

ALMONT TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

September 14, 2022

The regular meeting of the Almont Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Planning Commission Chairperson, Andrea Bara, at the Almont Township/Village Hall, 819 N. Main Street, Almont, Michigan 48003. Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andrea Bara, Steve Hoffa, Dennis Sweers, Kevin Vallelunga and Bryan Zender. Also present, Planner Caitlyn Habben from ROWE Professional Services and Cory Mabery, PE, of Davis Land Surveying and Engineering, PC., Ida Lloyd, Zoning Administrator

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kim Streeter, Jeremy Yarbrough and recording secretary Jenny Henige

PRESENT: 4 guests

MINUTES: MOVED BY VALLELUNGA AND SUPPORTED BY ZENDER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JULY 13, 2022 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED.

CORRESPONDENCE: Received.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No comments from the audience were received.

LATE AGENDA ITEM: Moved to Reports

Introduction: Ms. Sarah Jones came in on behalf of Mr. Lafontaine to discuss a Commercial Condominium project at 4260 Van Dyke.

Introduction: Ms. Sarah Jones came in on behalf of Mr. Lafontaine to discuss a Commercial Condominium project at 4260 Van Dyke. A lot of details still need to be addressed but the basic concept is to convert the existing suites (about 10 suites) to Commercial Condominiums and sell them as individual suites under a Condominium Association. The challenge has been trying to find a buyer due to the whole building being vacate except for one current business as it is difficult to get a loan on an empty plaza. There is also some thought being given to adding a storage building behind the current building to the west for use by tenants of the Condominium as cold storage. The size of this building is to be determined.

Mr. Mabery of Davis Land Surveying and Engineering provided some insight as to this being a common practice for facilities like this to be converted to Commercial Condominiums and there are many different uses that tenants make of these types of suites.

Ms. Habben from Rowe Professional Services provided comments regarding Almont Township Ordinances and how they may be applied to Commercial Condominiums. The property is currently zoned C3 with C3 to the North and South.

General comments and questions from members of the Planning Commission focused on getting a better appreciation of the intent of the owner and how to proceed pending formal application from the owner.

Public Hearing: SLU-22-01- Paolo Iacobacci-5648 Van Dyke – Self Storage

Public Hearing opened at 7:23 pm.

Mr. PANSERA questioned the drainage on the property if MDOT has approved and the turning lane.

Public Hearing Closed at 7:42 pm.

Mr. Mabery of Davis Land Surveying and Engineering provided comments regarding his review letter of 25 August 2022 covering the latest site plan dated 2 August 2022 relative to Zoning Ordinance No. 39. The site plan drawings are a big improvement from the initial submission but still have a number of issues that need to be addressed.

Ms. Habben from Rowe Professional Services provided comments regarding Almont Township Ordinances and her review letter dated 29 August 2022. Ms. Habben covered the SLU requirements and review standards along with the check list as well as ordinance informational requirements of Section 4.2.B and Zoning Compliance requirements identifying issues relative to the site plan dated 2 August 2022.

Ms. Habben clarified that generally the content and completeness of the site plan meeting the requirements of the Ordinances was the basis for approval of the SLU. Therefore; they are generally approved at the same time either in one or separate motions and that some items can be addressed in an administrative process.

Commissioner Bara reviewed the findings of the Almont Township Fire Chief in his review letter dated 8 September 2022. Mr. Iacobacci indicated he was in receipt of the letter and he would address the concerns with the Fire Chief.

Commissioner Zender discussed the need for the Site Plan to be clear regarding the hours of operation as the SLU approval will reflect the accuracy and intent of the owner. Mr. Iacobacci agreed that the hours currently on the site plan did not necessarily address his intent for a self-storage facility and he had a better understanding of the need for clarification and that this could be 7 days a week.

Commissioner Zender went on to discuss Section 2.4 Appearance and the need to better address the façade of the building and consideration be given to a more decorative building material in accordance with the ordinance.

Commissioner Sweers requested and received clarification as to the surrounding property zoning. Ms. Habben indicated that currently the property on the North, South and West is zoned Ag/residential with Commercial C3 to the east. Commissioner Sweers reviewed the 4 standards for which the Planning Commission must find affirmatively in Section 5.3 when approving a SLU focusing on the impact to the surrounding neighborhood.

Commissioner Sweers referred to Sections AA, BB, and CC on the site plan in comparison to how those sections were taken on the drawing of the property and how they differed. Mr. Iacobacci provided clarification that the arborvitaes would be planted on the 2.5-foot berm and that a chain link fence would also be installed. Commissioner Sweers indicated that by his calculations the arborvitaes would be about 13 feet apart and suggested that consideration be given to adding slats to the chain link fence for improved screening. Mr. Iacobacci indicated that should not be a problem.

Board Member discussion included Façade, Hours of Operation, Slated Fence Moved by Zender, supported by Bara, to Postpone SLU and Site Plan until applicant adds required information on plans.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Zender, Bara, Hoffa, Sweers, Vallelunga

No: None

Motion carried 5/0.

New Business: N/A

Old Business: PC By-Laws and Procedures – discussion ensued regarding the proposed changes to the items. Planning Commissioners agreed to read the proposed changes submitted by Commissioner Sweers and vote in October.

REPORTS:

Planner – the upcoming fall seminar training at Rowe

Engineer – VERBAL REPORT

Zoning Board of Appeals – n/a

Zoning & Building Report – Revised Application

Planning Commission General Comments - None

ADJOURNMENT: MOVED BY ZENDER, AND SUPPORTED BY VALLELUNGA, MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:37 PM.