

City of Kalamazoo
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes
June 7, 2018
FINAL

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

Members Present: Rachel Hughes-Nilsson, Chair; Gregory Milliken Vice Chair; Sakhi Vyas; Derek Wissner; Alfonso Espinosa;

Members Excused: Charley Coss; James Pitts; Jack Baartman; Emily Greenman Wright

City Staff: Christina Anderson, City Planner; Robert Bauckham, Senior Development Planner; Clyde Robinson, City Attorney and Amanda Coeur, Community Development Secretary

A. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

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

C. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

Commissioner Milliken, supported by Commissioner Espinosa, moved approval of the June 7, 2018 Planning Commission agenda. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Espinosa requested that the spelling of his name be corrected in the minutes. **Commissioner Espinosa, supported by Commissioner Vyas, moved approval of the May 3, 2018 Planning Commission minutes as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

E. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

F. PUBLIC HEARINGS

P.C. #2018.04: Request from Walter Jones, III for a special use permit to allow a lodge use at 701 Riverview Drive and 911 Hotop. [Recommendation: motion to approve the request.]

Planner Bauckham presented the staff report. He stated the property contains a building that was formerly used as a restaurant with a parking lot. He told the Commission the building had been vacant since 2015. The properties in question are part of the Riverfront Overlay District. The applicant is proposing using the property for an American Legion Post as well as a café. A special use permit is needed for the lodge use only, as restaurants are a permitted use. If the special use permit is approved, the applicant will update the façade of the building. The applicant will manage both the café and lodge. The applicant presented the request to the Eastside Neighborhood Association at a regular meeting, and the Association had no objections to it. Currently there are no building additions planned, no parking upgrades needed, and no tree removals planned. City staff is recommending approval of the request.

The applicant, Walter Jones III, spoke to the Commission and requested the special use permit be approved. Mr. Jones gave background information on the American Legion organization. Mr. Jones is a veteran himself, having three purple heart medals awarded to him. He stated there is a serious problem of homelessness among veterans in the community. They are planning to donate the proceeds from the café operation to the Eastside Neighborhood Association and Ecumanical Senior Center.

Commissioner Milliken asked the applicant how many tables are proposed within the café. Mr. Jones stated he would like to see a capacity of 30-40 people, but is waiting on the Fire Marshal to give him an exact capacity count.

There were no public comments.

Commissioner Vyas, supported by Commissioner Espinosa, motioned to close the public comment portion of the hearing. A voice vote was taken and passed.

Commissioner Wissner, with support from Commissioner Vyas, moved to approve the special use permit to allow a lodge use at 701 Riverview Drive and 911 Hotop Avenue.

Commissioner Wissner stated he thinks this will be a good use of the property. Commissioner Hughes-Nilsson thanked the applicant for his service and gave her support of this project.

A roll call vote was taken and the request was unanimously approved.

P.C. #2018.06: Request from the Community Planning & Development Department to rezone several parcels along E. Cork Street between Gembrit Circle and Sprinkle Road from Zone M-1 (Manufacturing, Limited District) to Zone CC (Commercial, Community District). [Recommendation: motion to recommend to the City Commission to approve the request.]

Planner Bauckham presented the staff report. He stated that this was a staff initiated request to change the zoning of 37 properties. Currently, all of the parcels are zoned M-1, manufacturing. The proposal is to rezone them to the CC, commercial district. There are currently five hotels in the area, which are identified as a conforming use in the current zone. However, the hotels cannot expand and no new hotels can be built without variances granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals. If the rezoning is approved, these hotels would be a permitted use and they would no longer have to go through the variance process to expand. New hotels could also be built in the area without the need for variances.

Planner Bauckham explained that staff expanded the area to better match the Future Land Use map that was approved in the 2025 Master Plan. The expanded area includes are car sales lots, offices, vacant buildings, restaurants, and single family homes. The single family homes would be a conforming use with the proposed change of zoning. The current homes could be replaced if destroyed, but no new homes could be added. All of the other existing uses in the rezoning area would be permitted in the proposed CC zone. No new industrial uses would be permitted in the area, or junk yards, body shops, or recycling facilities. The rezoning would not affect the existing industrial uses located to the west of the 37-parcel rezoning area. City staff attended the Milwood Neighborhood Watch meeting regarding this request on May 1, and no objections were stated. All property owners and occupants in the area were invited to a meeting on May 24 to discuss the request. No objections were provided during that meeting. Many questions were asked by citizens during both meetings, but no concerns were raised. Staff also answered several telephone calls about the request. Questions were asked by the callers but no objections provided. Planner Bauckham also stated that the rezoning meets the Economic Vitality Goal of the 2025 Master Plan.

Commission Milliken asked if the current uses on Sprinkle Road would be conforming. Planner Bauckham stated all of the existing uses on Sprinkle Road would be permitted in the proposed zone.

There were no public comments.

Commissioner Vyas, supported by Commissioner Espinosa, motioned to close the public comment portion of the hearing. A voice vote was taken and passed.

Commissioner Milliken, supported by Commissioner Vyas, motioned to recommend to the City Commission to approve the rezoning of thirty-seven (37) parcels located along E. Cork Street between Gembrit Circle and Sprinkle Road.

Commissioner Milliken stated that this rezoning was consistent with the Master Plans vision. He spoke about staff identifying that the uses would be permitted or conforming, and this will create a good environment for economic vitality.

Commissioner Espinosa spoke about his concern that the city is limiting where marijuana growing operations can be located. He stated the city is removing some current barriers, but should limit future barriers for marijuana uses.

A roll call vote was taken and the request was approved by a vote of 4 to 1 with Commissioner Espinosa voting no.

P.C. #2018.07: Request from Matthew and Yvonne Bond to vacate the north 105 feet of Foresman Avenue. [Recommendation: motion to recommend to the City Commission to approve the street vacation request, with one condition.]

Planner Bauckham presented the staff report for this case. He stated that the street is within the Eastside neighborhood. The Eastside small homes project is proposed for a portion of this street, south of the proposed vacation area. The applicant is requesting the vacation of the north 105 feet of Foresman Avenue. This section of road is not paved. The Public Services and Public Safety Departments were asked if their departments had any issues with the request. No objections were provided. Public Services asked that there be one condition to the request, which is that an easement be provided to the Department for access to the underground utilities in the street section for maintenance purposes. Planner Bauckham reported that the Eastside Neighborhood Association had no objections to this request. The request meets the 2025 Master Plan goal of removing barriers to desired development. The applicant would like to build a gazebo in his rear yard and cannot accomplish this if the vacation is not approved.

Commissioner Wissner asked Planner Bauckham who owns the properties on either side of the street section proposed for the vacation. Planner Bauckham responded that the applicant owns the properties on either side.

Matthew Bond, the applicant, stated that his family has lived on Charles Avenue since 1990. He indicated his home sits on 3 acres, which are adjacent to the street section for the proposed vacation. Mr. Bond stated they plan to make some improvements to their property.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Wissner, supported by Commissioner Espinosa, motioned to close the public comment portion of the hearing. A voice vote was taken and passed.

Commissioner Milliken, supported by Commissioner Espinosa, motioned to recommend to the City Commission to approve the vacation of the segment of the public street, with one condition. The condition of approval is that an easement be provided to the Public Services Department for access to the underground utilities in the street section for maintenance purposes.

Commissioner Milliken stated the request meets the standards of the ordinance and the street vacation policy.

A roll call vote was taken and the request was unanimously approved with the condition.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

H. NEW BUSINESS

None

I. CITIZENS' COMMENTS (Regarding non-agenda items)

None

J. CITY COMMISSION LIAISON COMMENTS

None

K. CITY PLANNER'S REPORT

Planner Bauckham spoke in regards to the City Planner's Report. He reviewed the Site Plan Review spreadsheet that was in the Commissioners' packets. Some highlights of the report were:

- A four story building will be built where the former fire station was located on Cedar Street.
- Lot 9 located east of the Radisson Hotel will become a mixed-use development project.
- Crane Park improvements have been approved, which will include a pickleball court.
- The Hospitality House for Bronson Hospital has started construction on South Burdick Street.
- Work is continuing on the Midtown Marketplace building on Howard Street.
- There will be a site plan meeting next week for the Northside Association for Community Development duplex project on North Street.

Planner Bauckham also stated that due to the Fourth of July holiday, the next Planning Commission meeting will be held on July 10th.

L. MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS BY PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

None

M. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Espinosa, supported by Commissioner Wissner, moved to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken and passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 7:48pm.

Planning Commission

June 7, 2018

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive style. Below the signature is a solid blue horizontal line that extends across the width of the signature.

Christina Anderson,

City Planner

Community Planning & Development