

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE KENTWOOD PLANNING COMMISSION  
JUNE 12, 2018, 7:30 P.M.  
COMMISSION CHAMBERS

- A. Chair Jones called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
- B. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Pemberton.
- C. Roll Call:  
Members Present: Bill Benoit, Garrett Fox, Dan Holtrop, Sandra Jones, Ed Kape, Timothy Little, Mike Pemberton, Monica Sparks, Frank Vander Hoff  
Members Absent: None  
Others Present: Economic Development Planner Lisa Golder, Senior Planner Joe Pung, Planning Assistant Monique Collier, and the applicants
- D. Approval of the Minutes and Findings of Fact

**Motion by Benoit, supported by Pemberton, to approve the minutes for May 22, 2018 and Findings of Fact for : Case#18-18 Bethany Christian Services – Rezoning of 0.586 Acres of Land from C-2 Commercial to R-2 Two Family Residential Located at 930 52<sup>nd</sup> Street; Case#19-18 – Clark at Keller Lake – Independent Living- Final Site Plan Review for the conversion of the maintenance building located at 2451 Forest Hill Ave**

- Motion Carried (9-0) –

- E. Approval of the Agenda  
  
Pung stated under Other Business add Woodland Mall exterior sign request discussion for Shoe Department Encore.

**Motion by Commissioner Holtrop, supported by Commissioner Pemberton, to approve the agenda for the June 12, 2018 meeting.**

- Motion Carried (9-0) –

- F. Acknowledge visitors wishing to speak to non-agenda items.
- G. Old Business
- H. Public Hearing

**Case#20-18** – Good Stuff Fireworks Tent Sale – Special Land Use and Site Plan Review for an Open Air Business located at 3170 28<sup>th</sup> Street SE

Pung stated the applicant would like to have Firework sales for July 4. The request is intended to be an interim use. Pung stated there is an application that has been submitted for a permanent use of the property located at 3170 28<sup>th</sup> Street.

Pung stated the recommendation from staff is conditional approval of the Special Land Use and Site Plan review as described in Schweitzer's memo.

Jones opened the public hearing.

There was no public comment.

**Motion by Kape, supported by Benoit, to close the public hearing.**

- Motion Carried (9-0) –

The commissioners were ok with the request and offered no additional comments.

**Motion by Holtrop, supported by Pemberton, to grant conditional approval of the Special Land Use Open Air Fireworks Sale. Approval is conditioned on condition 1 and basis points 1-3 as described in Schweitzer's memo dated June 5, 2018.**

- Motion Carried (9-0) –

**Motion by Holtrop, supported by Fox, to grant conditional approval of the Site Plan for an Open Air Fireworks. Approval is conditioned on condition 1 and basis points 1-3 as described in Schweitzer's memo dated June 5, 2018.**

- Motion Carried (9-0) –

**Case#21-18** – The Fields of Breton - Preliminary Plat Located at 5955 Wing Ave

Commissioner VanderHoff recused himself from project.

Pung stated the request is for preliminary plat and final site plan review for a 36 lot residential subdivision on approximately 14 ½ acres of vacant land. He stated this is about 21 ½ acre parcel which was just rezoned from R1-B to R1-C Single family Residential

Pung stated the development will be accessed off of Breton Avenue extended which is being developed as part of the newest phase of the Bretonfield development.

Pung stated the development is consistent to the Master Plan recommendation for low/medium density residential for the area. It is consistent with the City's 70/30 policy.

Pung stated at the work session there was discussion as to whether or not have a connection to the north. Pung stated the recommendation does not have the sidewalk connection.

Pung stated he is recommending conditional tentative approval of the preliminary plat and final site plan as described in his memo.

Chris VanderHoff, Bosco construction was present.

Jones opened the public hearing.

There was no public comment.

**Motion by Pemberton, supported by Kape, to close the public hearing.**

- Motion Carried (9-0) -

Fox asked when they plan to start the project. VanderHoff stated hopefully this fall. He stated he hopes this time next year they will be through final plat and able to sell homes.

Holtrop stated after last meeting he didn't know if he wanted to consider an amenity to the project that would connect to the Paul Henry Trail. VanderHoff stated he thought about it but there are a few reason they don't want to have the connection; the privacy, the crime etc.

The commissioners stated they think this is a good project.

**Motion by Holtrop, supported by Pemberton, to recommend to the City Commission conditional tentative approval of the Preliminary Plat dated April 26, 2018 as described in Case 21-18. The Fields of Breton. Approval is conditioned on conditions 1-4 basis points 1-5 as described in Pung's memo dated June 4, 2018.**

- Motion Carried (9-0) -

**Motion by Holtrop, supported by Pemberton, to grant conditional approval of the final site plan dated April 26, 2018 as described in Case 21-18: The Fields of Breton. Approval is conditioned on conditions 1-4 and basis points 1-5 as described in Pung's memo dated June 4, 2018.**

- Motion Carried (9-0) -

**Case#22-18** – Cobblestone at the Ravines – Final PUD Phase Site Plan Review Central Village Phase 3 South Village Phase 2 Located at 4333 Shaffer

Golder stated the applicant is requesting approval of 26 detached condominium units. This is a change from the previous depiction of these condominiums, which were approved preliminarily as site condominiums. She stated as condominiums (not site condominiums), the ownership privileges will only extend to the inside of the home. The outside of the home, and the land surrounding the units will now be considered common elements, with maintenance paid through the condominium association. The master deed for these units will be different from the site condominium units.

Golder stated six of the proposed freestanding condominium units were approved under Case 1-18, along with the condominium flats. This approval for the freestanding condominiums will replace the earlier approval.

Golder stated one of the recommendations is to extend a sidewalk across so that it separates the public area from the private area. She stated the private drive doesn't meet our private road standards it is 12 feet wide. It should be a 16 feet wide pavement on an 18 foot base.

Golder stated now that these are not site condominiums we are looking for more of a landscaping plan.

Robb Lamer, Excel Engineering was present. He stated Village East is under construction. They now want to connect 44<sup>th</sup> and Shaffer so there is more ability to travel between areas easier.

Sparks questioned the price on the condos. David Stebbins Redstone development was present. He stated price point will start in the \$275,000 and up range.

Kape questioned the square footage of the homes. Stebbins stated he isn't sure yet. They will have two unit designs, they will vary in color. Lamer stated there are two different types for the single family homes. They will change depending on who is interested in what. The duplex and the quadplex will stay the same.

Pemberton stated he thinks it looks good.

Benoit stated there are roads from the other developments, is there some kind of easement access across those for these condominium. Is there something in the documents stating they can use the roads and who is responsible for them. Lamer stated the main roads are general common element any and all of the condo associations have part of their fees go directly to maintaining and taking care of the roads. Holtrop

concurrred, he wanted to make sure there were general dues and that the whole development is kept up

Fox questioned if the homes will be ADA compliant. Stebbins stated they will strive to have it fully ADA unless it is specified by a purchaser. He can't say that every unit would be ADA but they do try to strive for the zero clearance, no step unit for convenience. Fox questioned if they will be spec or custom homes. Stebbins stated they will do both. They usually try to have some specs available.

VanderHoff stated they came before the commission before and he wants to know if any of the units will be rented out if they can't sell them. Stebbin stated they are not planning on it. Golder stated we don't have any restrictions on individuals renting their units. VanderHoff stated he is concerned with only 26 condominium units it is possible inadequate funds will be raised to maintain the exterior of the buildings.

Sparks questioned how much is the Home Owner's Association (HOA) fees. Stebbins stated the current is about \$230 dollars.

Jones stated her question is on the outward appearance. She questioned whether the exterior be different or will this be a community that you drive into and try to remember which one is yours. Stebbins stated they have two different units they will be building. He stated they will mix up the colors but as far as materials those will be the same. Golder stated when this was approved with Bosgraff we were very particular about the materials and the styles and the colors and that they be varied and Bosgraff had many single family home versions. She stated to some extent the desires can be applied to Redstone as well. She stated they can bring some elevations in to show how they can vary them enough to meet the approved standards from before. Discussion ensued. Golder stated she thinks Redstone can work on colors and designs and show them how the homes can be different.

Fox stated he would like to see the plans of the whole house and not just the main floor. Lamer stated he will provide copies at the public hearing.

Stebbins stated along the line of making the homes look different you have an opportunity with landscaping and not just the exterior colors. Lamer stated he would like to show a typical lot with the various types of trees as they go along. But, it would be difficult for him to show the whole plan with exactly what it is on every single house unit number 1-26 because they can switch up the types of houses. He wants to show the typical two options of houses. Discussion ensued. Golder stated with the landscaping it is not unreasonable for the final site plan to have some detail. Golder stated the detail should be provided.

Lamer stated the commissioner had concerns regarding the fees and if there are enough to maintain with only 26 units. He stated he disagrees just because there are fewer units.

Redstone has condos all over town and they are good at keeping the maintenance up. Discussion ensued.

Pemberton stated it has been his experience that the developer starts the association and then turns them over. If the initial developer decides to step back the board would hire another one. He stated he isn't concerned about the future. Benoit stated he agrees he isn't worried about it.

J. New Business

**Motion by Holtrop, supported by Benoit, to set a public hearing date of July 10, 2018, Case#23-18 Panda Express Chinese Kitchen - Special Land Use and Site Plan Review for a Drive-Thru Restaurant Located at 3170 28<sup>th</sup> Street SE**

- **Motion Carried (9-0)** -

K. Other Business

1. Woodland Mall Exterior Sign Request for Shoe Encore

Pung stated this is a request to have an exterior sign for Shoe Department Encore. He stated since Shoe Encore doesn't have an exterior customer entrance this is why they are asking for allowance for the sign on the exterior of the mall. Pung stated if Shoe Encore did have an exterior customer entrance, there is an allowance for signage on the outside. He stated in 2010 Su Alterations came in and requested the same thing to have a sign on the exterior of Woodland Mall.

Jones questioned why. Pung stated because they are relocating and expanding and it is to make it easier for those coming to the mall to know where their new location is. Golder stated in part it is because of the big bay window too.

Benoit suggested if we did this for Su Alterations and we are now doing it for Shoe Encore we should consider changing the ordinance. Golder stated she thinks they are trying to make it easier to rent these awkward locations. Benoit stated they are still asking for an exception to the rules and the rules are there for a reason.

Jones stated she doesn't like the idea of adding certain signs on the outside of the mall. She just thinks about the visual pollution that could result with stores having individual signs.

Pemberton stated he sees this as a compromise and the bay window does play a role. Having an idea of where he is going before he gets to the mall is a good idea for him.

Fox stated as he read the report he kept thinking Woodland Mall is coming to us to enforce a sign policy that they don't want. He questioned whether Woodland Mall wants everyone who does not have an entrance to have a sign. He stated and if the answer to

that is no, then what Woodland is looking for the planning commission to make the decision for them so they don't take the blame for their tenant? Fox stated for him that is an issue. Fox stated on the other side as a mall he doesn't care who has signs. He stated this should not be a Kentwood decision it should be a Mall decision. He stated for this instance he is ok with it. He stated maybe it is language that we put in for Woodland Mall and say as long as you are within these dimensions put up as many signs as you want. He stated that will then enforce Woodland Mall to make the decisions rather than putting it on the commissioners. But he doesn't have an issue with this request because it is a mall. Discussion Ensued.

**Motion by VanderHoff, supported by Pemberton, to allow Shoe Department Encore to erect an exterior sign on the outside of Woodland Mall.**

- Motion Carried (7-2)
- Jones opposed -
- Fox abstained -

2. Review/Discussion of Master Plan Update Documents

Golder discussed

**70/30 and Aging Housing**

**A Committee of Planning and City Commissioners is to be appointed to discuss this issue**

**Division Avenue Redevelopment and Bus Rapid Transit**

**Key Issues:**

- The Bus Rapid Transit or "BRT" will have a major impact on the future land use and redevelopment of the Division Avenue corridor. The development that is envisioned as a result of the BRT could invigorate the entire southwest portion of the city of Kentwood. However, at this time there is still a lack of investment in the area.
- Division Avenue is a key gateway corridor to both the city of Kentwood and the city of Wyoming, requiring cooperation between the two communities.
- There is a lack of quality public amenities along Division Avenue, and no unified form of branding or marketing of the area.
- The current Division Avenue businesses seem to market to automobile users rather than to pedestrian and transit traffic.
- The city has not taken an active role in marketing the area.
- Division Avenue conveys traffic to commercial areas and neighborhood communities from M-6 to the south and from the city of Grand Rapids to the north. In addition, it is bisected by numerous east/west cross streets, such as 44<sup>th</sup>, 52<sup>nd</sup> / 54<sup>th</sup>, and 60<sup>th</sup> Streets. The amount and speed of traffic along the corridor may be a detriment to some residential and neighborhood commercial uses.

- The individual lots in this area of Kentwood are typically small, which can be a significant challenge in any moderate- to large-scale redevelopment along the east side of Division Avenue. As such, a series of separate parcels would need to be assembled for any type of large scale development.
- The new Form Based Code ordinance allows for urban type of residential development and mixed use, but the city does not have experience in dealing with these types of developments and whether they are feasible for the area.
- Projected demographic changes in this area of Kentwood anticipate further ethnic diversification, yet members of these diverse populations do not participate in the planning process, city government or the Division Avenue Business Association.
- There is still a negative perception regarding the safety of the corridor.

**Action items:**

- City shall meet with MEDC, Community Assistance Team, MSHDA and other state agencies to determine what incentives are available to offer developers should they choose to develop along the Division Avenue Corridor.
- City shall host informational meetings for realtors and developers on developing properties within the Form Based Code area.
- City shall develop property information packages to identify priority properties available for development on the Division Avenue Corridor. The property information packages shall list the amenities associated with the property, relevant demographic data, provide a market analysis, list incentives available and provide other information to communicate the city's desired outcome for the area. The city will work with the residents in the area to ensure community support and vision for a development project.
- City shall promote its commercial loan program for new investment along the Division Avenue corridor.
- The city must also invest in the area. The city should consider the establishment of a Corridor Improvement Authority, Downtown Development Authority (DDA), or other authority to assist in providing a means to pay for public improvements along the corridor. Improvements could include burial of overhead wires, the establishment of new landscape medians, lighting and landscaping.
- The city should consider help to promote incentive programs for first-time home buyers and small-scale development investment. For example, municipal incentives could include expedited review of development and redevelopment proposals by investors.
- Future planning work should be conducted jointly with the cities of Wyoming and Grand Rapids. This work may include the location of medians and pedestrians crossings along the corridor.

- The city shall reach out to the existing and emerging diverse populations along the Division Avenue corridor for input, participation and leadership in the planning process.
- City shall work with the city of Wyoming to explore traffic calming measures to make the corridor friendlier to residential and neighborhood development.
- City shall promote more events that bring people to the Division Avenue corridor for shopping, eating, and recreation.
- The city shall improve and enhance the perception of safety of the area through improved lighting, incorporate the concept of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) into review of new and redeveloping commercial uses within the Division Avenue corridor to reduce crime.

### **Redevelopment of 28th and 29th Street Corridor**

#### **Key Issues:**

- The 28th and 29th Street commercial corridor caters to a regional consumer market, not just Kentwood and Grand Rapids.
- The 28th and 29th Street corridor is a regional amenity that should be addressed across corporate boundaries, although coordinated planning between communities on 28th and 29th Street has not generally been undertaken.
- Given the size and scale of the commercial shopping area and infrastructure that does not promote free movement between properties, access between most stores requires the consumer to use public roads between adjacent properties. This pattern only serves to add additional traffic congestion to 28th Street which can hasten the perception of being an undesirable place to shop. Although there are portions of the corridor that allow cross access between uses, some property owners resist the establishment of the connections due to concerns about liability, traffic, and the effect that the cross access has on maintenance.
- As the 28th Street corridor ages, concern has been raised regarding the health of the corridor as a retail venue. Competition from newer developments such as at Breton and Burton Streets and the East Beltline North, as well as online retail sales may cause an erosion of the retail strength of 28th Street. There is also concern regarding the future of big box retailers. Closures of big boxes and lack of viable businesses to replace them given non-competition clauses in the leasing language may create vacant space along the city's most significant retail corridor.
- If the 28th and 29th Street business corridor is to remain healthy and viable over the long-term, a key issue will be to develop ways to maintain the area's regional draw for consumers. Recent trends have shown that commercial areas which combine a mix of uses – such as retail with a variety of residential and office opportunities – will remain sustainable and healthy for many years to come.
- Attempts to incorporate medians into 28th Street and 29th Street rights of way have failed. However, strategically introducing median landscaping would make traffic movement safer and improve the aesthetic character of the corridor. Such improvements

would project a fresh image of quality for the corridor and will enhance the perceived quality of the local retail located on 28th and 29th Streets.

- Incorporate the concept of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) into review of new and redeveloping commercial uses within the corridor to reduce crime and to continue the perception that the 28<sup>th</sup> Street and 29<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor are safe places to shop.

**Action Items:**

- Conduct a detailed inter-municipal market study of the 28th and 29th Street corridor to accurately determine what economic market it will support. The study could be undertaken in part by Woodland Mall to assist in its marketing efforts. In addition, the market analysis completed by the city of Wyoming for 28<sup>th</sup> Street should be taken into account. Communities along 28<sup>th</sup> Street should come together to discuss how to improve and retain the street's value as a commercial corridor, or how to introduce new uses to reinvigorate the area.
- Explore the feasibility for establishing a mixed-use overlay district along 28th and 29th Streets to allow land use flexibility. The overlay could be incorporated where commercial businesses have failed or are in decline, in order to offer more land uses that would be sustainable in the long run. Mixed use zones could allow for residential and office to develop above commercial establishments; ownership might be similar to that of a condominium association. These possible changes to zoning districts should be considered as possible tools to encourage and/or facilitate a more viable business climate for this area of Kentwood. Revisions to the requirements of the zoning ordinance may need to be made to address issues such as increased building heights and number of stories, maximum building setbacks, shared parking, inter-parcel connections, etc.
- Promote some form of outdoor public amenities in key areas. For example, Woodland Mall has established a plaza between the Red Robin and On the Border Restaurants and serves as a gathering place for shoppers. The construction of the plaza and the new stores such as Barnes and Noble and The North Face store have also increased the exterior access to Woodland and allowed for the exterior renovation of the mall.
- Explore the feasibility of creating a 28th and 29th Street DDA or merchants association to encourage a unified pro-active approach for keeping the corridor a healthy and viable shopping destination. This will also help to coordinate quality aesthetic treatment for businesses.
- Explore the feasibility of establishing a Special Assessment District (SAD), Corridor Improvement Authority, or Downtown Development Authority for corridor improvements. The SAD should be established after several short term goals and projects have been accomplished to demonstrate success and changing trends within the area.
- At present, there is limited mid-block vehicular – and pedestrian – circulation between 28th and 29th Streets. The circulation that does take place occurs through existing parking lots. When the opportunity presents itself, the city should require that new and redevelopment projects accommodate interblock

connections with appropriate green space. This will work to lessen the burden on the primary corridors while creating new pedestrian scale areas. This will also allow for smaller-scale mixed use businesses to develop perpendicular to the two major thoroughfares and as such, will allow the large commercial blocks to take on the smaller scale of a main street.

- Explore the possibility of creating a multi-jurisdictional 28th Street task force to assure continuity of design standards for the entire corridor.
- Establish contact with the Michigan Department of Transportation to explore the prospect of introducing median landscaping to improve public safety and aesthetics in the 28th Street corridor.

### 3. Commissioners' Comments

Commissioners welcomed Little to the Commission

Fox wanted a copy of the 2017 police annual report. Golder stated the City Commission minutes are on the website if he can't find she will get him a copy.

Benoit stated on 36<sup>th</sup> Street the house we rezoned someone needs to do something about the house the roofs are falling out the windows are out it looks like trash.

Kape stated the Marathon station on Stauffer and 44<sup>th</sup> Street now have a second drop box in their parking lot for clothes.

Holtrop stated Green Market put up lighting. Collier stated they asked if they could put up Christmas lights for Ramadan. Jones stated they are LED and very bright it looks like a circus.

### 4. Staff's Comments

Golder stated the City of Grand Rapids is going to be voting on their medical marijuana regulations. Discussion ensued.

## L. Adjournment

**Motion by Commissioner VanderHoff, supported by Commissioner Fox to adjourn the meeting.**

- Motion Carried (9-0) -

Meeting adjourned at 9:02p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Kape, Secretary