



PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

CITY OF NOVI

Regular Meeting

January 13th, 2021 7:00 PM

Remote Meeting

(248) 347-0475

In accordance with Open Meetings Act, MCL 15.261, ET SEQ., as amended, this meeting was held remotely.

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL - Pursuant to the State of Michigan Open Meetings Act, all members shall identify their physical location by stating the county, city, and state from which he or she is attending the meeting remotely.

Present: Member Avdoulos- *City of Novi, Oakland County, MI*; Member Becker- *City of Daytona Beach, Volusia County, FL*; Member Dismondy- *City of Novi, Oakland County, MI*; Member Ferrell- *City of Novi, Oakland County, MI*; Member Lynch- *City of Novi, Oakland County, MI*; Chair Pehrson- *City of Novi, Oakland County, MI*

Absent: none

Staff: Barbara McBeth, City Planner; Lindsay Bell, Senior Planner; Christian Carroll, Planner; Madeleine Daniels, Planning Assistant; Rick Meader, Landscape Architect; Kate Richardson, Staff Engineer; Doug Necci, City Façade Consultant; Beth Saarela, City Attorney

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Pehrson led the meeting attendees in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Ferrell.

VOICE VOTE TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 13, 2021 PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA MOVED BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER FERRELL

Motion to approve the January 13, 2021 Planning Commission Agenda. *Motion carried 6-0.*

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

No one in the audience wished to speak.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no committee reports.

CITY PLANNER REPORT

There was no City Planner report.

CONSENT AGENDA - REMOVALS AND APPROVALS

There was nothing on the Consent Agenda.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no public hearings.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. LINEAGE LOGISTICS PARKING EXPANSION JSP19-47

Consideration at the request of Lineage Logistics for approval of revised Preliminary Site Plan. The subject property is located in Section 9 north of Twelve Mile, west of West Park Drive, along Humboldt Drive, and is zoned I-2, General Industrial. The applicant is proposing to expand the parking lot to the north of the existing building and will add carports over the new spaces.

Planner Bell said the subject property is located in Section 9 north of Twelve Mile Road, west of West Park Drive on the north side of Humboldt Drive. The parcel is 14.27 acres. It is zoned I-2, General Industrial with I-2 to the east and south. North and west of the property is zoned I-1, Light Industrial. The Future land use map indicates Industrial Research and Development Technology for this property and the surrounding properties, except for a small area designated as Private Park which is a wetland area, and to the south which is planned for Heavy Industrial. The only natural features are the wetland area on the west side, within the area designated as parkland.

Last year the applicant submitted a plan to expand their existing parking lot to the north of the existing building. As permitted by the Zoning Ordinance, the parking lot expansion was approved administratively as it met all requirements of the Ordinance. The applicant has now revised their plan to include carport structures to cover all of the new parking spaces. The number of carport structures will require a variance, which was granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals at their meeting last night, January 12.

The proposed awning structures do not include any brick material as required by the Façade section of the Ordinance. Therefore, the applicant requests a Section 9 façade waiver. Staff supports the waiver as adding brick would interfere with the vehicle use of the spaces and this is not a highly visible area of the city. The Planning Commission is asked to approve or deny the Preliminary Site Plan with the requested waiver. Representing the project tonight is Chris Wickline from JB Donaldson.

Chris Wickline, JB Donaldson, said the owners are looking to install the carports. This is kind of an amenity they're looking to do. This is Lineage Logistics world headquarters. They're a world-wide refrigerated logistics company. They're looking to provide amenities for their staff. Part of the site

plan that we did for the new parking lot is we planned for future car charging stations at all of the parking spaces indicated. Also, part of not having the brick structures at the end of the carports is because we created walking paths in-between and all around these potential carport spots and that could create some blind spots for people walking through the parking lot and with employees backing out that's why the request was made.

Member Lynch said I looked at this and took a drive out there. I don't see an issue with this. Especially when we're talking about a safety issue. I'm in support of this project.

Member Ferrell said I support the project as well especially since it involves safety. It definitely has my support.

Member Dismondy said I drive by this every day and you wouldn't even notice the parking lot. it's in an industrial park so I would have no problem supporting this.

Member Becker said I also drove by this. I wanted to ask; this is an additional 189 spaces to the ones that are already there?

Chris Wickline said this is an additional 189 spaces.

Member Becker said when the initial proposal went into the City for this building and parking lot, you didn't think about needing 183 more parking spaces at the time?

Chris Wickline said Lineage Logistics bought this building from Owens Corning about three years ago and this was an old R & D Facility for Owens Corning where it was partially office space but mostly industrial space. It is where they made the muffler packing. Lineage Logistics bought it and Owens Corning became a tenant and used part of the building while Lineage Logistics had their main headquarters in the other part of the building. Owens Corning has since moved out and Lineage Logistics has taken over the other half of the building and expanded their operation and that's the need for the additional parking.

Member Becker said that explains it. The original Ordinance says that we should have, in this particular situation, two carports for a parcel that is more than a half-acre, that seems kind of limiting. I was just curious what the intention was to set up an Ordinance that said no more than two carports.

Planner Bell said the carports happen to fall under the section of the ordinance that deals with accessory structures so because they're considered a farm building or a barn or shed so that's kind of why they're limited to two and it is something we would like to address in the Ordinance in the future to make this so it doesn't have to get a variance every time for the number of structures.

Member Becker said perfect, I'm curious what we're setting ourselves up for in the future unless we do clarify car ports versus outbuildings because if somebody was saying lets go from two to four car ports, that's one thing but we're asking to approve a variance of two to thirty-four and I just wonder how many other applicants in the future are going to say well you did it for Lineage Logistics let's just trash the idea of two so that's my only concern with this like the others who have seen it I don't think you're really going to see these very much. Is what we're setting ourselves up for the next project that doesn't have it nicely hidden from other buildings?

Member Avdoulos said to the applicant, you indicated that there's going to be power going out there so that you could create charging stations for electric vehicles. Any consideration for solar panels in the future? This is kind of dove tailing what Member Becker was indicating because as I was reading it, I was thinking too that a lot of institutions and companies are utilizing the ability where they

can do carports and then have solar panels and reclaim some of that energy and that might create some further discussion down the road, but I'm just curious if you're doing that since your talking about EV power I thought maybe solar would supplement that electricity.

Chris Wickline said we did look into that and Lineage Logistics was all for that. However, based on their location and the direction of the sun it wouldn't produce a lot of energy so the stand set that Lineage Logistics has is that they're waiting for higher efficient solar panels to put on these carports. In the future they are considering that and as part of the design that we submitted, the carports will actually be able to support solar panels on them.

Member Avdoulos said everything looks fine from the city's report and all the departments so I would like to make a motion.

Chair Pehrson I also support the project.

Motion made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Ferrell.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE PROJECT JSP19-47 LINEAGE LOGISTICS PARKING EXPANSION REVISED PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN MADE BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER FERRELL.

In the matter of Lineage Logistics Parking Expansion, JSP19-47, motion to approve the revised Preliminary Site Plan based on and subject to the following:

- a. A Zoning Board of Appeals variance for exceeding the allowable number of accessory structures;**
- b. Section 9 facade waiver for the lack of brick on the carport canopies, which is hereby granted, as this is not a highly visible location and the addition of brick to the supports would interfere with vehicle use;**
- c. The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters and the conditions and the items listed in those letters being addressed on the Final Site Plan.**

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 3, Article 4, and Article 5 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance. Motion carried 6-0.

2. STORIE LOU PLAZA JSP20-19

Consideration at the request of Alrig LLC for approval of a Preliminary Site Plan, Stormwater Management Plan, and Section 9 Façade Waiver. The subject property contains 1.41 acres and is located in Section 14, on the east side of Novi Road, north of Crowe Drive. The site is currently developed with a branch of the Fifth Third Bank. The applicant is proposing to redevelop the site into a 7,000 square foot multi-tenant building that proposes one retail tenant and one restaurant.

Planner Carroll said this is a matter of consideration at the request of Alrig LLC for approval of the Preliminary Site Plan, Stormwater Management Plan, and Section 9 Façade Waiver. The subject property contains 1.41 acres and is located in Section 14, on the east side of Novi Road, north of Crowe Drive. It is right next to Crowe Center, which was recently developed in the past few years. The site is currently developed with a branch of the Fifth Third Bank. The site is zoned TC, Town Center, and a majority of the surrounding area is also zoned TC and is subject to the 2014 Town Center Study. The Future Land Use map indicates TC Commercial for the entirety of the property and the surrounding area. There are no natural features on site.

The site is going to be accessed from Crowe Drive. They're eliminating both of the curb cuts on Novi

Road and filling them in with sidewalk. They are proposing sixty-eight parking spaces, which meets the requirements. The site will be screened by a screening wall on the south and a front portion on the west, which faces Novi Road. The applicant is not required to screen the east portion of the property because the property does not extend to Ingersol Drive. This is actually owned by the Boston Market to the north. The site will be serviced by underground stormwater detention located on the southwest of the property. Currently, the applicant is providing some site amenities including a bench, sconce lighting, and screening walls, which is part of the 2014 Town Center Study requirements. They are trying to match closely with the amenities of Crowe Center to the south.

The site does require a Zoning Board variance for a reduced parking setback on the south side of the property. Currently, they're proposing a 5.2 foot exterior side yard setback and twenty feet is required, however, this request is supported by staff due to the narrowness of the site.

Planner Carroll continued to say in regard to landscaping, the applicant has requested two landscape waivers for the site. Both of them are in relation to Crowe Drive. The first waiver is for deficiency in greenbelt width along Crowe Drive, which is supported by staff because the proposed redevelopment is an improvement to the existing conditions. The second waiver is for deficiency in perimeter trees, they are short one tree, which is supported by staff due to the lack of space.

Looking at the façade, a Section 9 Façade Waiver has been requested by the applicant for the site as the percentage of fabric awning exceeds the maximum percentage allowed in the district, however, our Façade Consultant supports it because the proposed materials are consistent with the surrounding area.

The Planning Commission is asked tonight to hold the matter of consideration and approve or deny the Preliminary Site Plan, Stormwater Management Plan, and Section 9 Façade Waiver. Representing the project tonight are Heather Henika from Alrig LLC, who is the applicant; David Landry, who is the applicant's attorney; Mitchell Harvey from Stonefield Engineering, who is the Project Engineer; Beau Wynn from Detroit Architectural Group, who is the Project Architect; and Paul DeVitto also from Stonefield Engineering, who is the Landscape Architect. Staff and Façade Consultant Doug Necci are available to answer any questions.

David Landry, applicant's attorney, said given the administration has recommended approval, I only have a few comments this evening. This is the former site of a Fifth-Third Bank. It's a redevelopment project. The uses are permitted. We're seeking preliminary site plan approval. What struck me when I first looked at this project was the fact that this is completing the development theme that Novi is trying to establish along Novi Road. We are taking a building, which was formally set back and bringing it up to the road and we are eliminating two curb cuts along Novi Road, which I think is huge. Historically, those of you will remember that going south to north from Grand River you have a gas station with a curb cut, you have the old Kim's Gardens with a curb cut, you have Crowe Drive, then you have these two curb cuts from the bank. Well, were eliminating those two and the project to the south eliminating the old Kim's Gardens so now other than Crowe Drive the only curb cut you're going to have is the car wash, which is obviously a plus for traffic. Everyone knows traffic going in and out of the Town Center can be hectic at times. We're also completing the theme along Crowe Drive. To the north, we're installing the sidewalk, we're installing the TC required amenities of a brick wall with a wrought iron type fence on top to match what's on the south end of Crowe Drive, so it will complete the theme driving into the Town Center off of Crowe Drive. We're proposing a new single building of 7,000 square feet, no more than 3,200 square feet of restaurant, the remaining 3,800 feet for the other permitted uses. We're seeking three waivers: two landscaping and one façade, all three are supported by the administration. We do understand we need a Zoning Board variance and we are on the ZBA Agenda for February 9th. We're happy to answer any questions that anyone has.

Member Avdoulos said I think the biggest plus for the project is the elimination of the curb cuts, that cleans it up quite a bit. Pulling the building forward is something that the City has been wanting to do along that corridor so making Novi Road not as physically wide and bringing the businesses forward more for their ability to be seen. I don't have any issues with the plan as presented. I looked through the staff recommendations and they're all approving it. I'm fine with the waivers, I think Mr. Necci indicated it meets with the surrounding areas so I am in support of the project.

Member Becker said I have very much the same thoughts. I think the waivers and the variance are more than balanced in our favor by what's happening on the lot, eliminating possible right turns into those two curb cuts. I think the building looks magnificent compared to what's there. I have absolutely no reservations and I support it entirely.

Member Dismondy said the waivers are minor and bank branches are dying and this is what we need because there's going to be a lot more of these coming up.

Member Ferrell said I echo the fellow members on the board. I think it's great to repurpose it and I'm definitely in support of it, especially bringing it to the same style and structure of the other buildings on the property.

Member Lynch said I agree with the commissioners. This seems like a win/win for the City and the Developer. It's a reuse and redevelopment, we're eliminating a couple of curb cuts. The landscaping waivers are minor. I'm in support of this project.

Chair Pehrson said I agree and I think this is win/win for everyone.

Motion made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Ferrell.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE STORIE LOU PLAZA JSP20-19 PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN MADE BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER FERRELL.

In the matter of Storie Lou Plaza, JSP20-19, motion to approve the Preliminary Site Plan based on and subject to the following:

- a. Landscape Waiver for a deficiency in greenbelt width along Crowe Drive because the proposed redevelopment is an improvement to the existing conditions, and a screening wall will be proposed, which is hereby granted;**
- b. Landscape Waiver for a deficiency in greenbelt landscaping along Crowe Drive (6 trees required, 5 trees shall be provided) because the proposed greenbelt does not have enough space for an additional tree, which is hereby granted;**
- c. Section 9 Façade Waiver for an overage of fabric awning on the west (10% allowed, 14% proposed), east (10% allowed, 19% proposed), and south (10% allowed, 14% proposed) elevations because the proposed design does not adversely affect the aesthetic quality and meets the intent and purpose of the Ordinance, which is hereby granted;**
- d. The findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters and the conditions and the items listed in those being addressed on the Final Site Plan.**

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Article 3, Article 4, and Article 5 of the Zoning Ordinance and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance. *Motion carried 6-0.*

Motion made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Ferrell.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE STORIE LOU PLAZA JSP20-19 STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN MADE

BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER FERRELL.

In the matter of Storie Lou Plaza, JSP20-19, motion to approve the Stormwater Management Plan subject to the findings of compliance with Ordinance standards in the staff and consultant review letters and the conditions and the items listed in those being addressed on the Final Site Plan.

This motion is made because the plan is otherwise in compliance with Chapter 11 of the Code of Ordinances and all other applicable provisions of the Ordinance. *Motion carried 6-0.*

3. TEXT AMENDMENT 18.294 – FACILITIES FOR HUMAN CARE

Consideration for Text Amendment 18.294, at the request of Bowers and Associates Inc., to amend the City of Novi Zoning Ordinance at the following location: Article 4.0, "Use Standards," Section 4.64, "Facilities for Human Care," in order to reduce the minimum lot size requirement from five acres to four and a half acres.

Planner Carroll said this is a proposed Text Amendment that came before the Planning Commission as a public hearing in September. There were some outstanding issues regarding land ownership, the parcel, and the sidwell number, but they have since been confirmed and resolved so now the applicant wishes to move forward with the proposed Text Amendment. Again, this is the former Tru Hotel site, which is located south of Thirteen Mile Road and East of M-5. The site is zoned OST, Office Service Technology, and the newly proposed use of the site, an Assisted Living Facility, is a principal permitted use of the site.

As a reminder, the change proposed is to lower the minimum lot size requirement from 5 acres to 4.5 acres, which would allow for currently sixteen additional parcels in the City to be potentially developed with Facilities for Human Care.

There were some questions discussed initially when this was brought to Planning Commission regarding services and those have since been resolved and talked about. The Planning Commission is asked tonight to consider this request and make a recommendation to the City Council. Representing this proposal tonight are Basil Bacall from Elite Hospitality Group and Ramy Sesí, who is the applicant's attorney. Staff and the City Attorney are available to answer any questions.

Basil Bacall, Elite Hospitality Group, said for the sake of not being redundant, when we went over this last time, the whole item was confirmation of our lot size to be 4.61 acres versus 3.5 acres that was shown.

Member Lynch said I don't have any issues with this. This is a redevelopment, plus I think the last discussion really didn't give us a good answer why 5 acres was the original acreage requirement. I think for this site it makes sense. My only fear is for the other sixteen sites. I don't want to shoot ourselves in the foot, but my analysis is that I don't see the City at risk on the other sixteen sites of creating a problem, but I'm not an expert at this. This particular site, I have no problems with. This particular use makes sense. I just want to make sure whatever we do here we carry across the City, but I am in support.

Member Ferrell said I definitely agree with the prior Commissioner on that. I feel the same way, I just I think it's a minimum amount required between 5 acres and 4.5 acres, I don't think that much will make that big of a difference. I don't recall what the reasoning was why it was 5 acres as well. I do support it for this project but for the other ones I'm not sure if that will be an issue in the future. So I'm curious to hear from the other members.

Member Dismondy said just to be clear, we are not planning on whether or not we agree on how the

property should be used, we're just allowing it to be more flexible in its use, correct? I support it.

Member Becker said actually we're agreeing that this going forward would apply to any Human Care Facility that it would only need 4.5 acres not 5, is that right?

Planner Carroll said that would be correct.

Member Becker said so this is a text change, not a variance just for the Tru Hotel. I'm just checking, this only applies for Facilities for Human Care within the OST District, not all the other uses get to go to 4.5 instead of 5, this would just be for Human Care Facilities?

Planner Carroll said yes, this falls under Section 4.64, so the list of requirements is a minimum of 5 acres which would change to 4.5 acres so I think when you look at the Draft Ordinance Amendment in the packet it will refer to what section its amending.

Member Becker said I think this would be a great reuse otherwise it would probably be an empty hotel, I think Human Care Facilities would be a great idea.

Member Avdoulos said I think we were just waiting on some clarification so we had some discussion on this before and it looked like even if all those properties did the same thing it would only be sixteen of them throughout the City, so it wasn't going to be drastic. This helps push the project along and kind of repurpose an existing building. I would like to make a motion.

Made by member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Ferrell.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL FOR TEXT AMENDMENT 18.294 FACILITES FOR HUMAN FOR THE CHANGE OF SECTION 4.64 MADE MY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER FERRELL.

In the matter of Text Amendment 18.294 Facilities for Human Care, motion to make a positive recommendation to City Council for the text amendment change for Section 4.64 Facilities for Human Care. *Motion carried 6-0.*

4. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

City Planner McBeth said this is a bit unusual to talk about at the first of the year, we usually talk about Committee assignments at the beginning of the fiscal year in July. We did find that with the two Planning Commissioners leaving, there are a couple of openings on some important committees needed even yet this month with the Capital Improvement Program Committee. We also expect soon there will be a Walkable Novi Committee meeting at least before the half-point of the year and the Master Plan and Zoning Committee as well. Mr. Becker was kind of enough to write in and indicate his preferences and he has volunteered his services for two of those positions, one for the Capital Improvement Program Committee and the other for the Master Plan and Zoning Committee. If anybody else wanted to have a seat on either one of those they could speak up, but there are two additional vacancies as well; the Walkable Novi Committee and the Rules Committee both have one vacancy each.

Member Avdoulos said I can do the Walkable Novi Committee, I had done that before and then there were some other members that had expressed interest in it so we switched around, but I can do that one.

Chair Pehrson said anyone else for Rules?

Member Avdoulos said what is our limit? We can be on three Committees?

Chair Pehrson said I think since we need to fill in spots from Member Maday, we can work around it.

Member Dismondy said you can put me down for the Rules Committee. I know I took over former Member Anthony's spots on the Committees, but I just don't know which ones they were.

Chair Pehrson said you are on the Environmental Committee, Implementation Committee, Master Planning and Zoning Committee, and then maybe the Rules Committee.

City Planner McBeth said thank you.

Chair Pehrson said does that cover everything?

City Planner McBeth said that takes care of it. Thank you very much for your understanding on this.

5. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 9, 2020 PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES.

Motion made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Ferrell.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 9, 2020 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES MADE BY MEMBER AVDOULOS AND SECONDED BY MEMBER FERRELL.

Motion to approve the December 9, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Motion carried 5-0. (Member Lynch left the meeting at 7:35 pm)

SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUES

Member Avdoulos said I've gone twice to the urgent care center that's next to the Starbucks on Grand River and Beck Road. There's the drive-thru for Starbucks around the south part of the building and there's also parking that's there but gets blocked with the cars that are going into the drive-thru. It's a congested area and I know that in the plans there's a road that we wanted to connect to and cut through, but I've gone there a couple of times to take my daughter to get a COVID test and I got stuck and couldn't back out of the parking space because the traffic was so backed up.

I think we should take a look at it and then keep it in mind with future projects coming in. The way to get out of there if you want to get out to Grand River is you have to go through the bank parking lot to get onto Grand River and that gets all congested so it's just messy and I don't know if there's something we can do maybe to help at least maintain the drive-thru lane for Starbucks, but then also allow cars to go by. I don't know if that's through having them put poles there or doing something. People get frustrated and they honk and they try to drive over each other and it's just a nasty situation. I experienced it twice on totally different days at different times and that's a busy spot so I'm glad they're doing business, but it was insane.

City Planner McBeth said thank you for pointing that out. I recall when they come in, it was kind of a tight situation and there was that hope, as you had said, eventually the road will connect from back to Grand River and alleviate some of that traffic. In the meantime, we can definitely go out and take a look at it and see if there are any improvements that we would recommend or signage that we can offer to the management there and see if there's anything we can do to help them with that.

Member Avdoulos said now with COVID, more and more people are using the drive-thru so that they

can minimize their exposure and then that just backs up. It goes around the building and into the drive way and almost onto Beck Road.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Seeing no one wished to speak, Chair Pehrson closed the audience participation.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Member Avdoulos and seconded by Member Ferrell.

Motion to adjourn the January 13th Planning Commission meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 pm.