



MASTER PLAN AND ZONING COMMITTEE
City of Novi Planning Commission
December 11, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.
Novi Civic Center – Council Conference Room
45175 W. Ten Mile, Novi, MI 48375
(248) 347-0475
MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Tony Anthony, John Avdoulos, Cindy Gronachan

Absent: None

Staff Present: Barb McBeth, City Planner; Lindsay Bell, Planner; Sri Komaragiri, Planner; Thomas Schultz, City Attorney; Madeleine Kopko, Planning Assistant

1. Approval of Agenda

Member Anthony made a motion to approve the agenda with additions for audience participation in between each item. Member Gronachan seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

2. Approval of November 13, 2019 Master Plan and Zoning Committee Meeting Minutes

Member Gronachan made a motion to approve the November 13, 2019 Minutes. Member Anthony seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

3. Discussion Items

i. Holiday Inn PRO JZ19-24

Review and provide comments on the rezoning request for approximately 5.52 acres of property located south of Grand River Avenue, east of Beck Road (Section 16) from I-1 (Light Industrial) to TC (Town Center) with a Planned Rezoning Overlay.

Planner Bell explained the proposed hotel development.

- The property is currently zoned I-1, Light Industrial, and only allows motels as a Special Land Use, subject to certain standards.
- The rezoning request is necessary to allow the development of a four-story hotel.

- The current plan shows 117 guest rooms, a 40-seat restaurant, a future 10,417 square foot retail/restaurant space, and a public gathering space.
- The applicant is requesting a Planned Rezoning Overlay option with a TC, Town Center, rezoning, which is not currently supported by the 2016 Master Plan for Land Use.
- The Master Plan designates this area as City West and recommends a new zoning district to be created to enable the vision for this area.
- The applicant has chosen to pursue the PRO option. The Town Center District requested for rezoning seems to match the concept of the applicant's proposal. The Town Center Zoning District does currently resemble the City West area, which would accommodate the mix of uses proposed.
- The proposed site is currently developed with an industrial building which includes an upholstery shop and sign company.
- Staff indicated many issues that will need to be addressed in the applicant's next submittal including excessive amount of parking, the use of a private road, lack of connectivity, and lack of landscaping plans.

Brian Biskner, Powell Engineering, noted that the applicant wanted to follow along with the City West process, but decided to go with the PRO option as it may be a faster route. He also said he looks forward to receiving all comments from the Committee and is particularly interested in the comments regarding the public space location along Grand River.

Chair Avdoulos turned it over to the Committee for comments.

Member Anthony provided some of his comments.

- He believes that a hotel would be a good fit on this parcel.
- This use would be one that the Planning Commission looks at for parking reductions.
- The applicant should look at our Non-Motorized Master Plan to see how Novi is trying to be more walkable and see how they can incorporate those goals into their site plan. The Planning Commission likes to review that map and see how the City can improve its infrastructure.
- Member Anthony said that he could see this project connecting to the convention center and the hospital.
- We would not want to get involved with donations into the tree fund for this project, and scaling back on the parking would allow us to do that.
- There is an existing buffer between the existing industrial sites and the residential area; this is probably one of our best buffers in the City.
- When the Planning Commission looks at a plan, Member Anthony indicated that the parking, green space, and walkable connections are very important to us.

Member Anthony asked about the restaurant/commercial space.

Applicant Manhal Shammami said they are looking into family-style restaurants or quick, fast-food type establishments. It's tough right now because there isn't

much in between Taft and Beck Roads to draw a lot of attention to retail and restaurants. When we bring in the hotel, it may start to draw that attention.

Member Gronachan said Suburban Showplace hosts a lot of events in the summertime. That may be an important thing to note when deciding on a restaurant. As far as the green space, I think a park or open space idea for the guests or restaurant customers to use in between the hotel and restaurant would work out really well. It may encourage more people in their decision to go there because of that space. There's a long walk from here until the next Starbucks, for example. Member Gronachan said that she is a proponent of green space.

Member Avdoulos asked the applicant what made them look at this site?

Applicant Manhal Shammami said we know how busy Suburban Showplace gets and encourages people from other communities to visit the area. There's a lot of manufacturing coming in and Suburban Showplace has a lot of events related to that. So, first we picked the brand and that's Holiday Inn. When we built a Holiday Inn in 2009 on Twelve Mile near Haggerty Road, the hotel market was still strong during the recession, so we know the usage. We've done a study to show this would fit in very well there. I think this would be a really good place with Suburban Showplace across the street and the hospital down the street as well. No one has really built anything with a restaurant attached nearby. We forgot to mention the restaurant will be open to the public and there will be a conference room inside the hotel. We are shooting for 120 rooms with upgrades to the fitness center and the pool.

Chair Avdoulos said the location to me is odd because you think it would go across the street. I would like to see a map with a broader image that shows Beck Road and Grand River Avenue including recently built or proposed hotels and see how this ties into the Master Plan. I also think this can spur other developments. There are some other restaurants down the street so I would just like to see how all of this ties in.

Member Avdoulos asked if this is falling in line with what the Master Plan envisions.

Planner Bell said this falls into the City West area on all sides. Eventually development could happen all around it with the standards of the City West District. We were hoping to see some sidewalk connections to make these future connections possible. We think something more could be added to that.

Mr. Biskner said we started talking with staff last spring. We wanted to go with the City West concept, but we didn't know how long that would take and the franchise might have been lost so we wanted to go with the PRO option.

Member Anthony said what deviations would be included with that?

Planner Bell said maybe a hotel under three stories; however, this project is not abutting residential districts. In terms of other standards, we started with looking at the Town Center standards and it continues to evolve the more we work on it.

City Planner McBeth said the mix of uses may be more important. At some point, projects are going to come in and this seems like the starting point.

Member Avdoulos asked does this use work with all the other surrounding uses. I travel frequently and I use google maps to see what's nearby and I pick a hotel based on that. We have to keep up with today's technology.

Member Gronachan said I think this is the right place for this development. I think you just need to be creative and futuristic. I like the idea but it needs some work. I don't know how I feel about four stories either, but it will spark a lot of development. There is not a lot of height in that area right now and it may stick out.

Mr. Shammami said a new look for Holiday Inn just came out a couple of months ago and it is very modern. It looks about 3 stories because the roof is flat.

Member Avdoulos said I am not concerned about the height in that location. When it is time to go to Planning Commission, we can see some more visuals compared to the things already nearby. We like seeing things out of the box.

Planner Komaragiri asked the applicant if they anticipate many guests and noted that they should look into adding a crosswalk for people to cross the street from Suburban Showplace.

Member Gronachan confirmed that there is a crosswalk in front of Suburban Showplace.

Member Avdoulos closed the Committee's comments and asked the audience if they wished to speak.

Mike Duchesneau, 1191 South Lake Drive, said this is consistent with the Master Plan and this is what we are looking for along Grand River Avenue. Most PRO plans need some work explaining their existence but this works. The one thing that caught my eye is the second curb cut. You would end up with three curb cuts and that's a 50 mile per hour road. Grand River Avenue gets a lot of traffic and left turns will probably be difficult. I don't have any issues with height, personally. The Grand River Corridor Authority may want to look at goals for what we want to see on Grand River Avenue. This also may be a good location for a bus stop. I'm in support of the development.

Chair Avdoulos closed the audience participation seeing no one else wished to speak.

ii. Novaplex

Review and provide comments on the revised Concept Plan related to the rezoning request for a 22 acres of property located on the west side of Haggerty Road, north of Twelve Mile Road in Section 12 from Office Service Technology (OST) to Multi-family residential (RM-2) using a Planning Rezoning Overlay option.

Planner Komaragiri said we presented this project back in September. The Committee provided some good comments. The applicant listened to those comments and came back with revised plans. Some of the revisions to the concept plan include:

- The number of apartment units was reduced.
- Wetland and woodland site impacts were reduced.
- Wetland mitigation was proposed.
- The number of deviations was reduced.
- The overall density of the project was reduced.

Planner Komaragiri reminded the Committee of the comments from the last meeting:

- The Committee wanted the applicant to demonstrate connectivity and possibly provide a study before the public hearing is scheduled.
- The Committee wanted to see a connection maintained to Infinity Medical.

Planner Komaragiri said this parcel is going from an OST district to a dense residential district. The buildings proposed would be taller and would fit more of the RM-1 (Low Density, Low Rise Multiple Family District) style. The Ordinance states that if the building heights are lower than RM-2 it would be considered RM-1, meaning it has less than 4 stories. The unit count complies with RM-2, but the height complies with RM-1. The changes seen from the first concept plan include the buildings being completely above ground and not half underground.

Zach Weiss, of Beztak Communities, clarified that the buildings within the development are 4-stories.

The applicant, Mark Highlen said the buildings are above a straight 3-story but below a 4-story. Our major concern was the layout and making sure the use works here. We will come back with all of the details. With the connectivity issue, we want to provide for the surrounding OST (Office Service Technology Zoning District) area. We are not going to be able to create connectivity with shopping because its 1-2 miles away, as it is with most residential subdivisions. This is a car culture and people drive everywhere.

Planner Komaragiri asked the applicant to provide an exhibit showing how far these shopping services are.

Member Anthony said I think my issue last time was the isolation the project sits in. I like the changes to the density. I started to become okay with it. At least

it's connected to the neighborhoods across the street. The school connection seemed very lengthy. I could get over the lack of shopping connectivity.

Mr. Highlen said we are trying to market this development as a younger adult living area.

Member Anthony said all it takes is one child to move in and the school system has to provide for that one child.

Member Gronachan said I'm grateful for all the new explanations. The only concern is the isolation and marketing for younger adults.

Chair Avdoulos said because there is residential across the street in Farmington Hills, it does help me with understanding the rezoning request. What would really help me is identifying the other services nearby and how you know where these are. We want to see a successful project. Communicating to the Planning Commission why this property makes sense is going to be the most helpful. I recognize that apartment style living is becoming more popular.

Mr. Weiss said our main accomplishment is to provide support to the employment nearby.

Chair Avdoulos closed the Committee's comments and asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak.

Mike Duchesneau, 1191 South Lake Drive, said as a resident this is not consistent with the Master Plan or existing uses. The parcel should remain as Office Service Technology. Across the street in Farmington Hills, the residential zoning would probably be closely related to our R-3 District which doesn't compare to the proposed multiple family. Townhomes are being built nearby and Manchester is under construction. I don't see why we would allow this to go through. There are many homes nearby that are already residential for lease. I can't get past the rezoning request.

Dorothy Duchesneau, 125 Henning, said I have the same issue. I think the development is nice, but the location is not good. You would have to cross I-96 and M-5 to get to school. It makes things difficult for young students. I know what it feels like. It does not make sense to put an isolated sliver of residential right here. There isn't a park nearby for kids.

Chair Avdoulos closed the audience participation.

iii. Adjourn

Member Gronachan made a motion to adjourn. Member Anthony seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 6:47 PM.