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The City of Bloomington Plan Commission (PC) met on October 7, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in the City of Bloomington Council Chambers. Members present: Cate, Wisler, Kopper, Sandberg, St. John, Kappas

ROLL CALL

MINUTES TO BE APPROVED: UDO Hearings: August 29th, September 5th, 10th, and 16th

****Minutes approved by voice vote 5:0—Approved.**

REPORTS, RESOLUTIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS: Terri Porter, director, said that the City Council would begin UDO hearings on October 16th and a full schedule of hearings is on the Planning and Transportation and City Council websites. Porter also said that the City had hired Craig Shonkwiler as the new Transportation and Traffic Engineer, and his first day would be November 18th. He is currently the assistant city engineer for Urbana, Illinois. She thanked Neil Kopper for being the interim engineer for over a year and that he would sit on the Plan Commission for the October and November hearings before stepping down.

Joe Hoffmann resigned from the Plan Commission at the September hearing so Wisler said that nominations and an election for a new president needed to take place that evening.

****Kappas motioned to nominate Wisler for Plan Commission president. Sandberg seconded. Motion carried by roll call vote 5:0—Approved.**

****Sandberg motioned to nominate Kappas as Plan Commission vice-president, the position previously held by Wisler. Wisler seconded. Motion carried by roll call vote 5:0—Approved.**

PETITIONS CONTINUED TO: November 4th, 2019

SP-23-19 **City of Bloomington**
105 & 111 W. 4th St., and 222 S. Walnut St.
Request: Site plan approval for a new parking garage with waivers in the Commercial Downtown (CD) zoning district.
Case Manager: Jackie Scanlan

PETITIONS:

PUD-26-19 **First Capital Management**
3201 E. Moores Pike
Request: A PUD amendment to the list of permitted uses to allow multi-family apartments.
Case Manager: Eric Greulich

Eric Greulich presented the staff report by summarizing the Staff report from the first hearing, reiterating what the Plan Commission discussed, and adding the petitioner's revisions. The Plan Commission discussed:

- Height and massing
- Possibility for adjacent transportation connections
- Traffic study for impacts to Moores Pike
- What is the public benefit to this project?
- Have enough environmentally sustainable design features been included?
- Inclusion of more parking spaces
- Storm water runoff

Since that first hearing, the petitioner submitted a commitment regarding the inclusion of affordable housing, a list of environmentally sustainable design features, and the height of the building has been reduced from 60 to 50 feet. The property is currently zoned Planned Unit Development (PUD) and the petitioner is requesting to amend the list of uses within the PUD to allow for “dwelling, multi-family.” Greulich said the major concerns at the August hearing were height and massing. The architecture and lack of environmental features are the main reasons Staff is recommending the Plan Commission forward the petition to the Common Council with a negative recommendation.

Mark Figg, petitioner, said that this petition is an opportunity to place something here that will be used because no one has been interested in having a business here for 20 years. Figg also said he’s trying to fill a need for more housing since the area has several multi-bedroom apartment buildings. Figg highlighted the walkability, the many services and amenities in the area, the property’s proposed reflective roof, ability to collect rainwater, and potential reserved spots for electric charging stations. He believes with the incoming hospital more multi-family housing will be beneficial on Bloomington’s eastside. He added that he has committed ten percent of the bedrooms as workforce housing to be permanently affordable.

Plan Commission Questions:

Members asked if anything more could be done to make the front of the building face Moores Pike. Figg responded that the geometry is difficult and would require taking up more land.

Public Comment:

Members of the public that spoke: Tom Duffy, Greg Alexander, Babbette Ballinger, Elaine Lucas, Becky Gavin, Barbara Hillery, Roger Reimers, Rex Hillery, Kadhim Shaaban, Jan Coyle

All that spoke did so in remonstrance of the petition. The public endorsed the planning staff’s decision for the Plan Commission to forward the petition to the Common Council with a negative recommendation, expressing concerns about the height of the structure eliminating the next door retirement home’s privacy, college students as incompatible neighbors, fire truck access in the small parking lot, increased traffic and hazards, if the petitioner will truly offer affordable housing, lack of sidewalk connectivity in the area, fear of low occupancy due to predicted drop in university enrollment, lack of amenities for residents, especially families, and water runoff and road erosion.

Jeff Fanyo, Bynum Fanyo said he believes only a minor increase in traffic will occur according to the traffic study, a plan is in place to redirect water runoff to a retention pond that will go to Jackson Creek, and emergency vehicle access has been examined and a fire truck will fit in the parking lot. Figg responded that he is willing to make traffic calming efforts, has designed the building to have internal amenities, not external, occupancy numbers will depend on how the property is managed, referencing low occupancies in surrounding properties as inaccurate, and does not foresee a decrease in university enrollment or housing demand.

Plan Commission Comments:

Wisler reminded all those present that the Plan Commission is an advisory committee to the Common Council by law, and can only make recommendations. Some members said that the petition is not the best project for the area, it’s too dense and tall, and would create problematic space and traffic issues. Townhomes were suggested as a better use for the 2.2 acres to add to missing middle housing. Smaller units would appeal to couples or families rather than the 3-4 bedroom units often rented to students.

****Sandberg motioned to forward the petition to the Common Council with a negative recommendation. Cate seconded. Motion carried by roll call vote 5:1—Approved.**

SP/UV-32-19 **Rimrock Companies**

1901 W. 3rd St. & 307 S. Cory Ln.

Request: Site plan approval and use variance recommendations to the Board of Zoning Appeals for larger units in the “mini-warehouse facility” use in the Commercial Arterial (CA) zoning district.

Case Manager: Jackie Scanlan

The property is located at 1901 W. 3rd Street and is zoned Commercial Arterial (CA). Surrounding land uses include vacant land and Culver’s Restaurant to the north across 3rd Street, single family residences to the west and south, and commercial to the east. The property is vacant except for a billboard at the northeast corner. There are some trees on the site, but no wooded areas that would require preservation. The site is part of a larger roughly 5.4 acre holding that includes a parcel to the south and a parcel to the west that are both outside of the City corporation boundary. The property largely drains to the east, falling roughly 20 feet from the northwest to the east, and ultimately draining to a sinkhole located to the southeast of the larger property holding. The outer edge of a second large karst feature is located in the southwest portion of the petition parcel. The petitioner proposes to develop this site with three mini-warehouse facility buildings containing 41,600 square feet of storage space, as well as a 6,000 square foot office building on the petition site. Six parking spaces are included near the office building. One 32,325 square foot “mini-warehouse” facility building is also planned for the County parcel to the south. The Unified Development Ordinance allows 200 square feet per unit in a mini-warehouse facility. The petitioner is requesting a use variance to allow some 300 square foot units. The petitioner must receive a use variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals to allow for the larger units.

Daniel Butler, Bynum Fanyo, spoke on the petitioner’s behalf saying he believes the petition is low impact land use, given the many different kinds of uses that could be put at the location. The area will be low traffic, buffer vegetation will conceal the 16 foot buildings, motion sensor lights will turn on in the interior buildings, but will not contribute to light pollution and will have a low energy impact.

Mike Carmin, Bynum Fanyo, also spoke on the petitioner’s behalf explaining the petition will be largely single use with multiple users. He explained that the petition will remedy the issue of westside residents having to drive across town for storage units since currently the westside does not have a storage facility and this petition will be building where a use is needed and not duplicating another use like it. Currently no storage facility on the westside increases traffic for those driving across town to their storage unit(s).

Plan Commission Questions:

St. John asked how many units are being proposed and Butler responded the facility will have 25 units.

Cate asked if the karst features suggest certain uses aren’t appropriate for this site and if this site can have multiple uses. Scanlan responded that the only problems are the sinkholes, but they’re small, so many different uses are appropriate for this land. Discussion ensued between the Plan Commission about the need for a more mixed-use structure along with the needed storage units on this land.

Cate asked about possible flooding resulting from construction and if the site would attract crime. Butler responded that four ponds are located near the property to prevent flooding and building the units will actually aid adjacent property owners with flooding. As for crime, Butler isn’t concerned because an adequate security fence and ample, but low impact lighting will be installed. Discussion ensued about an increase in traffic in the area, possible multi-story construction, and the need for bike parking. Traffic is predicted to be low for the area and bike parking is required by city code, and could serve as parking for employees who bike.

Maston Crapps, Rimrock Companies addressed site plan questions by explaining that annexation and setbacks make it difficult to have a different site plan for the site and the current site plan was also designed with cost in mind.

Kappas and Scanlan discussed if the petition aligned with the Comprehensive Plan concerning the urban corridor transition over time.

Public Comment:

Members of the public that spoke: Susan Brackney, Greg Alexander

Brakney explained that she believes the proposed structure will negatively affect surrounding properties because the impervious surface will force water to surrounding properties and increase flooding, especially given the increase of adverse weather recently. She said future negative effects cannot currently be predicted, therefore the use variance should be denied.

Alexander said closing the sidewalk and bike lane to build the storage facility will force people to walk in the street, and would like to see something in place to prevent this.

Plan Commission Discussion:

Sandberg asked for clarification concerning separate motions for the site plan and use variance portions of the petition. Wisler said it would be more appropriate to handle each portion in a separate motion.

Before the Plan Commission vote, Butler concluded by adding that Bynum Fanyo is willing to add internal sidewalks to link units, noting building two would be the best option for sidewalks given the planned pavement in front of the other buildings. Scanlan added that city code requires internal sidewalks to link buildings. Final Plan Commission comments were mixed with some believing the storage facility is not the right fit for west 3rd street, while others viewed it as a good, transitional design for the area. Kappas said he was concerned about the extra impervious surface increasing flooding and would like to see evidence proving this will not happen.

****Sandberg motioned to approve SP-32-19 based on the four conditions of approval in the amended staff report. St. John seconded. Motion failed by roll call vote 4:2.**

****Kappas motioned to continue SP-32-19 to the November Plan Commission hearing. St. John seconded. Motion carried by roll call vote 6:0—Approved.**

**** Kappas motioned to forward UV-32-19 to the Board of Zoning Appeals with no recommendation. Sandberg seconded. Motion carried by roll call vote 6:0—Approved.**

PUD-34-19

Curry Urban Properties

NW Corner of Longview Ave. & Pete Ellis Dr.

Request: PUD district ordinance and preliminary plan approval to rezone 3.2 acres to PUD.

Case Manager: Jackie Scanlan

The property is located at the northwest corner of E. Longview Avenue and S. Pete Ellis Drive and is zoned Commercial Limited (CL). The 3.2 acre property is currently undeveloped. Surrounding zoning includes Residential High Density Multifamily (RH) to the north, Residential High Density Multifamily (RH) and Commercial Limited (CL) to the south, and Commercial Limited (CL) to the east and west. The surrounding properties have been developed with a mix of high density multi-family residences and commercial tenant spaces with the St. Mark United Methodist Church just to the west of the site. This property has frontage on 3 public streets - E. 7th Street to the west, E. Longview Drive to the south, and S. Pete Ellis Drive to the east. There are no environmental constraints on this property. The petitioner proposes to create a Planned Unit Development in order to construct a 4-story, mixed-use building. The proposal includes an expected 19,000 square feet of commercial space, apartments on the upper floor and a portion of the ground floor, and a parking garage. The commercial use is expected to be medical office related to the new hospital campus. The multifamily portion of the proposal includes a mix of studio units, one-bedroom units, and two-bedroom units for a total of 264 units. Roughly 30% of the units are expected to be two-bedroom units, resulting in 344 total bedrooms. The overall density is proposed at a maximum of 30 units/acre, with 29 units/acre in the current design. The building will also contain a structured parking garage accessed from Longview Drive with 306 parking spaces, with 102 spaces per floor. The structured parking will be for the office portion of the building, as

well as for the residential tenants. The petitioner also proposes improving up to 15 spaces of on-street parking on Pete Ellis Drive.

Scanlan highlighted proposed changes that have been made since a similar petition for the site was submitted in 2018. Changes include a lower elevation in some areas of the structure, proposed affordable housing, and additional green space set aside.

Steve Brehob, Smith Brehob and Associates, spoke on the petitioner's behalf, explaining that changes have been made to make a better project. He didn't have anything to add, but was instead there for the Plan Commission members' questions and comments.

Plan Commission Questions:

Plan Commission members asked if the petitioner had engaged with surrounding neighbors to relay the petition's public benefit, if affordable housing will be made available, and for details on the Fitwell feature in the petition.

Curry responded that all neighbors in the area had been notified and the property to the north had written support for the petition. As for the affordable housing portion of the petition, Doris Sims, Housing and Neighborhood Development director, explained that Curry had committed 15% of the bedrooms to be affordable and for residents between 100 and 120% of the Area Median Income, the units will remain affordable for decades. Curry explained that the Fitwell feature promotes a healthy living lifestyle, citing the Bryan Park fitness stations, also a part of the Fitwell program. He said having this feature will support social equity, occupant safety, physical activity, and smoking cessation.

Public Comment:

Members of the public that spoke: Greg Alexander

Alexander said the sidewalk network for the petition connects well, but not far from the site on Longview is a sidewalk gap, and other gaps are nearby. This increases risk to pedestrians in the area. He concluded by highlighting additional ample sidewalk gaps on the south side of town.

Plan Commission Discussion:

Kappas liked the plan for the property the first time it was presented in 2018. He thinks the petition is good for young professionals desperately looking for a place to live. He also liked the multi-use path that surrounds three sides of the property and encouraged the petitioner to extend the eight-foot wide path to twelve feet to make the path more appealing to pedestrians. He also added that a traffic discussion may need to take place at the next hearing to examine how an increase in residents and cars in the area might affect the surrounding intersections.

****Cate motioned to continue PUD-34-19 to a second hearing. Kappas seconded. Motion carried by roll call vote 6:0—Approved.**

Meeting adjourned.