

City of Kalamazoo  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
Minutes  
May 4, 2017  
*FINAL*

Second Floor, City Hall  
Commission Chambers  
241W. South Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Members Present: Rachel Hughes-Nilsson, Chair; Charley Coss, Vice Chair; Josh Cook; Emily Greenman Wright; Gregory Milliken; James Pitts; Sakhi Vyas; Derek Wissner; Alfonso Espinosa

Members Excused: None

City Staff: Rob Bauckham, Senior Development Planner; John Kneas, Assistant City Attorney; Amanda Coeur, Recording Secretary

Guests: Bill Ritsema; Ebony Lawrence

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**B. ROLL CALL**

Planner Bauckham proceeded with roll call and determined that the aforementioned members were present.

**C. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA**

**Commissioner Espinosa, supported by Commissioner Pitts, moved approval of the May 4, 2017 Planning Commission agenda. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Commissioner Espinosa, supported by Commissioner Greenman Wright moved approval of the April 13, 2017 Planning Commission minutes as presented. With a voice vote, the motion carried.**

**E. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Planner Bauckham stated why F1 and F2 were postponed as stated on the agenda, he is hoping that these items will be on the June 1<sup>st</sup> agenda.

**F. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**P.C. #2017.02: Request to rezone 621 W. Kalamazoo Avenue from Zone M-1 (Manufacturing, Limited District) to Zone RD-19 (Residential, Duplex District). [Recommended action: postpone to the June 1 meeting.] And P.C. #2017.03: Request from Clark House, LLC for a special use permit to allow a bed and breakfast use at 621 W. Kalamazoo Avenue. [Recommended action: postpone to the June 1 meeting.]**

**Commissioner Vyas, supported by Commissioner Greenman Wright moved to postpone these two public hearings to the June 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried.**

**P.C. #2017.04: Request from Justin Guisinger for a special use permit to allow a microbrewery use with food service in a portion of the existing building at 505 E. Kalamazoo Avenue. [Recommended action: approve the special use permit.]**

*\*\* Commissioner Wissner arrives- 7:07pm\*\**

Planner Bauckham presented the staff report. He stated that this request is for a microbrewery within the same building as a tattoo parlor, retail business, financial advisors, and an entertainment business. This request is to use 3500 square feet of the building. There will be a bar and kitchen on the south side of the property, and the microbrewery will be on the north side. The business will accommodate 60 customers, would be open Wednesday-Saturday and would serve pre-packaged food. There will be two brewing kettles at the facility, and they will brew approximately 5 barrels a week.

This property is located in a downtown parking exempt area and is not required to provide parking. Currently there are 14 spaces available. The tenancy to the east is concerned about brewery customers parking in their lot. There could be a patio built in the future, city staff stated that this would require a site plan review. No expansions to the building are planned, there is also no new trees that will be planted on site, or new outdoor lights to be added. This site is surrounded by other businesses and within the CMU zone. Staff is recommending approval with one condition, which is when the patio is developed a site plan needs to be submitted.

Commissioner Cook asked Planner Bauckham if businesses are relocating or will they be sharing space? Planner Bauckham stated they will be sharing the space, currently the financial business is on the western side, the tattoo parlor is on the Kalamazoo Avenue side, Final Clue, the entertainment business, is on the eastern side and the brewery will be on the northern side.

Commissioner Milliken asked if there will be truck access, Planner Bauckham stated there is an alley off the northern edge that trucks can use.

Commissioner Hughes- Nilsson questioned the parking and if the applicant could handle the potential issues with parking. Planner Bauckham stated that there is parking on Walbridge, Kalamazoo Avenue, and on the alley. If they were not located inside of the downtown parking exempt area it would be the applicant's responsibility to find appropriate parking for their customers.

Commissioner Milliken asked about the parking spaces to the east of the property, Planner Bauckham stated he spoke to the property owner and this is not available.

The applicant spoke, and stated his business was looking to accommodate foot traffic and use parking that is available on Walbridge. He would direct customers to not use the lot to the east of the building.

Commissioner Cook asked the applicant if he had talked to neighboring businesses. The applicant stated they have talked to Black Owl Café who welcomes the business. They have also talked to neighbors regarding parking, but have not gone door to door. Commissioner Cook also asked the applicant about their long term plan for growth. The applicant stated there is a three year plan for expanding production off site, they would like to stay on the site within the next five years, they feel like they could grow at this location.

The Public Hearing was opened, and Mr. Bill Ritsema, owner of Ritsema Associates spoke. He has no objections to the business, but he is concerned about parking as there is already a tenant on the property who operates after the normal 5pm business hours.

Ebony Lawrence spoke, she owns a retail business on the same property as the proposed microbrewery. Her business shares the parking lot with Final Clue. She stated her business is open 10am-10pm, and sometimes parking can be a hassle.

The public hearing was closed, and Commissioners discussed the request.

Commissioner Vyas stated it may be beneficial to get neighbor feedback, especially in regards to parking. Commissioner Cook agrees, some neighbors have supported, but none have provided written support. There are struggles about how businesses are settled within this property. He would like to see a photo of the façade, and where exactly the business would be located. Commissioner Milliken agrees and stated this is a unique site for this business, he would like to see how capital improvements may benefit the patrons.

Commissioner Hughes Nilsson asked Planner Bauckham if it was possible to put a fence around the building to enforce parking, Planner Bauckham stated a fence could obstruct walking. He recommends signage but if that didn't work a fence could be an option. Assistant City Attorney Kneas stated the Fire Marshal may have an issue with a fence being in the middle of the parking lot. Planner Bauckham stated that the parking lot is only one way with a separate designated entrance and exit.

**Commissioner Wissner, supported by Commissioner Coss, move to approve the special use permit request with the following condition: a site plan shall be submitted to the city for review and approval when a patio expansion is planned. With a roll call vote, the motion carried. Commissioners Cook and Pitts abstained.**

#### **G. CITIZENS' COMMENTS (Regarding non-agenda items)**

None

#### **H. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Planner Bauckham gave an Imagine Kalamazoo 2025 update. On June 1<sup>st</sup> the draft strategic plan will be brought forth to the Planning Commission, no action will be required. The plan will then go to City Commission on June 19<sup>th</sup>. In July, the draft Master Plan will be brought in front of the Planning Commission. The Master Plan will then go to the City Commission and the 63 day Public Comment period will start. September 12<sup>th</sup> the comment period will close, and in October Planning Commission will adopt the Master Plan.

#### **I. NEW BUSINESS**

None

#### **J. CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

None

#### **K. CITY COMMISSION LIAISON COMMENTS**

None

#### **L. CITY PLANNER'S REPORT**

Planner Bauckham gave the City Planner's Report. Some of the highlights of the site plan program included:

- Kalamazoo Innovation Initiative is a change of use to workshops and offices. They provide training to the public in such things as 3D Printing.
- Kalamazoo Spirits at West Main and Drake is converting from a gas station into a liquor store.
- Kalamazoo Distilling has started work on their property on the corner of Portage Street and Lake Street.
- Exchange Place has broke ground. They have 2 lanes of traffic currently blocked off on Rose Street as well as Michigan Avenue.

Redevelopment Ready Communities certification is almost complete. Economic Development created a marketing component that has been submitted.

The Site Plan Review Process has been under review for the past few months with a consultant, who has created a policy that will be brought forth to the Planning Commission within the next few months.

The Planning Commission Retreat will be around the middle to end of September, more details will come at a later date.

For the June meeting the Bed and Breakfast will be coming to the Planning Commission for rezoning. Waldon Woods is looking at a phase 4 rezoning, changing from PUD to residential. The draft strategic plan which was talked about earlier and finally there may be a possible expansion of the YMCA.

#### **M. MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS BY PLANNING COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Wissner told Commissioners that Art Hop is this weekend, as well as the Borgess races.

Commissioner Vyas stated that the Farmers' Market opens this weekend and the Food Truck Rally is going on.

#### **M. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Rebekah Kik,  
City Planner  
Community Planning & Development