

**ADA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE APRIL 16, 2020 MEETING**

A meeting of the Ada Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, April 16, 2020, 7:00 p.m. via video/audio-conferencing, in conformance with the Michigan Governor's Executive Order 2020-48

I. CALL TO ORDER

Leisman called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Burton, Butterfield, Carter, Easter, Heglund, Jacobs, Leisman

Absent: None

Staff Present: Ferro

Public Present: Approximately 8

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Easter, supported by Carter, to approve the agenda as written. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 20, 2020 MEETING

Moved by Carter, supported by Jacobs, to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2020 meeting as presented.

Roll Call:

Yes: Burton, Butterfield, Carter, Easter, Jacobs, Heglund, Leisman.

No: None

Absent: None

Motion passed unanimously.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS - None

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Preliminary PUD Plan, 92 Multifamily Residential Units on a 9.64-acre site in the C-1 Village Business Zoning in District, 7590 E. Fulton St., Parcel No. 41-15-34-127-003, Wheeler Development Group

Chair Leisman stated that this item has come before the Planning Commission several times and that a Public Hearing was held at the February meeting. There was no meeting in March. Leisman invited Ferro to comment on the prepared staff report.

Planning Director, Ferro, summarized the applicant's request as outlined in his staff report. Ferro stated the project is a residential, multi-family development consisting of 92 units in 4 buildings, on 9.64 acres on the south side of Fulton St. and east of the Ada Fresh Market.

Ferro noted several revisions since the February Planning Commission meeting which include:

1. The driveway access has been shifted to align with an existing parking area access drive intersection within the Marketplace Square Development.

2. A 110-foot long, single-story, parking garage that was formerly placed along the west property boundary has been shifted to a location 25 feet from the property line and rotated 90 degrees.
3. A sidewalk/marked pedestrian path has been added to provide a better pedestrian connection to the sidewalk along River St.
4. The small management office building has been removed from the plan.
5. Each of the 4-story buildings has been shifted slightly, placing them 5 feet closer to the central pedestrian courtyard between the buildings.

Ferro stated the proposed project includes 2 buildings which are 3 stories and 2 buildings which have 3 and 4-story components. The 2 tallest buildings are furthest from Fulton St. and have a generous setback of 280 ft. from Fulton St.

Ferro stated conventional parking standards requires 180 spaces for the 92 units but 168 parking spaces are what's being provided. Given the location of the units to the village and the walkability to nearby services, amenities, civic buildings, etc.; he believes the 168 parking spaces is sufficient.

Ferro stated the zoning ordinance requires a traffic impact assessment for a PUD project of this size. The applicant submitted an analysis that was prepared in 2018 when the Marketplace Square driveway was reconstructed/relocated, as well as the addition of a turning lane on Ada Dr. which was completed in the last year. The original analysis was based on the assumption that there would be 50 dwelling units on this site rather than the proposed 92 units.

Ferro stated that the applicant provided a cover letter from the traffic engineer with the 2018 traffic analysis which states "comparing the previously assumed 50 units to 92 units, I would estimate we would generate an additional 16 morning peak-hour trips (4 entering, 12 exiting) and 24 afternoon peak-hour trips (15 entering, 9 exiting). I would not expect any changes to our recommendations based on these additional trips."

Ferro stated he did some additional analysis on the impact of traffic when changing from 50 units to 92 units and found that there is a projected increase (morning and afternoon trips in both directions) of 1.7% to 8.1%.

Ferro stated the development will be served by public water and sewer. Those utility plans have been reviewed and approved by the Township engineer. No information has been provided on storm water management but that aspect of the plan can be addressed at the final PUD review.

Ferro stated the proposed plan does not identify the 100 year floodplain elevation or boundary, however, he believes the entire site is currently slightly below the floodplain elevation and will require a small amount of fill.

Ferro stated he has made comments on the conceptual landscaping plan which he expects to be addressed at the final PUD plan. One recommendation will be to add evergreen screening along the back of the garage buildings facing Fulton St.

Ferro stated an exterior lighting plan and photometric analysis were submitted but this is not a requirement in the Preliminary PUD process. The plan shows parking lot lighting but does not show fixture specifications. These details will be handled in the final PUD submittal.

Ferro stated there is a potential non-motorized trail shown on the plan running through the entire property, running east/west. In previous meetings, the applicant has offered to construct the trail as part of the site improvements. The plan shows a 6-foot wide trail width. The Township's trail specifications call for an 8-foot wide width. The trail would be part of a trail route that would extend from the east end of Legacy Park out to and underneath the M-21 bridge deck, and up onto the non-motorized trail on the north edge of the M-21 bridge deck over the Grand River.

Ferro stated he believes the alignment of the trail as shown on the plan has some conflict with the south edge of the courtyard shown between the two 4-story buildings. The trail appears to terminate at the south end of those buildings. This will need to be addressed in the future.

The plan proposes two identification signs. One sign is located immediately south of the proposed new driveway access, and the second is located about 100 feet north of the other, north of the driveway access. Ferro stated that if the southerly sign were shifted a little farther north, it would eliminate the need for a second sign. Ferro stated that the Township's sign regulations state that one ground-mounted sign per entrance into the development is permitted. However, PUD regulations authorize variations from the sign regulations if the Planning Commission feels it is warranted. Ferro stated he does not feel a second sign is warranted at this point.

Chair Leisman invited the applicant to speak.

Steve Tietsma of Progressive AE stated the comments made during previous meetings regarding the end of River Street prompted them to change the angle of the garage so it is no longer the focal point. This change also allowed them to relocate the driveway to better align with the parking lot to the rest of the commercial development and gave them space to add a few extra parking spaces.

Mr. Tietsma stated that Tom Toole of Ghafari made some changes to approve the aesthetics of the garages. Mr. Tietsma also commented on the non-motorized trail, stating that their property does not go all the way to the Fulton St. bridge. The Township owns a sliver of property closest to the bridge. The timing of the trail installation will need to be addressed.

Mr. Tietsma stated the Planning Director provided a thorough report and described the changes very well. Tom Toole of Ghafari commented on architecture of the garage doors stating that faux windows have been added and there are now two sets of materials alternating with siding and brick.

Easter asked if there was any collaboration with Ken Dixon. Mr. Tietsma stated they did meet with Mr. Dixon and talked through some of the architectural components. Mr. Dixon had a certain building construction in mind that did not pan out economically for a project of this nature.

Ferro shared the renderings from the February meeting and Mr. Toole made comments on the changes they have made since then, noting that the office building has been removed and a parking garage has been moved to be adjacent to your left as you come in from Fulton St. Additionally, evergreen trees have been added to create a parking buffer.

Leisman invited the public to comment:

Ken Dixon of Dixon Architecture stated that he did meet with the applicants after the February meeting to discuss connectivity. Mr. Dixon feels the trail along the river has been designed well but does not feel like there is any other connectivity that's really rooted with the layout of the buildings in block A and B. The connectivity seems to be kind of jogged to make up for misalignments. Mr. Dixon stated he feels the development should have a welcoming entrance from River Street with a loop road that fosters vehicular

and pedestrian connectivity. Mr. Dixon stated he is supportive of the residential component and density which is critical to the success of the village. He questions the large scale of continuous architecture and noted that all four buildings are almost identical.

Tom Korth stated he was not aware of how far along this project was until he saw the Zoom meeting invite two days ago. He has spoken to Ferro and Leisman and understands a lot of work has gone into this project up to this point. Mr. Korth stated he is a former Ada Township Planning Commission Chairperson. While on the Planning Commission, he always had a pedestrian focus on what was done in the Village. This site has a sense of exclusivity that is uninviting to the general public. Mr. Korth stated he has always thought that the entire Envision Ada goal was to create a rich campus-like village where all of its residents would use for their personal enjoyment, including walking, visiting with people, exercising, etc.

Mr. Korth stated he sketched some possible changes on the applicant's current renderings and provided them to Ferro and Leisman. Mr. Korth stated he doesn't feel anyone will use the courtyard space as it is currently designed. He also feels efficient walkability to Amway is needed as it is likely Amway employees will be living in these units. He thinks there should be a path out of the north end of the courtyard for people trying to get to Amway.

Mr. Korth also suggested adding a curb cut and pavement striping near the west entrance to bring attention to safe areas for pedestrians to walk. Mr. Korth stated there should be a link from the south courtyard to the river path. He also suggested adding a paved sidewalk all around the development, connecting from the north garage bank, up along Fulton St, and connecting to the non-motorized trail along the river.

Ferro presented a rendering showing another possible route for someone to walk to Amway.

Easter inquired about who is responsible for pedestrian traffic, the developer or Ada Township as part of the Village's trail system? Jacobs agreed, stating that some of the property in question is not even owned by the developer.

Ferro stated there may be some concern in requiring the applicant to make offsite public improvements.

Heglund stated he would like as many connections as possible and expressed concerns about pedestrians walking across the parking lot to get to Ada Market.

Butterfield also expressed a desire to have safe connections for people with joggers, bicycles, skateboards, etc. who will be wanting to take the shortest route possible to get to their destinations.

Leisman stated the Township has required other developers to install the trail if it runs adjacent to their property and the same could be done for this project along Fulton St.

Carter stated he does not like the idea of pedestrians crossing 3 lanes of traffic at the Market entrance off of Fulton St. He does, however, like the idea of a trail loop but does not feel like the developer should be required to pay for that right now. Carter suggested the developer could provide an easement to the Township for future trail installation.

Leisman stated an easement for a trail path along Fulton could be a condition of approval. Ferro stated he knows there are some grade issues along Fulton St involving a ditch. There is also insufficient room between the north end of the buildings and the right-of-way boundary.

Easter stated that the Planning Commission should be concerned that this area is walkable but should also be sensitive in keeping this project moving forward.

Leisman stated that in addition to the Planner's 10 recommended conditions of approval, another condition could be added stating that the applicant shall add a future trail along Fulton onto the site plan along with a willingness to grant the Township an easement from that northern trail in order to provide a connection to the trail along the river.

John Wheeler of Wheeler Development Group responded to the public concerns. Mr. Wheeler stated that having multiple facades like Mr. Dixon recommended would bring the cost of this project to a level which would require rent to be higher than what tenants would be willing to pay. Mr. Wheeler noted issues with the site and the costs that go into mediating those issues. He also stated that their residents need to be protected. He feels they would want a quiet atmosphere and would not want River Street to go through their property.

Steve Tietsma stated that any path along Fulton St. would likely be in the right-of-way and they would be prohibited from granting an easement. However, the Township could possibly accomplish it by getting a permit through MDOT.

Carter agreed with Mr. Tietsma but noted that there may be different areas on their property where the path would cross. It may be a good idea to have easements in the event the township wants to add a path that loops around their property.

Ferro commented on the PUD zoning standards as outlined in the Commissioners' packets. Ferro stated the applicant has made considerable improvements throughout this process incorporating the Planning Commissioners' feedback. Coordination with the Marketplace Square property owners will need to happen in order to add pavement striping for pedestrian crosswalks.

In regards to the proposed non-motorized trail, Ferro stated that if the applicant can add the 8 ft. path on the northwest portion of their property, the Township could complete the path all the way to the M-21 bridge.

Ferro summarized his recommended conditions of approval as outlined in his staff report dated 4/10/2020. Ferro stated the Preliminary PUD plan will need to show flood elevation information before it goes to the Township Board for approval. It will also need to show 1 ground-mounted sign, not 2. Ferro stated elevation sketches for the rear facade of the parking garages have been provided.

Leisman discussed adding additional conditions of approval including:

1. Adding "prior to consideration of the Plan by the Township Board" to conditions no. 3 & 4
2. Adding an 11th condition that the Preliminary PUD shall be revised to identify placement of a future non-motorized trail along the Fulton St. frontage of the PUD site, to be constructed by others, and to identify any easements on the PUD site needed to accommodate future trail construction, which easements shall be granted to the Township by the property owners.

Leisman asked for feedback from the Planning Commissioners.

Heglund stated he wants to make sure our language is precise to ensure the connectivity piece is followed through.

Leisman stated a 12th condition of approval could be added that states "the Preliminary PUD Plan shall be revised, prior to consideration by the Township Board, to include additional site improvements to enhance pedestrian connectivity to the Village and existing and planned pedestrian facilities.

Easter expressed appreciation for the spirit of cooperation from everyone involved in this project. She understands Mr. Wheeler's comments about residential vs. commercial. She feels this will be a great addition to the Township.

Carter stated he would like to make sure the language on the trail running across the Ada Market parking lot is written in a way that does not make this project fall through if Ada Market does not agree to the trail.

Burton thanked Tom Korth for his input. She appreciates the connectivity ideas. She is happy with this project.

Butterfield stated this project has shown a lot of collaboration between the Township and the developers. She appreciates Mr. Korth's suggestions and recommended sharing his ideas with the Township Board. She thinks this project has turned out well.

Jacobs agreed with the previous comments.

Leisman stated he also echoes the previous comments and agrees with Ferro's recommended conditions.

Moved by Easter, seconded by Burton, to recommend approval of the Preliminary PUD Plan for the Village East Residential PUD, subject to the following conditions:

1. The approved PUD Plan shall be carried out in substantial conformance with the following documents submitted by the applicant, except as modified by these conditions of approval: Plan sheets C-101, C-201, C-301 and L-100, all dated 3/11/20 and prepared by Progressive AE, and Plan sheet AE1-01, AE1-02, AE1-04, AE2-01, AE2-02, AE2-03 and AE2-04, all dated 1/23/20 and prepared by Ghafari.
2. The proposed development shall consist of a maximum of 92 residential dwelling units, with the following unit mix by number of bedrooms:
1-bedroom units: 32
2-bedroom units: 56
3-bedroom units: 4
3. The Preliminary PUD Plan shall be revised, prior to consideration of the Plan by the Township Board, to identify the 100-year base flood elevation.
4. The Preliminary PUD Plan shall be revised, prior to consideration of the Plan by the Township Board, to include one ground-mounted sign, in conformance with the zoning regulations, including maximum sign area of 16 square feet, and maximum height of 5 feet.
5. A storm water permit application and accompanying construction plans for the storm water management system shall be submitted, subject to review and approval of a permit by the Planning Department, prior to initiation of site improvements.
6. Pole-mounted parking area lighting shall be limited to use of "full-cutoff" fixtures. Any building-mounted exterior lighting shall utilize "full cutoff" fixtures, or be of low-intensity, non-glaring style, subject to fixture specification approval by the Planning Department.

7. Construction plans for public water and sewer main extensions shall be subject to issuance of required State permits and approval by the Utilities Director, prior to initiation of site improvements, and prior to issuance of building permits.
8. Floodplain development permits shall be issued by the Michigan EGLE and Ada Township, prior to initiation of site improvements and prior to issuance of building permits.
9. In addition to compliance with zoning ordinance submittal requirements, the Final PUD Plan submittal shall address the following:
 - a. Elevation sketches for the rear façade of parking garages shall be provided.
 - b. The landscape plan shall include evergreen tree plantings in the northeast portion of the site, to provide visual screening of parking garages from Fulton St.
 - c. The layout of the proposed non-motorized trail through the site and the adjacent steps from the pedestrian plaza between the two four-story buildings shall be revised to address the constructability issue caused by the site topography, and to provide a minimum paved surface width of 8 feet.
10. Construction plans for the non-motorized trail through the property shall be subject to approval by the Township, prior to construction. The non-motorized trail through the site shall be completed within one (1) year of issuance of any occupancy permits for dwelling units in the PUD. Upon completion of trail construction, the applicant shall grant to Ada Township an easement for public use of the non-motorized trail through the property, in a recordable form acceptable to the Township.
11. The Preliminary PUD Plan shall be revised, prior to consideration by the Township Board, to identify placement of a future non-motorized trail along the Fulton St. frontage of the PUD site, to be constructed by others, and to identify any easements on the PUD site needed to accommodate future trail construction, which easements shall be granted to the Township by the property owner.
12. The Preliminary PUD Plan shall be revised, prior to consideration by the Township Board, to include additional site improvements to enhance pedestrian connectivity to the Village and existing and planned pedestrian facilities.

Roll Call:

Yes: Heglund, Easter, Carter, Burton, Butterfield, Jacobs, Leisman

No: None

Absent: None

Motion passed unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Revised PVM District Development Plan, Marketplace Square, Building B5, Construction of a 19,313 Sq. ft., 3-story building to be used for restaurant and office space, 7471 River St. SE, Parcel No. 41-15-34-128-005, Ken Dixon on behalf of Ada Marketplace B-5, LLC

Ken Dixon of Dixon Architecture presented. Mr. Dixon stated this is the 3rd application he has presented to the Planning Commission for Building B5. They are now proposing a 3-story, 19,313 sq. ft. building with a footprint of about 7,261 sq. ft. which will be comprised of about 3,000 sq. ft. on a portion of the first floor for a restaurant and the remainder of the space will be used for a single business

Mr. Dixon stated the building is designed to look historic in nature. The building has been designed to comply with all the PVM standards but they are asking for 3 departures which are:

- 1.) Frontage % required along River Street - 90% min /100% max. The building is proposed with 84.8% frontage along River Street.
- 2.) Building materials permitted - 12% of the building footprint is proposed to be clad in vertical metal siding which is not a permitted material.
- 3.) Upper story windows, maximum pane size - the proposed maximum size of window panes measures 14'-4" wide by 8'-0" high on the second and third floors which is larger than the maximum allowable size of 40" wide by 48" high.

Mr. Dixon reviewed the renderings with the Planning Commissioners noting the large windows, handicap accessible doorways and a buried grease trap for the restaurant. The third floor will be half office space and half outdoor terrace. Mr. Dixon noted a center mullion shown on the rendering that he would like to remove as requested by the tenant.

Mr. Dixon stated the parking requirements have been met. There will be a parking surplus of 97 stalls within the Marketplace Square development at the conclusion of the project.

Leisman asked if there are plans to come back to the Planning Commission for revisions to Building B6.

Mr. Dixon stated there are not; and they are currently in the process of bidding out B6 as they would like to build both B5 and B6 buildings at the same time.

Easter stated that her personal opinion is that there is a ton of brick in the township and she likes the metal clad variation.

Burton stated she agrees with Easter, she thinks it's a fabulous building design.
Heglund stated he loves the design, it looks awesome.

Leisman stated he likes the basic building and is fine with two of the departures but is having a hard time with the building materials departure. He feels the side of the building with metal clad does not look like the period of 1870's to 1940's. He understands that people like it but has a hard time justifying how it complies with the PVM standards.

Ferro stated the historical character remains the predominant character in that it has the appearance of an older building being adapted and enlarged in a newer time. It's similar to what was done in the B3 building (currently James Salon & Boutique).

Leisman asked if Zeytin's is aware of the metal cladding.

Mr. Dixon stated he is not sure. He also stated that villages grow organically over time and space and they are trying to accelerate a little bit of what would happen or could happen. Additions are a reality and this "addition" keeps a bit of uniqueness in the village. Leisman stated that is why he previously asked about Building B6. If B6 is being built as originally planned then the metal clad will not look like the predominant feature.

Commissioners reviewed the River Street elevation and Mr. Dixon noted that the proposed metal clad is similar in color to the black bricks on Zeytin's. These buildings have a nice fluidity between them.

Butterfield stated she likes the dark color of the metal; it would not work if it were a lighter color. It looks like a great space and will be very attractive with the right plantings.

Carter stated he was leaning towards Leisman's opinion of the metal clad at the beginning of the meeting, however, he is accepting of it now.

Ferro stated in regards to the 3 requested departures, the criteria for departures have been satisfied and approval is recommended.

Ferro stated approval of the development plan is recommended, subject to the findings and conditions as outlined in the staff memo dated 3/16/2020 which was provided in the Commissioner's packets.

It was moved by Burton, seconded by Carter to approve the Revised PVM District Development Plan for Unit B-5 in Marketplace Square Condominium, subject to the following findings and conditions:

1. The Planning Commission hereby makes the following findings:

a. The proposed development plan, as modified by the conditions of approval listed below, requires the following “departures” from the standards of the PVM district, which are hereby approved:
Sec. 78-476(a) – Minimum frontage percentage.
Sec. 78-479(b) – Building Walls (exterior).
Sec. 78-479(e)(2)b.2. – Window and doors, Upper Story Windows, Max. Pane Size.

b. The above departures result in a plan that complies with the spirit and intent of the PVM District to a greater degree than would be the case without authorization of the departures.

c. The proposed alternative is consistent with the purpose and intent of the PVM District.

d. The proposed alternative, in comparison to conformance with the PVM district standards, will not have a detrimental impact on adjacent property or the surrounding neighborhood.

e. The proposed alternative is necessary and appropriate to accommodate a superior design of the proposed development.

2. The proposed development plan for a 19,313 sq. ft., 3-story building is hereby approved, subject to the following conditions:

a. The building and site improvements shall be completed substantially as shown on the plan set titled “Ada Marketplace Square Condominium – Unit 5,” (civil drawings) with the most recent revision date of February 19, 2020, “Marketplace Square – B5 Building” (architectural drawings) dated March 11, 2020, and “Marketplace Square –B5 Building (landscape drawing) dated February 20, 2020, except as modified in accordance with these conditions of approval.

b. Exterior building mounted light fixtures shall qualify as “full-cutoff” control of light emission or of a low light intensity non-glaring style, subject to approval of the Planning Department. Fixture specifications shall be submitted for approval, prior to building permit issuance.

c. Floodplain development permits shall be issued by the Michigan EGLE and Ada Township, prior to issuance of a building permit.

d. The upper floor windows on the masonry portion of the building may be modified to remove the center mullion, as shown on the rendering presented to the Commission at the April 16 Commission meeting.

Roll Call:

Yes: Jacobs, Butterfield, Burton, Carter, Easter, Heglund, Leisman

No: None

Absent: None

Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. COMMISSION MEMBER/STAFF REPORTS

Ferro stated that the Township laid off 12 employees. Easter stated she appreciates their contributions to the Township and looks forward to their return when the Stay Home/Stay Safe order is lifted.

Easter and Leisman thanked Ferro for his work in coordinating this Zoom meeting.

Carter noted that the Ada Business Association is promoting gift certificate purchases for the local restaurants and retail shops.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Bernie Velkamp stated he loves Building B5 and likes the metal clad "addition".

X. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Smith, Ada Township Clerk

rs:aw