

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS
23600 Liberty Street
Farmington, Michigan
July 10, 2023

Vice Chairperson Perrot called the meeting to order in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan, at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, July 10, 2023.

ROLL CALL

Present: Crutcher, Kmetzo, Mantey ,Perrot, Westendorf
Absent: Majoros
A quorum of the Commission was present.

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: Director Kevin Christiansen; Recording Secretary Bonnie Murphy, Brian Golden, Director of Media Relations, Brian Belesky, Director of Media Specialist,

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Westendorf, seconded by Crutcher, to approve the agenda.
Motion carried, all ayes.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

A. June 12, 2023 Minutes

MOTION by Kmetzo, seconded by Crutcher, to approve the items on Consent Agenda.
Motion carried, all ayes.

LEGION SQUARE - PUBLIC HEARING AND PUD SITE PLAN REVIEW: CERVI CONSTRUCTION, AMERICAN LEGIONAL HALL, 31775 GRAND RIVER AVENUE

Vice Chairperson Perrot introduced this item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen stated this item is a public hearing and preliminary PUD site plan review on a proposed Planned Unit Development Plan for the redevelopment for the former American Legion Hall property located at 31775 Grand River. At the February 13, 2023 Planning Commission meeting the Commission held its preapplication process which is a discussion and review with the Applicant on a proposed PUD Planned Unit Development Concept Plan for the redevelopment of the former American Legion Hall No action was taken at that meeting. At the May 8, 2023 Planning Commission meeting the Commission review the preliminary PUD plan for Legion Square and scheduled the required Public Hearing. The Applicant, Cervi Construction of Livonia, Michigan, has submitted a preliminary PUD plan for the redevelopment of the former American Legion Hall. The preliminary plan includes a concept preliminary site plan, a preliminary proposed building elevation and project support materials. Also, attached with your staff

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packet additional information to include aerial photos of the site, a PUD site plan planning conceptual design review letter from OHM Advisors, the City's planning and engineering consultant dated May 4th of 2023, and a PUD site engineering and conceptual design review letter from OHM Advisors dated 5th, 2023. The Applicant, Cervi Construction of Livonia, Michigan, is here this evening to present a preliminary PUD plan to the Planning Commission. The requested action this evening, Mr. Chairman, is to hold the required *PH as requested by the Applicant, which was scheduled by the Commission back in May and also then to hold that PH so that you would look to open that PH, hold that PH, and then close that PH. Subsequent to that it is then in the hands of the Planning Commission with your next steps. Part of the PUD process you know you are in an advisory capacity, again holding the PH on the preliminary plan and potential action this evening and maybe consideration of that preliminary plan and action by the Commission forwarding it to the City Council for their review and consideration. The City Council takes your hand-off of the preliminary conceptual plan after you hold the PH and act on the *PP and they'll also consider a draft Planned Unit Development Agreement but that is the next step after this step this evening and any action by you. There is one final step after the City Council and that's a final PUD site plan if and when this project were to get to that point, that comes back to you for that final approval. So, with that, Mr. Chairman, I'll turn that back over to you.

Vice Chairperson Perrot thanked Christiansen and invited the Applicant up to the podium to give a summary and review of the proposal.

Todd Craft, 23040 Gill Road, Farmington, representing Fabio Cervi for Cervi Construction for this PH and PUD site plan approval. We're excited to be here for the PH, in this stage of the process, and excited that we have so many people interested and looking forward to get through this process. Since we've been here last the project was reduced from 32 to 30 units and that was to improve some of the interior design of it. And then also the way it was designed we're two-feet more away from the western side of it. Some of the other changes we made, we had the facades redrawn that face Grand River per the recommendation of the City's engineer, OHM to differentiate it and give it more style since it would be close to the sidewalk. Other than that we did bring some brick and stone samples and if there's any other questions, that's pretty much what's changed since we were here last.

Perrot invited the Applicant, Fabio Cervi, to come to the podium.

Fabio Cervi, 12419 Stark Road, Livonia came to the podium, with Cervi Construction. He stated just to build on what Todd had mentioned, we did reduce the project from 32 units to 30 units. It gives a little more leeway on the westerly side but ultimately the interior design, the layout of the unit improved dramatically by doing that and it was in our best interest to deliver the best product we possibly can even at sacrificing a couple of units.

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So, our color rendering, don't know if you've seen it, we've given you a colored rendering of the project, with materials of stone, the colors and mix. Plus we do have the elevations here, the side elevations in the rear were not in color. Aside from that, if there's any other questions for me.

Crutcher asked for the samples the Applicant brought.

Perrot asked for a visual to be put on screen and the Applicant demonstrated the different materials proposed to be used.

Cervi stated more windows were added and transoms up above, a board and batten style siding as well as Hardee siding. He stated the trim will be white, the overhangs and the trim and the soffits and the siding will be darker blue for the siding with red brick below. And the back side is lap siding, with brick on the first floor.

Christiansen stated it may be helpful for edification and audience members to review the comments in the letters from OHM Advisors and the corresponding updated letters.

Chairperson Perrot invited Austin Downey, OHM Advisors, to the podium. He stated that Kevin gave a great outline when and that right outline and from an engineering perspective there are no showstoppers and the couple other comments they expect to see those addressed on the next site plan. He said there will be more sidewalk in front of the townhouses along GR allowing for more accessibility. Jennifer Morris, planner from OHM was not able to be at the meeting tonight but the biggest question she had in regard to the original planning letter presented to the Commission was the façade facing the Grand River side, but seeing the materials tonight clarified those questions.

Commissioner Kmetzo asked at what point do we expect to see a final site plan from Cervi Construction and Christiansen replied that the PUD process is a five-step process and the third step is where we are at now, the required Public Hearing for the Planning Commission. The fourth step is forwarding the preliminary plan after the PH to the City Council, and they then will act on the preliminary plans, so that is within their purview and what action they will take. After that the final PUD site plan, any changes in the final PUD site plan will come back before the Planning Commission for a final approval. After that final PUD site plan, whenever it is, then the next step if the project is approved is the engineering design and construction documents, all the details for site construction in accordance with the City's requirements and it's put together, a complete package, for permits. So, five steps then that can move forward.

Kmetzo said the preliminary site plan that we are reviewing is the site plan that was presented that incorporates the changes that have been made based on the OHM

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Advisors' recommendations with some open issues and Christiansen replied that is correct.

Commissioner Westendorf asked at what point does this go to the Grand River Corridor Improvement Authority and Christiansen replied it already did in February. Their authority was to review

Perrot asked about the Pathways Committee and their input as to walkability. He stated there's a grass cut-thru that currently leads to the current American Legion property to the street. So, in the event this comes to fruition we would need to follow their guidance and work with the developer to address accessibility in terms of sidewalk, connectivity to that neighborhood, things like that.

Christiansen said we have had some dialogue on this and on the various boards and commissions in the City and one of the committees is the Pathways Committee created by the City Council and their charge is to look at connectivity throughout the City of Farmington, existing sidewalks, existing pathways, areas where upgrades and improvements can be made, they look at other opportunities, make suggestions and recommendations to various entities including the Planning Commission and City Council. They look at trying to identify areas where there can be connections that might benefit the City, the public, for walkability, for nonmotorized connection throughout the community. One of the things that they were looking at most recently was the GRCIA Vision Plan and you might note there's also an instrument that was created a number of years ago, the Rouge River Nature Trail Project. It was an assessment that was done by the University of Michigan School of Environment, Natural Resources, and a graduate program within that school, graduate students came to Farmington and they conducted a survey and an analysis of the Rouge River that runs through Farmington up in Farmington Hills, so let's go to Ten Mile and Farmington Road that goes down to Heritage Park, it comes into and through Shiawassee Park and comes along the south side of Grand River and crosses underneath Grand River and then comes on the north side of Grand River, south side of Valley View and runs underneath GR and then comes across behind those properties on Brookdale and then adjacent to the west side of Brookdale Condominiums, you'll see there's a little blow out portion, a little elbow is right there at Sherwood, then it continues on and goes through Farmington, Nine Mile Road area and goes out by a connector and into the Botsford area. The Pathways Committee has looked at that plan, the Rouge River Nature Trail Project plan, which again is an evaluation and recommendations from that graduate student group at U of M, the GRCIA certainly references that tool that looks at opportunities for redevelopment and also made comment here with this project, too, because it may be at some point in time the ability to implement that plan, whether it's in part or in its entirety and to achieve some of the connectivity that it's proposing. One of the things that was discussed and that you alluded to, Mr. Chair, is along Sherwood Avenue, particularly the east/west portion from the west end where it ends going towards

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the Farmington branch of the Rouge River. And then as we go east there is a sidewalk there on the south side of this piece, adjacent, and also on the south side of Sherwood and there's sidewalk on Shaw. So there is some unstructured portions including the south side of this property.

There was dialogue about that at the CIA level and the Pathways Committee. If you look to the south end of this drawing which is the site plan package color sheet, you'll see that there is property that goes out to the edge of Sherwood Street and it's vegetated, it doesn't look down, there is a grade right there and currently there is a worn path over time, undefined and unstructured, and you'll see the sidewalk on the adjacent property to the east. So one of the things we take to look at when we're looking at site plans as was discussed here by OHM on the Grand River side, is making sure we have that connectivity to that sidewalk.

MOTION by Crutcher, supported by Westendorf, to open the Public Hearing.

Motion carried, all ayes.

(Public Hearing opened at 7:40 p.m.)

PUBLIC HEARING

James Misaros, 31712 Sherwood, lives in house and adjacent and east of prop addressed the comment regarding the connectivity regarding the parking lot and Sherwood Street, which is only used to provide access for the American Legion Hall to get back and mow the lawn and was always intended as a greenbelt barrier and that the agreement was that the hall would maintain the section that has no sidewalk there.

Doug Stanton 22409 Sherwood, stated his concerns with the close proximity of the proposed units and his house.

Johnny Watson, 31751 Sherwood expressed concerns about construction traffic, garbage and that the project doesn't benefit the neighborhood.

Jordan Meyer, 31831 Brookdale, Unit 103, expressed concerns with parking, the noise and density and height of the project, garbage, as well as it being rentals as opposed to ownership, project will change character of neighborhood, including his view of the sunrise, and strongly opposes the project.

Brendan Ruddy, 31721 Sherwood Street, opposes project, especially a multi-story one and expressed concerns about parking.

Marya Davis, 30105 West Ten Mile, Farmington Hills, Commander of American Legion, spoke to the outstanding character of Cervi Construction and is highly confident in their forthrightness and ability to work out a good resolution for the project.

Kim Campbell, 31622 Shaw, expressed concerns with overall design of project and it not being compatible with the neighborhood.

Allan Appiah, 31731 Sherwood Street, expressed concerns with size and height of project and it not being compatible with neighborhood

MOTION by Kmetzo, supported by Mantey, to close the Public Hearing.
Motion carried, all ayes.

(Public Hearing closed at 8:11 p.m.)

Vice Chairperson Perrot asked if there were further questions or comments from the Commissioners.

Crutcher wants to know how comments and concerns will be addressed by developer.

Perrot invited Cervi back to the podium.

Fabio Cervi returned to the podium. He stated that he has spoken with Mr. Misaros about his concerns and tried to address them with fencing and vegetation to block sound to try and accommodate the site. He stated they own The Orchards in Farmington and as far as parking is concerned seven of the eleven renters at that complex own one car, four of them have two cars. The units are \$2,000 a month, they are young professionals with good paying jobs and smart and he anticipates the proposed development will attract the same clientele. He said as far as damage to property from construction, they build within five feet of homes and there is no heavy trucks intending to be utilized, the building is 14 feet and the walls will be pre-built. He stated he feels trash cans is a much more sanitary way of handling the trash. Another unit he owns where there is City trash is a much more sanitary way of handling trash than dumpsters. He said the building will be 65 feet from Sherwood with a beautiful retaining wall in the back so that will cut off access per se from people coming straight down from the site to Sherwood, they have beautiful landscape design that will enhance the rear of the property as opposed to homes that would probably be 25-30 feet from the curb. These buildings will be set back further and beautiful landscape that will benefit the residents on Sherwood. He stated as far as renters, Brookdale Condos are owner operated and 40% of their complex is rentals. He stated his sites are quiet, they screen their tenants, and he thinks this project will add benefit to the neighborhood.

Crutcher asked if the garbage cans will remain outside or pulled into the garage and Cervi replied pulled into the garage. He then addressed the parking as there is a one-car garage and one can park on the drive, four visitor parking spaces. Crutcher then asked if the units on the main floor will have a patio or deck and no yard area at back of unit and Cervi replied there is a deck not connected by grade or ground.

Kmetzo asked how long they anticipate construction to be and Cervi replied a little over two years as they had a similar project in Farmington Hills during Covid and it came in at a little over two years.

Kmetzo asked how long the American Legion has been vacant, and Christiansen referred the question to Commander Davis.

Commander Davis came to the podium and stated the American Legion is currently occupied and in use. There hasn't been as much activity there since Covid which is the primary reason why we are leaving because that took all of our income, our income cannot maintain a 1947 building so we have decided to downsize. They still use the property and the Hall is used for their own members' use. They continue to look and they want to stay in Farmington, however we may end up having to go a little farther out because the needs we have for parking, etc., are not readily available.

Perrot called for a motion on the item.

MOTION by Kmetzo, supported by Mantey, to table the PUD Site Plan Review for Cervi Construction, American Legion Hall, 31775 Grand River Avenue, so the Applicant can take into consideration the comments heard at the Public Hearing, and in the OHM Advisors review letters, to give the Applicant an opportunity to make any changes based on those comments and the engineering and planning letters and their recommendations proposed in those letters

A roll call vote was taken on the aforementioned motion with the following result:

AYES: Kmetzo, Mantey, Perrot, Westendorf

NAYS: Crutcher

Motion to table carried (4-1).

UPDATE – CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Director Christiansen gave an update on the current development projects stating the Streetscape is completed, work on Heights Brewery continues and they are hoping for an end of summer/September timeframe for opening. He encouraged people to stop in Jill's

Pharmacy to see the work on the inside. The Castle Dental property has sold, not aware of next step yet. The old Fitness 19 will now be My Salon Suites. Cannelle's is refurbishing the interior and exterior as well as the implementation of outdoor seating. The Big Boy statue is up. There has been interest in the Paramount Health Care and the Winery is under contract with the MEDC and Oakland County and is looking for financial support for the project. Maxfield Training Center is moving along and will go before Council at an August meeting. Savvy Sliders is close to opening and Blue Hat Coffee has completed their work. There has been some repurposing of industrial buildings along Nine Mile and Dagwood Deli might be transferring ownership. He reminded everyone that the Founder's Festival is up and coming the third weekend in July.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT

None heard.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Crutcher, supported by Westendorf, to adjourn the meeting.
Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary