowman clarified the name of the project being Riverwalk of Farmington and Michaelson responded in the affirmative.

Gronbach inquired if the original Riverwalk in Farmington Hills has sidewalks and he indicated it does.

Discussion was held about the review of elevations in the portfolio for the community as well as floor plans. Michaelson stated they have three reservations from people living in the area.

Chiara raised the question of sewage and Christiansen responded that storm water management is part of the review through engineering. Michaelson indicated they had worked closely with OHM on that aspect.

Chiara asked for a delineation of boundaries between Farmington and Farmington Hills on the plans and Michaelson stated that that would be done.

MOTION by Crutcher, supported by Gronbach, to approve the final site plan for Riverwalk of Farmington, with the inclusion of the conditions specified in the review letter from LSL Planning dated February 3, 2015, as well as the conditions set forth in the review letter from OHM dated February 4, 2015.

Motion carried, all ayes.

Christiansen thanked everyone for their participation and hard work, indicating the importance of a project like this in the City bringing 33 new homes with school aged children to the community and thanked the Windmill Group for their commitment and for the dedication of the neighborhood park.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None heard.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS**

Chiara indicated he was happy the clock had been reinstalled in Chambers.

Gronbach commented on the Exxon Gas Station at Power and Grand River and stated to the administration to make sure the items still pending on the certificate of occupancy get completed.

Christiansen assured that they are aware of them and know that the owner will complete them as weather permits. He invited the Commissioners to stop in to see the interior changes that had been done.

### **STAFF COMMENTS**

Christiansen indicated that there is a need for a Special Meeting of the Planning Commission to move forward with a few projects and asked the Commissioners to check their availability of dates.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Gronbach, seconded by Crutcher, to adjourn the meeting.  
Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Secretary