

PLANNING COMMISSION

August 1, 2013

The City of Portage Planning Commission meeting of August 1, 2013 was called to order by Chairman Welch at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of Portage City Hall, 7900 South Westnedge Avenue. Approximately 10 citizens were in attendance.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Patterson, Rick Bosch, Miko Dargitz, Wayne Stoffer, Dave Felicijan, Betty Schimmel, Henry Kerr and Paul Welch.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None.

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Allan Reiff.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Christopher Forth, Deputy Director of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Services; Michael West, Assistant City Planner and Charlie Bear, Assistant City Attorney.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chairman Welch led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Welch referred the Commission to the June 20, 2013 meeting minutes contained in the agenda packet. Commissioner Dargitz asked that the minutes be amended under City of Portage 50th Anniversary Celebration – Recognition of Portage Businesses to reflect the discussion regarding possible inclusion of the Passbook in the September edition of Portager. Mr. West indicated he did not recall the specifics of the June 20, 2013 discussion, but thought inclusion of the Passbook document in the Portager may not be possible due to logistics and costs. Mr. Forth stated he would look into the matter and recalled discussion of either an insert or a printed Passbook in the Portager. Mr. Forth indicated the June 20, 2013 minutes could be amended to include some of this discussion and he would follow-up with other city departments to see whether inclusion of the Passbook in the Portager was possible. Commissioner Dargitz indicated the subcommittee thought it was essential to include the Passbook in the Portager since the names of the participating businesses could not be included in the press release. As a compromise to not including the names of the participating businesses in the press release, Commissioner Dargitz recalled that Attorney Brown was agreeable to inclusion of the Passbook document in the Portager. After a brief discussion, a motion was offered by Commissioner Stoffer, seconded by Commissioner Bosch, to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was unanimously approved.

SITE/FINAL PLANS:

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Special Land Use Permit/Site Plan: Appletree Learning Center, 1518 and 1530 East Centre Avenue. Mr. West summarized the staff report dated July 25, 2013 regarding the request by BBI Holdings, LLC to establish an 11,645 square foot child daycare center and associated site improvements at 1518 and 1530 East Centre Avenue. Mr. West discussed the conflicting land use screening proposed along the west side of the site, between the parking lot and western property line, where abutting a single family residence and the screening proposed around the outdoor play area. Mr. West also discussed the proposed access arrangement and the applicant's commitment to provide shared/cross access to the property to the west upon its redevelopment.

Steve Witte of Nederveld (applicant's engineer) and Dan Boverhof (BBI Holdings, LLC) were present to support the applications. Mr. Witte summarized the development project and discussed parking, child drop-off, traffic flow and the outdoor play area. Mr. Witte stated the child drop-off was staggered throughout the day with the peak hour between 7:30-8:30 a.m. generating approximately 40 vehicles. Mr. Witte also indicated the outdoor play area would be utilized throughout the day, weather depending, and would involve small supervised groups of 30-40 children. Chairman Welch opened the public hearing. One citizen, Tammy Mason, 1508 East Centre Avenue, spoke in regards to the proposed child daycare center. Ms. Mason expressed concerns regarding traffic flow and volume associated with the daycare center, particularly in the mornings, and also impacts associated with daycare centers located on either side of her property. No additional citizens spoke regarding the proposed child care center. A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Stoffer, to close the public hearing. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Commission and staff discussed various aspects of the proposed development including the proximity of the two daycare centers, traffic generation, flow and peak hours associated with the daycare center and the proposed driveway location and future shared/cross access with the adjacent property to the west. Commissioner Bosch expressed concerns regarding possible congestion at the driveway and suggested widening the proposed driveway to accommodate three lanes; two egress lanes and one ingress lane. Mr. Witte stated no opposition to this request and indicated he could work with staff to revise the driveway design. After additional discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Patterson, to approve the Special Land Use Permit for Appletree Learning Center, 1518 and 1530 East Centre Avenue. The motion was unanimously approved. A motion was then made by Commissioner Bosch, seconded by Commissioner Stoffer, to approve the Site Plan for Appletree Learning Center, 1518 and 1530 East Centre Avenue subject to staff working with the applicant to widen the proposed driveway to three lanes with two egress lanes and one ingress lane. The motion was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Council Sign Committee and Planning Commission Work Group. Mr. Forth summarized the staff report dated July 25, 2013 regarding the request from City Council for three Planning Commission volunteers to participate in a work group to consider potential amendments to the Zoning Code sign regulations. Chairman Welch indicated he had made contact with potential volunteers and has asked Commissioners Schimmel, Bosch and Patterson to participate in the City Council Sign Committee work group. Mr. Forth indicated that a meeting schedule has yet to be established, but the three Commissioners would be contacted once a first meeting was scheduled.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. City of Portage 50th Anniversary Celebration – July Passbook Drawing. Commissioners Felicijan and Dargitz conducted the July Passbook drawing and Caroline Selby was selected as the winner of a \$20.00 gift car to West Lake Drive-In. Commissioner Felicijan stated the gift card could be picked up at West Lake

Drive-In. Commissioner Dargitz discussed how citizens could participate in the Passbook program and how the Passbook could be downloaded from the City web site at www.portagemi.gov. Commissioner Dargitz discussed how the Passbook program works and stated the winner of the August drawing would be announced at the first Planning Commission meeting in September.

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher T. Forth, AICP
Deputy Director of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Services