

PLANNING COMMISSION

April 1, 2010

The City of Portage Planning Commission meeting of April 1, 2010 was called to order by Chairman Fox at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. Approximately twelve citizens were in attendance.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Cory Bailes, James Cheesebro, Miko Dargitz, Paul Welch, Jim Pearson, Rick Bosch, Bill Patterson and Chairman Thomas Fox.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None.

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Wayne Stoffer.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Michael West, Assistant City Planner and Randall Brown, City Attorney.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Planning Commission, staff and the audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Fox referred the Commission to the March 18, 2010 meeting minutes. A motion was made by Commissioner Cheesebro, seconded by Commissioner Welch, to approve the minutes as submitted as submitted. The minutes were unanimously approved.

SITE/FINAL PLANS:

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Special Land Use Permit: Portage Soccer Club (outdoor soccer facility), 8201 Cox's Drive. Mr. West summarized the staff report dated March 25, 2010 regarding the request by Portage Soccer Club to continue an outdoor soccer facility at property addressed as 8201 Cox's Drive. Mr. West stated the outdoor soccer fields are used seasonally, April through October, by the Portage Soccer Club youth program and the Pfizer co-ed adult league. Mr. West discussed the previous Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) actions beginning in 2006 that first approved and established the soccer fields and gravel parking lot at the site. Most recently, in March 2010, Mr. West indicated the ZBA granted an interpretation that seasonal soccer fields are similar to an outdoor theatre use in the I-2 district, and, also granted a variance from the off-street parking lot paving requirements. Mr. West also referred the Commission to an April 1, 2010 letter of support received from Mr. John Calnin that was included in the final agenda packet.

Mr. David Rice was present to explain and support the project. Mr. Rice provided a history of the property use as a soccer facility and the past ZBA actions regarding temporary use and parking lot paving variance. Mr. Rice also discussed the nature of the lease arrangement between the Portage Soccer Club and Pfizer. The Commission

next discussed the past ZBA actions and the role of the Planning Commission in the review of the Special Land Use Permit.

The public hearing was opened by Chairman Fox. One citizen (Mr. John Kailukaitis, 114 East Westwood, Kalamazoo, MI) spoke in support of the Special Land Use Permit application. A motion was then offered by Commissioner Welch, seconded by Commissioner Cheesebro, to close the public hearing. The motion was unanimously approved. A motion was then offered by Commissioner Pearson, seconded by Commissioner Welch, to approve the Special Land Use Permit for Portage Soccer Club (outdoor soccer facility), 8201 Cox's Drive. The motion was unanimously approved.

2. Rezoning Application #09-02, 9801 Oakland Drive – request to adjourn. Mr. West summarized the staff report dated March 25, 2010 regarding the request received by Hyland Associates, LLC to rezone the east 5.91 acres of 9810 Oakland Drive from R-1C, one family residential to R-1B, one family residential to facilitate Phase II of the Oakland Farms subdivision and provide a transition between the I-1, light industry zoning/land use along the east side of Oakland Drive and the interior land are further west. Mr. West discussed a March 25th meeting with the applicants to discuss an expanded rezoning consideration involving the existing Oakland Farms Phase I subdivision and four additional parcels (9804, 9818, 9832 and 9842 Oakland Drive). Mr. West indicated the expanded rezoning consideration was suggested to facilitate appropriate growth and development and to consider the establishment of a more coherent zoning pattern in this area of the city. Mr. West stated the applicants were supportive of the expanded rezoning consideration.

Mr. Dan Martz (Hyland Associates, LLC) was present to support the rezoning application. Mr. Martz discussed the fragmented zoning pattern in the area of the proposed rezoning and reviewed his March 8th communication that identified supporting reasons for the rezoning request. Mr. Martz stated the delay for consideration of the expanded rezoning request would not affect Hyland Associates construction schedule, however, requested the meeting be adjourned to May 6, 2010, if possible.

The public hearing was opened by Chairman Fox. One citizen (Ms. Marie Mackey, 9636 Oakland Drive) spoke in regards to the proposed rezoning. Ms. Mackey expressed concerns regarding the loss of land area and openness in this portion of the city. A motion was then made by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Welch, to adjourn Rezoning Application #09-02 to the May 6, 2010 meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

PLATS/RESIDENTIAL CONDOS:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. FY 2010-2020 Capital Improvement Program – recommendation to City Council. Chairman Fox summarized the previous Commission discussion of the FY 2010-2020 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) during the March 18th meeting and referred the Commission to a draft transmittal to City Council that was included in the agenda materials. Commissioners Dargitz and Pearson stated that issues were discussed during the March 18th meeting, however, were not referenced in the draft transmittal. Chairman Fox indicated the issues were detailed in the March 18th meeting minutes, which would be attached with the transmittal. The Commission next discussed the draft transmittal and agreed to include a sentence that would reference the issues discussed during the March 18th meeting and urge the City Council to review the meeting minutes. After additional discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Dargitz, to recommend to City Council that the FY 2010-2010 CIP be approved (first year budget, and conceptually the remaining nine out-year, planning level projections), along with the draft transmittal with the inclusion of the following sentence in paragraph three of the draft transmittal: “The Planning Commission raised several issues through review of the CIP at the March 18, 2010 meeting and the Commission urges the City Council to review the meeting minutes that are attached with this transmittal.” The motion was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Charter Township of Comstock – 5 Year Land Use Plan Update. Chairman Fox referred the Commission to the notice and draft plan document received from Comstock Township and asked if there were any specific comments the Commission had regarding this matter. A motion was then made by Commissioner Welch, seconded by Commissioner Cheesebro, to acknowledge receipt of the notice and Plan document from Comstock Township with no comments provided. The motion was unanimously approved.

2. FY 2009-2010 Planning Commission Goals and Objective Update (April 2010). Chairman Fox referred the Commission to the draft transmittal included in the agenda materials to City Council that provided the requested April 2010 Update to the Planning Commission Goals and Objectives. A motion was then made by Commissioner Cheesebro, seconded by Commissioner Bailes, to approve the transmittal regarding the FY 2009-2010 Planning Commission Goals and Objectives Update (April 2010), as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. 2010 Major Thoroughfare Plan Status Report – information only. Chairman Fox referred the Commission to the March 25, 2010 Department of Community Development staff report and 2010 Major Thoroughfare Plan Status Report. A motion was then made by Commissioner Welch, seconded by Commissioner Cheesebro, to accept the 2010 Major Thoroughfare Plan Status Report. The motion was unanimously approved.

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael K. West, AICP
Assistant City Planner