



# PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

CITY OF NOVI

Regular Meeting

**July 24, 2019 7:00 PM**

Council Chambers | Novi Civic Center  
45175 W. Ten Mile (248) 347-0475

## CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

## ROLL CALL

**Present:** Member Anthony, Member Avdoulos, Member Ferrell, Member Gronachan, Member Lynch, Member Maday, Chair Pehrson

**Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Barbara McBeth, City Planner; Sri Komaragiri, Planner; Lindsay Bell, Planner; Rick Meader, Landscape Architect; Kate Richardson, Staff Engineer; Beth Saarela, City Attorney

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Member Lynch led the meeting attendees in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Member Lynch and seconded by Member Gronachan.

## VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE July 24, 2019 AGENDA MOTION MADE BY MEMBER LYNCH AND SECONDED BY Member Gronachan.

***Motion to approve the July 24, 2019 Planning Commission Agenda. Motion carried 7-0.***

## AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Michel Duchesneau, 1191 South Lake Drive, said welcome new members to the commission. I'd like to talk about the proposal you have to modify the B-2 Zoning Ordinances. I am not supportive of changing the B-2 zoning ordinance as it's presented to allow for taller buildings. I recognize it is only three parcels or so, but I know B-2 could be very useful in the future. I would be supportive of amending the B-2 zoning ordinance for properties adjacent to an interstate freeway or freeway service drive or allowing them in the Grand River corridor district. Those areas could accommodate the goal the applicant is seeking. The Master Plan of 2016 extensively talks about City West and other areas that could be or should be developed with an eye for allowing taller buildings along the freeway. City West basically says in the Master Plan that the vision is three to five stories buildings allowing up to ten stories for some parcels that would be adjacent to the interstate. So I think that since the City West ordinances or districts have not been defined I

think the applicant can either through the Master Plan or the ZBA process or through a PRO process can accomplish what he wants to do. Thank you.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

There were no Committee Reports.

### **CITY PLANNER REPORT**

City Planner McBeth said thank you and good evening, as you know we have two new Planning Commission members this evening: Cindi Gronachan and Brent Ferrell. We would like to welcome them. Additionally we have a change in the Planning Department we want to tell you about. Hannah Smith has been our Planning Assistant for two years and she's done an excellent job, but she decided to go back to graduate school and get her Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning so we are going to wish her well as she goes to the University of Michigan to get that degree. We also have a new Planning Assistant who started work here last week, Madeleine Kopko.

Chair Pehrson said very well and welcome to our new members, we appreciate your participation.

### **CONSENT AGENDA- REMOVALS AND APPROVAL**

#### **1. PLANET FITNESS JSP 18-57: Approval of Transformer Location**

Approval at the request of PF Michigan Group, LLC, for allowing the alternate location of the proposed transformer in the interior side yard in lieu of required rear yard, as may be granted by the Planning Commission per the revised Planned Rezoning Overlay Agreement for the Adell Center. The applicant previously received Planning Commission approval of Preliminary Site Plan for a single floor 21,054 square foot indoor recreational facility known as Planet Fitness.

Member Lynch said I'd like to make a motion to approve.

Motion made by Member Lynch and seconded by Member Anthony.

#### **ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE AN ALTERNATE LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED TRANSFORMER IN THE INTERIOIR SIDE YARD IN LIEU OF REQUIRED REAR YARD.**

**Motion to approve an alternate location of the proposed transformer in the interior side yard in lieu of required rear yard for Planet Fitness JSP 18-57. Motion carried 7-0.**

## **2. A123 SYSTEMS JSP 17-21: Landscape Plan Revisions**

Approval of the request of A123 Systems for revised Preliminary Site Plan with changes to the landscape plans. The subject parcel is located in Section 15, West of Cabaret Drive and South of Twelve Mile Road and is zoned OST, Office Service Technology. The applicant previously received Planning Commission approval to develop the 31.25 acre parcel with two buildings: one office/lab space of 128,936 square feet on the southern portion of the site (Phase 1) and the other as an assembly building of 53,469 square feet (Phase 2) including associated site improvements. Construction of Phase 1 is well underway, and the revised Landscape Plans bring the project into conformance with current ordinance standards.

Motion made by Member Lynch seconded by Member Maday.

### **ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE A REVISED PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN WITH CHANGES TO THE LANDSCAPE PLAN.**

**Motion to approve a revised preliminary site plan with changes to the landscape plan for A123 Systems JSP 17-21. Motion carried 7-0.**

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

There were no Public Hearings.

### **MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

#### **1. INTRODUCE TEXT AMENDMENT 18.289 – HEIGHT IN B-2**

Set a public hearing for Text Amendment 18.289 to update Section 3.10, B-1, B-2 and B-3 Business Districts Required Conditions, to allow building height to be increased to 52 feet or 4 stories in the B-2, Community Business District throughout the City of Novi when not adjacent to a residential district.

Planner Bell said staff received an application for a proposed ordinance amendment for the purpose of allowing the height to be increased from a maximum of 42 feet or three stories to 52 feet and four stories in the B-2 community business district throughout the City of Novi. The applicant, Mr. Frank Jonna, is primarily interested in developing a hotel on the remaining parcel in the West Market Square development which is located near the northwest corner of Grand River Avenue and Beck Road.

The B-2 district currently has a standard building height limit of 30 feet which may be increased on properties not adjacent to residential districts to 42 feet or three stories. All developments on properties adjacent to residential districts will still be limited to 30 feet under the proposed amendment. There are only two other areas of Novi that are currently zoned B-2 on the zoning map. The southwest corner of West Pontiac Trail and West Park Drive which contains three parcels: The Novi Square Shopping Center, Clearview Eye Care Building, and a vacant parcel. On the south side of 12 Mile Road, west of Haggerty Road, there is one parcel. It is not adjacent to residential and it was developed as the Holiday Inn Express and Suites at three stories. Of the locations noted, the three parcels on West Pontiac Trail are adjacent to residential districts so the text

amendment proposed would not apply to those properties.

Staff notes that the proposed change to the site in question could allow a taller hotel than is currently permitted from a maximum of three stories and 42 feet to the four stories and 52 feet as indicated by the applicant, if they chose not to develop a hotel at this location under the use that would be four stories could be proposed such as four story medical office or another use permitted in the B-2 District. Given the small size of the subject property, a medical office of that size would probably not fit the required parking.

If the Planning Commission is inclined to support the text amendment as a means to accommodate additional height at West Market Square and other B-2 zoned properties throughout the City, staff and the cities attorney's office will finalize the draft text amendment that will address this change prior to the public hearing. If this is the Commission's preference, staff would recommend the following: the additional height would only be allowed if the parcel is not abutting a residential district as limited in the ordinance and additional height would only be allowed if required building and parking setbacks are met.

Tonight the Planning Commission is asked to provide direction to staff and consider setting a public hearing for an upcoming Planning Commission meeting. At that time the Commission will hold the public hearing and forward a recommendation to city council for reading an adoption. The applicant, Frank Jonna, is here tonight if you have any additional questions. Thank you.

Chair Pehrson said would the applicant like to address the Planning Commission tonight?

Frank Jonna, 6200 Second Avenue, Detroit, said good evening, we have looked at trying to add diversity to this site and this creates an opportunity to add a new use to the site that will enhance the other tenants on the site. That's why we would like to pursue this. We also were listening to the comments are not opposed to additional conditions to protect the B-2 zoning throughout your community so we clearly have freeway exposure when you look at the properties that are up and down the freeway, 52 feet would not, in our minds, be an excessive height to go to.

Chair Pehrson said thank you, with that we will open it up for discussion by the Commission members.

Member Anthony said I think sometimes we talk about height and controlling height that can be relative and in my opinion I've seen, for instance, in Rochester Hills, very similar to ours, four story even going up to five story which has been able to blend very well. When you look at B-2, the presumption is B-2 around it is going to have some buffering so that you're not going from anything that's abrupt from B-2 to a single family residential. In fact, I think our staff, even added that, to ensure that that wouldn't occur. So when we're looking at having a public hearing, in my opinion, is that it wouldn't necessarily restrict B-2 fully, but I would support this, I think, four stories is not really excessive and easy to blend into a community when you have other buffering zoned with it.

Member Lynch said obviously this site lends itself for the hotel and I do understand that it is, if you look at the businesses that are there, it's a good idea to have something like that in that area, you know, four story/five story. We just approved something like that at the

Adell Property that was much taller than that. So for this site, no issue. There was one that was next to OST, I don't think that will be an issue there. [The site along Pontiac Trail] is the only one that may not be appropriate for the additional height. But overall the concept, the four stories, I think it would be nice. Certainly, we don't have enough hotel space, we've got the Showplace and a number of other events that we need hotel space so I think it's a perfect location and I don't have an issue.

Member Maday said it's more of a question: That additional height would not work in this [Pontiac Trail location], right? It's irrelevant because it's abutting a residential subdivision.

Planner McBeth said that's correct.

Member Avdoulos said I have a question for the applicant. As you've been studying this site, and it's going to an extra story it will give more parking, so have you done a parking study so the four stories can accommodate the required parking on that particular parcel?

Applicant Jonna said we've done some preliminary site plans that indicates we can certainly provide adequate parking for the ordinance requirements. There are two issues, the brand's requirements and the ordinance. That particular area of the site is dramatically under parked and we would certainly, if it benefits the community, do a parking study of the entire site. There's plenty of parking on the property and because it's a site condominium, it's all shared parking.

Member Avdoulos said I don't want to get into a situation where we allow something to happen and then all these variances start coming into play and we sort of like to make sure whatever we accommodate is going to work with the overall planning of the site.

Applicant Jonna said absolutely, we don't want an under parked building that's going to cause problems with the adjacent uses.

Member Avdoulos said and I agree with the other commissioners, I have no issue with the height, that's what hotels are, they're vertical, but I just want to make sure it fits with everything and we don't see a lot of things that we'll have to address later. Thank you.

Member Lynch said Barb, with the hotels, I remember somebody came in with the hotels at the Adell property and did do some preliminary work about the parking situation and how our ordinances were developed before things like Uber and Lyft, are we doing anything about investigating that for specific use? I'm just talking about hotels so we can take advantage of, I mean, we want to make sure we do the right thing and there's adequate parking and things like that, but with this new disrupter with Uber and Lyft, to make sure we keep our ordinances up to date.

Planner McBeth said we do have a study underway where we going to need to review studies done on the reduction of parking requirements in light of Uber and Lyft in a particular formal text amendment.

Member Lynch said so if we go ahead and approve the text amendment, we'll just assume they meet all the parking requirements and things like that.

Chair Pehrson said we are not approving anything other than setting a public hearing.

Member Lynch said but at the final site plan, which is further down the road, we'll have another opportunity to take another bite at this apple, maybe we'll have some more empirical data and more analysis to make a rational decision on what is the right amount of parking for hotels and things of that nature.

Planner McBeth said yes were hoping to present something to the Planning Commission in the next month or so related to the parking requirements.

Chair Pehrson said does the current language include, so were obviously not allowing this to abut a residential district, so does the language include something relative to having freeway access or major arterial roads so we do limit the particular use.

Planner McBeth said it does not currently, we could certainly add some text.

Chair Pehrson said I'd like to see if city administration could look at that and have that language as well. I think that would be helpful at this point in time. Thank you.

**ROLL CALL VOTE TO SET A PUBLIC HEARING FOR TEXT AMENDMENT 18.289 TO UPDATE SECTION 3.10 B-1, B-2, AND B-3 BUSINESS DISTRICTS REQUIRED CONDITIONS TO ALLOW INCREASE TO 52 FEET OR FOUR STORIES FOR B-2, MOTION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS.**

**Motion to set a public hearing for the text amendment 18.289 to update section 3.10 B-1, B-2, and B-3 Business Districts Required Conditions to allow increase to 52 feet or four stories for B2. Motion carried 7-0.**

## **2. ELECTON OF OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES**

Planner McBeth said Mr. Chair we did send out a memo last week. There are two different sections: there's the administrative and the liaison committee which will be the chair, vice chair, and the secretary. Each will need a nomination, a second, and a vote. We did get some responses from the members and I'm hoping that's reflected on the chart in front of you.

Chair Pehrson said so we need a motion to elect the Chair.

Member Lynch nominates Pehrson as Chair. Member Maday Seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE TO ELECT CHAIR PEHRSON AS CHAIRPERSON OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MADE BY MEMBER LYNCH AND SECONDED BY MEMBER MADAY.**

**Motion to elect Chair Pehrson as Chairperson. Motion carried 7-0.**

Chair Pehrson said we need a motion for Vice Chair.

Member Avdoulos said he nominates Member Anthony.

Member Anthony said I would like to decline, I like being in support and I think there is an

architect who would be an outstanding Vice Chair. I would like to nominate John as Vice Chair.

Member Avdoulos said I accept. Member Maday Seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE TO ELECT MEMBER AVDOULOS AS VICE CHAIR OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MADE BY MEMBER ANTHONY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER MADAY.**

***Motion to elect Member Avdoulos as Vice Chair. Motion carried 7-0.***

Chair Pehrson said next would be for Secretary. Do we have a nomination?

Member Maday said I nominate Mr. Lynch. Member Gronachan seconded the motion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE TO ELECT MEMBER LYNCH AS SECRETARY OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MADE BY MEMBER MADAY AND SECONDED BY MEMBER GRONACHAN.**

***Motion to elect Member Lynch as Secretary. Motion carried 7-0.***

Chair Pehrson said now for the committees. So we have the administrative taken care of?

Planner McBeth said yes that's taken care of. The next one is the Capital Improvement Program, Budget and Planning Studies. Two people have showed interest so we usually request one additional person as an alternate. So if the Commission would like to keep the two members and add an alternate.

Chair Pehrson said would anybody like to play alternate?

Member Gronachan said I will.

Planner McBeth said the next one is Environmental and Walkable Novi Committee. We usually have two members on that and one alternate. We did have two people express their interest: Member Maday and Member Ferrell so if we could have an alternate for that.

Member Anthony said I'll take alternate to that.

Planner McBeth said the next one is Implementation Committee. This is the committee that reviews zoning ordinance text amendments, it hasn't met in a little while, but nobody has volunteered this year.

Member Avdoulos said I will volunteer.

Chair Pehrson said I will also. Who's three? Member Anthony?

Member Anthony said I'll take it.

Planner McBeth said the next one is the Master Plan and Zoning Committee. Two people have expressed interest: Member Anthony and Member Gronachan and we would like a third.

Member Avdoulos said I will do it.

Planner McBeth said the other committee is the Rules Committee that also hasn't met in some time, we do look for three members and nobody has volunteered yet.

Member Maday said I'll volunteer.

Chair Pehrson said I will as well.

Member Ferrell said I'll take it as well.

Planner McBeth said thank you, I will put this list together and email it out to everybody.

### **3. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 26, 2019 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

Chair Pehrson said we need a motion to approve the June 26, 2019 Planning Commission Minutes.

### **ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE THE JUNE 26, 2019 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES MADE BY MEMBER LYNCH AND SECONDED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS.**

***Motion to approve the June 26, 2019 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Motion carried 7-0.***

### **SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUES**

Chair Pehrson said while we have a couple minutes or so, Brent why don't you give us a who you are/where you are/why are you here?

Member Ferrell said I was on the ZBA for about eight years and I thought I had a good opportunity to step up the game a little bit and see the other end of the spectrum of planning. My background is I.T. and I have a bachelor's degree. I have a daughter that's actually in the audience right now.

Chair Pehrson said very well, thank you and welcome. Cindy, how about a little about you?

Member Gronachan said I am a long time resident of Novi, I've served on the Zoning Board from 2001 to 2006 and from 2013 to last month. I am an insurance agent for State Farm Insurance, for 23 years. I also have a marketing degree from Madonna and I graduated from Hilbert College with a paralegal degree back in New York. I joined the Planning Commission because I've done everything I could possibly do on the ZBA and it was time for a change and a challenge. I'm thrilled to be here.

Chair Pehrson said welcome to both of you, thank you so much.



## **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

No Audience Participation.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Member Lynch and seconded by Member Gronachan.

## **VOICE VOTE ON THE MOTION TO ADJOURN MADE BY MEMBER LYNCH AND SECONDED BY MEMBER Gronachan.**

***Motion to adjourn the July 24, 2019 Planning Commission meeting. Motion carried 7-0.***

The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 PM.