

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING BOARD
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2014
City Commission Room
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan**

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Planning Board held October 22, 2014. Chairman Scott Clein convened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman Scott Clein; Board Members Bert Koseck, Gillian Lazar, Janelle Whipple-Boyce, Bryan Williams; Student Representative Shelby Wilson

Absent: Board Members Carroll DeWeese, Robin Boyle; Student Representative Jack Moore

Administration: Matthew Baka, Senior Planner
Brendan Cousino, Asst. City Engineer
Jana Ecker, Planning Director
Paul O'Meara, City Engineer
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary

10-158-14

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR PLANNING BOARD MEETING
HELD OCTOBER 8, 2014**

Mr. Williams

Page 2 - Second paragraph from the bottom, replace "intension" with "intention."
Add the sentence "At this time Mr. Williams left the meeting."

Motion by Ms. Whipple-Boyce

Seconded by Mr. Williams to approve the Minutes of the regular Planning Board meeting on October 8, 2014 as amended.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Whipple-Boyce, Williams, Clein, Koseck, Lazar

Nays: None

Absent: DeWeese

10-159-14

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS (none)

10-160-14

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Ms. Ecker reported that the applicants for Final Site Plan Review and Special Land Use Permit ("SLUP") review for 820 E. Maple Rd., All Seasons Senior Living, Request for Economic Development License, have asked for postponement.

Motion by Mr. Williams

Seconded by Ms. Whipple-Boyce to postpone the SLUP and Final Site Plan Review for 820 E. Maple Rd. to December 10, 2014.

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Williams, Whipple-Boyce, Koseck, Lazar

Nays: None

Abstain: Clein

Absent: DeWeese

10-161-14

COURTESY REVIEW

South Hamilton Alley Improvement

Mr. O'Meara informed the board that the architect, Mr. Jason Krieger, Krieger Klatt Architects, was present. Mr. O'Meara recalled that during the budget hearing for the FY 2014/2015 City budget, the City Commission asked the Engineering Dept. to consider reconstructing the alley that runs between Hamilton Ave. and E. Maple Rd. The alley is generally an 18 ft. wide strip of land, although it widens out at the 90° bend located south of the Hamilton Ave. entrance.

The existing pavement is in poor condition. There are some areas that have been patched in the past, but the majority of the alley still has the original 1929 pavement in place. The sewer has not been studied, but it is expected that it likely needs to be enlarged.

Pursuant to the City Commission's direction a meeting was held on September 11, 2014 to allow the property owners and tenants to meet with Engineering Dept. staff to discuss the project prior to the public hearing. In general, the comments from the people who attended the meeting were concerns about the cost and duration of the project, and that this is not a good alley to try to turn into a pedestrian environment because of its necessary service nature and high amount of traffic. Therefore, exposed aggregate may not be the best material to use in high amounts. Those present generally noted support for the reconstruction of the sewers, and improving the drainage in the alley.

The Architectural Review Committee also looked at this and offered several suggestions. Mr. Krieger worked with those concepts came up with a design that put some exposed aggregate in the middle of the 18 ft. wide strip of concrete.

“Via” signs following the conceptual drawings of Ron and Roman Architects will be partially implemented. The signs will be simplified by not adding electricity and mounting them underneath the street light. There may be an opportunity to name the alley through the Via signs.

There are three main areas where dumpsters are currently placed. Patterned metal screens can be installed adjacent to the dumpsters to help block the view of them and add some architectural interest on the sides. Mr. Krieger explained the screens will be permanently attached to the ground with footings.

Mr. Koseck thought in this particular via it would be much more practical to use concrete. Beautify it in the N/S axis as proposed. Chairman Clein liked the plan because it is a nice balance between the practical and the ornate. Ms. Whipple-Boyce believed the most important distinction in the concrete should be the connection between the two alleys that run north and south. As for the other, she wouldn't waste the money on aggregate. She was worried the dumpster panels would be hit and damaged. She hoped to see the name of the passageway on the via sign. Mr. Williams said he would significantly highlight the N/S passageways from Hamilton all the way to Maple Rd. and not E/W. Mr. Koseck added that signage, lighting, and pavement patterns can direct people so they don't get lost.

Mr. O'Meara advised the N/S Commonwealth passage is planned for 2016. Complete reconstruction of an alley is typically funded by special assessment. The City Commission can authorize a special assessment district after taking input from the property owners, if it declares the project a necessity.

10-162-14

SPECIAL LAND USE PERMIT ("SLUP")

PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN REVIEW

2200 Holland St.

Mercedes-Benz of Bloomfield Hills Prep and Storage Facility

New construction of a one-story building 16,400 sq. ft. in size for the cleaning, detailing, light repair and storage of vehicles (postponed from September 10 2014 - request by applicant to postpone to October 22, 2014)

Mr. Baka advised the subject property located at 2200 Holland St. currently contains five warehouse structures. The applicant proposes to demolish all of the existing buildings and construct a single warehouse building that will be 16,400 sq. ft. and will be used as the auto prep and storage facility for the Mercedes-Benz of Bloomfield Hills dealership.

The proposed building will have the capacity to store 100 cars. All uses over 6,000 sq. ft. in the MX District are required to obtain a SLUP. Accordingly, the Planning Board will perform the Preliminary and Final Site Plan Reviews for the project and then make a recommendation to the City Commission on whether or not to approve the proposal for a SLUP.

The applicant appeared before the Planning Board on September 10, 2014. The night of the meeting the applicant presented an alternate plan that incorporated one of the existing buildings into the redevelopment plan. Due to the significant changes made to the proposal, the Preliminary Site Plan Review was postponed so that the Planning Dept. could perform a full review of the new plan and to allow the applicant to incorporate the comments provided by the Planning Board. Since that time there has been a change in the architect. The Plan that was resubmitted closely resembles the original submittal. However, several of the comments of the Planning Board were incorporated, including the following;

1. The building was shifted to the south to allow for the future possibility of extending Holland St. as recommended in the Eton Road Corridor Plan ("ERCP");
2. The on-site parking was increased to meet the Zoning Ordinance requirements;
3. The retention area in the southeast corner of the site was replaced with trees and landscaping; and
4. Signage was added to the east and west facades to identify the building as a Mercedes Benz facility.

The proposed building appears to meet the setback and height restrictions of the MX Zone with the exception of the following: Article 04 section 4.76 SS-08 A(1) states that *Front building facades at the first story shall be located at the frontage line.*

Accordingly, the applicant will be required to obtain a variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals ("BZA") for the placement of the building off of the frontage line.

The plans submitted by the applicant indicate the proposed parking area will be 57,970 sq. ft. in size. Accordingly, the applicant is required to provide 2,898 sq. ft. of landscaping. The plans indicate that 2,940 sq. ft. of landscaping will be provided. However, the majority of the landscaping is clustered in the southeast corner of the parcel outside of the parking area which does not count toward the interior landscaping requirement. **Therefore, the applicant will be required to add additional landscaping in the parking lot that meets Article 4, section 4.20 LA-01 (F) or obtain a variance from the BZA.**

Design Review

A detailed design review will be done at Final Site Plan Review.

This parcel is subject to the window requirements of Article 04 section 4.83 WN-01, which requires 70% glazing on any façade that faces a street, plaza, park or parking area. The plans as submitted do not meet this requirement. ***The applicant will be required to provide 70% glazing on the first floor or obtain a variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals.***

Mr. Williams received confirmation that the proposed extension of Holland St. would cover not just the subject property but also the adjacent property to the north. The City has no easement rights to extend Holland St. However, it is possible now with the new configuration that Holland St. can be extended. Mr. Williams noted the glazing and landscaping requirements interact with access to the public and this site doesn't have that. So, he is not troubled by these requirements.

Mr. Koseck did not think this project meets the test for a SLUP.

Mr. Chuck Gesquire, the applicant, spoke about their vision for the use of the site, and how he believes it fits with the intent of the ordinance and the intent of the Eton Rd. Corridor Plan (“ERCP”). Car hauler traffic into the lot would occur predominantly during the last ten days of the month, about four loads per week. They have tried to group the trees elsewhere on the property rather than in the lot, so tree sap will not drop on the cars that are stored outside. The large expanse of pavement is needed to provide turning movement for the trucks.

Mr. Gesquire went on to explain they presently have a similar facility in Troy, but plan to abandon it. He introduced his new architect, Mr. Gary Kwapis.

Ms. Whipple-Boyce observed this is a permitted use in the MX District. It conforms with the vision statement for the ERCP. They are offering a new building and the opportunity to make the site much better than it could be. Further, by removing the small building they have permitted an extension of Holland St. that doesn’t exist presently. Maybe the board can work with them to make some site improvements.

Ms. Lazar was concerned with the disturbance to residential neighborhoods that large car haulers traveling down Eton would cause. Chairman Clein agreed with Ms. Whipple-Boyce that the proposal could be made better. He thought they do something inexpensive to the building to make it unique and original. He was very concerned about the truck delivery. Mr. Gesquire explained truck deliveries would occur in the early morning.

Mr. Williams agreed the board can focus on the building, but he thinks the land usage is a significant improvement. It was determined that the motions regarding the SLUP and the Preliminary Site Plan Approval should be separate.

Motion by Ms. Whipple-Boyce

Seconded by Mr. Williams to recommend approval to the City Commission of the SLUP for 2200 Holland St., Mercedes-Benz of Bloomfield Hills Prep and Storage Facility.

There were no comments on the motion from members of the public at 9:05 p.m.

Motion failed, 3-2.

ROLCALL VOTE

Yeas: Whipple-Boyce, Williams, Clein

Nays: Koseck, Lazar

Absent: DeWeese, Boyle

Mr. Koseck suggested the applicant take the future Master Plan and show how this project would adapt. Mr. Gesquire noted what a big step it would be to clean up that area. He hoped to get some help and improve the whole corridor.

Ms. Lazar commented she sees the project as being too passive for the location and the board is looking for something that has some life and movement. Further, she objected

to the traffic issue and the amount of surface parking, but not to the building. Mr. Williams observed that the City maintained property on the north side of the project is a disaster.

Ms. Whipple-Boyce thought if the applicant references the ERCP it might shed some light on some of the board's reservations. Also, it would help if they take some time to work with planning staff. Chairman Clein concluded that there have been constructive concerns related to the site plan, and how it might relate more to the Corridor Plan and future vision of that plan. Mr. Williams noted the board can't control the use if it meets the ordinance, but as a matter of SLUP approval they could simply prohibit the delivery trucks to this site to keep them off of Eton. Further, maybe there is a way to bring people to the site and make it a little more interactive and customer friendly. Therefore, the building design might change somewhat.

Ms. Ecker noted the City has purchased land in order to implement a linear park nearby at some point in the future.

Motion by Mr. Williams

Seconded by Mr. Koseck to postpone consideration of the SLUP and Preliminary Site Plan Review hearing for 2200 Holland St., Mercedes-Benz of Bloomfield Hills Prep and Storage Facility, to December 10, 2014.

There were no final comments from the public at 9:40 p.m.

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Williams, Koseck, Clein, Lazar, Whipple-Boyce

Nays: None

Absent: DeWeese

10-163-14

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA (no audience was left)

10-164-14

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications (none)

b. Administrative Approvals

- Ms. Ecker reported that Norman LePage of Griffin Claw Brewing Co. has asked for administrative approval to install a shed for whiskey barrels in the far S/E corner of the site next to Robot Garage. The shed measures 68 ft. x 60 ft. The consensus was for them to bring the plans back to the board through the site plan approval process.

**Motion by Ms. Whipple-Boyce
Seconded by Ms. Lazar to cancel the Regular Planning Board Meeting on
November 12, 2014 and hold a Special Meeting on November 19, 2014 at 7:30 p.m.
at City Hall or at the Dept. of Public Services.**

Motion carried, 5-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Whipple-Boyce Lazar, Clein, Koseck, Williams

Nays: None

Absent: DeWeese

c. Draft Agenda for the Regular Planning Board Meeting on November 19, 2014

- Eton Academy SLUP;
- Maple Rd. and Cranbrook rezoning;
- Expansion of parking lot on Woodward;
- Garage houses.

d. Other Business (none)

10-165-14

PLANNING DIVISION ACTION ITEMS

a. Staff report on previous requests (none)

b. Additional items from tonight's meeting (none)

10-166-14

ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, board members motioned to adjourn at 9:50 p.m.

Jana Ecker
Planning Director