



PLANNING COMMISSION

July 15, 2021

A regular Planning Commission meeting was held in the City Council Chambers, Petoskey, Michigan, on Thursday, July 15, 2021. Roll was called at 7:00 P.M. and the following were:

Present: Cynthia Linn Robson, Chairperson  
Rose Fitzgerald  
Rick Neumann  
Ted Pall  
Charles Willmott

Absent: Betony Braddock  
Carolyn Dettmer  
Richard Mooradian  
Kent Warner

Others: Cindy Hicks, U.S. Properties Group  
Jason Jordan, U.S. Properties Group  
Paul LeBlanc, PLB Planning Group, LLC, Grand Rapids  
Ron Pool, Landscaper for U.S. Properties Group  
Dr. Thomas Zeidel, North Central Michigan College

Staff: Amy Tweeten, City Planner  
Lisa Denoyer, Administrative Assistant

Upon motion and support, the minutes of the June 17, 2021 regular meeting were approved with corrections. Motion carried 5-0.

**Discussion and Scheduling of a Public Hearing on a Rezoning Request  
from R-1 Single Family to C – College District  
for North Central Michigan College, 1515 Howard Street**

Staff informed the Commission that North Central Michigan College had submitted a request to rezone its property south of Atkins to the new C-College District. The application included a master site facilities plan that incorporates the entire College 2019 Master Plan and an updated Page 31 that illustrates the dormitory location if it were to be taller than 45 feet.

The full staff review of the request to the ordinance standards will be provided for the public hearing.

Paul Leblanc, PLB Planning Group, LLC, thanked the Commission for their time, offered to answer any questions and informed the Commission that the master plan was used as a template for addressing the requirements of the plan submitted.

Commissioners thanked Mr. LeBlanc for addressing the 100-foot setback concern, inquired about a covered performance stage at the proposed amphitheater, and recommended adding a date to the

cover page of the site plan that indicates when the most recent update was made, as well as reference to the sculpture garden as it is an important heritage element.

Mr. LeBlanc responded that the performance stage would likely have a cover and that the recommendations were good ideas and would be considered.

Commissioners then discussed adding the building elevation drawing to the ordinance as an illustration of what is desired.

At this time, Commissioner Neumann made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Willmott, to schedule a public hearing on the rezoning request for its August 19 meeting when a full review of the Master Site Facilities Plan to the ordinance standards will be provided. Motion carried 5-0.

**Continued Discussion and Action on a  
Site Plan Amendment Request for  
Crestview Commons PUD, 1305 Spring Street**

Staff informed the Commission that at the direction of the Commission, U.S. Properties Group had amended their request to include additional signs along with a modified landscape plan. The owner is requesting a second free-standing sign for the plaza, similar in size to the free-standing sign approved in October that has a maximum height of 8 feet and 51 square feet of sign area.

The PUD has a specific landscape plan approved as part of the zoning that has been modified over time. There is no reference to the PUD or ordinance landscaping requirements of Section 1709.

The plan indicates the removal of 45 trees, including several large maple trees that staff feels could remain in the east/west island and not block visibility of storefronts. With additional street signs, she believes at least some of the remaining larger trees in the east/west island should remain. The evergreens along Spring Street have been trimmed like canopy trees with views of stores underneath. If replaced, new trees should be canopy trees, not ornamentals.

Jason Jordan, U.S. Properties Group, informed the Commission that three ginkgo trees would be planted along Spring Street. These trees would mature to 50 feet in height and 10 feet in width. Being the center sits so far off the road it would be preferred that fewer trees be planted to avoid blocking visibility of the center like the existing trees do.

Commissioners expressed concerns with the ginkgo trees as they can be very messy and smelly, commented that they did not feel the addition of the plaza name to the sign base was necessary and that they would prefer the location of the sister sign on Spring Street mirror the location of the existing sign.

Commissioners asked if the ginkgo tree would meet the requirements, if the entire site was irrigated and commented that the site lacks vegetation.

Staff responded that the minimum height requirement for trees when planted is 6 feet in height.

Ron Pool, Landscaper, responded that approximately 90% of the plaza is irrigated.

Commissioners then discussed the West Sheridan Street sign, concerns with visibility for vehicles exiting the plaza, and the replacement of any trees removed when placing the sign. Commissioners commented on the need for more canopy trees along Spring Street and the possibility of planting bushes and flowering plants in the islands to add more vegetation.

Staff commented that bushes and flowering plants would require more maintenance for the applicant.

At this time, Commissioner Pall made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Willmott, to approve the sign request with the following changes:

1. An additional freestanding plaza sign on Spring Street of 51 square feet and 8 feet in height, without the plaza nameplate on the brick base, and in a location that mirrors the location of the existing free-standing sign;
2. An additional free-standing sign at the West Sheridan Street entrance of 30 feet in sign area and 8 feet in height, without the plaza nameplate on the brick base, and in a location that does not obstruct vehicle vision to be reviewed and approved by staff; and
3. Replacement of two trees that will be removed for the Sheridan Street sign with two trees further to the south.

Motion carried 5-0.

At this time, Commissioner Neumann made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Fitzgerald, to approve the landscape removal plan submitted with the following conditions:

1. Planting of canopy trees along the entire Spring Street frontage of no more than 50 feet on center; and
2. Commissioner review of a revised landscape replacement plan that includes additional landscape materials in the east-west islands and replacement of canopy trees in all of the smaller islands that hold two trees.

Motion carried 5-0.

#### **Discussion and Direction on Possible Sign Ordinance Amendments**

Due to the late hour, Commissioners decided to postpone discussion to a future meeting.

#### **Discussion and Direction on Possible Zoning Ordinance Amendments to Address Housing**

Due to the length of past agendas, this item had not returned but staff felt it was important to continue moving it forward. She believed there was Commissioner consensus on the following items and if so, she would bring more specific language forward.

1. Eliminate density restrictions in business and industrial districts.
2. Change building height for three story buildings to 40 feet and definition measurement at the roof line plus parapet.
3. Amend private street standards.
4. Allow residential uses in the rear and lower level of buildings in the CBD that front alleys, subject to building code requirements.

The Commission discussed the items and wanted to better understand the impact of eliminating density requirements, questioned the wisdom of increasing the height to 40 feet if buildings could meet the current requirements and asked for more information. Staff will bring back information and possible ordinance language to the August meeting.

#### **Public Comment**

The meeting was opened for public comment. No public comment was received.

## Updates

Staff informed the Commission that the August meeting agenda will likely include the following, along with any public hearings scheduled tonight:

- Introduction of the third provisioning center request at 403 W. Mitchell Street;
- A sign plan amendment request for McLaren Northern Michigan;
- 2022-2027 Capital Improvement Plan; and
- Possibly a concept plan for 202 E. Mitchell Street (Mitchell Street Market).

The meeting was then adjourned at 9:21 P.M.

Minutes reviewed by Ted Pall, Vice Chairperson/Secretary