

PLANNING COMMISSION

May 7, 2020

The City of Portage Planning Commission meeting of May 7, 2020 was called to order by Chairman Corradini at 7:00 p.m. Pursuant to the "Remote Attendance Rules for Meetings" and Michigan Governor Whitmer's Executive Order 2020-21, this meeting was held remotely with Commissioners, staff, applicants and the general public participating via telephone call-in.

IN ATTENDANCE

Michael West, Senior City Planner and Randy Brown, City Attorney.

ROLL CALL

Mr. West called the roll: Meyer (yes); Pezzoli (yes); Baldwin (yes); Joshi (yes); Harrell-Page (yes); Schimmel (yes); Corradini (yes); Fries (yes); and Patterson (yes). All Commissioners present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Corradini referred the Commission to the April 16, 2020 meeting minutes contained in the agenda. A motion was made by Commissioner Fries, seconded by Commissioner Baldwin, to approve the minutes as submitted. Upon a roll call vote: Patterson (yes); Fries (yes); Joshi (yes); Corradini (yes); Schimmel (yes); Harrell-Page (yes); Baldwin (yes); Pezzoli (yes); and Myer (yes), the motion was unanimously approved 9-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Final Report: Conceptual Plan Amendment for Trade Centre Commercial Planned Development, 300-1150 Trade Centre Way. Mr. West summarized the staff report dated April 30, 2020 regarding a request by Trade Centre Holdings, LLC to amend two previously approved conceptual plans to allow construction of a new 4-story hotel building and associated site improvements on a new approximate 2-acre parcel that includes portions of 750, 850 and 950 Trade Centre Way. Mr. West stated the 30-acre tract of land is zoned CPD, commercial planned development and includes nine parcels ranging between 300-1150 Trade Centre Way. Mr. West stated the applicant was proposing to amend two previously approved conceptual plans to allow construction of a new 4-story tall hotel building. Mr. West stated the proposal involves another partnership between the developer and the City of Portage, along with an exchange of land and modification of property lines, whereby the existing city storm water basin located on the 850 Trade Centre Way parcel will be relocated to the northwest to allow construction of the new hotel building. In conjunction with the conceptual plan amendment and consistent with previous approvals within the Trade Centre CPD, Mr. West stated the applicant was also requesting a height modification and a conflicting land use screening waiver. Mr. West indicated the conceptual plan amendment, and associated height modification and conflicting land use screening waiver, were recommended for approval with the findings contained in the staff report.

Greg Dobson of American Village Builders (applicant representative) called-in to support the application and discuss the proposed new hotel project. Mr. Dobson thanked staff for all their assistance and the Planning Commission for conducting the virtual meeting. Mr. Dobson briefly summarized the proposed hotel project, the history of the Trade Centre CPD and efforts to reach out to the residential neighbors to the west and north.

The public hearing was then reconvened by Chairman Corradini. No citizens called-in to speak regarding the proposed conceptual plan amendment and new hotel project. A motion was then made by Commissioner Baldwin, seconded by Commissioner Schimmel, to close the public hearing. Upon a roll call vote: Myer (yes);

Pezzoli (yes); Baldwin (yes); Harrell-Page (yes); Schimmel (yes); Corradini (yes); Joshi (yes); Fries (yes); and Patterson (yes), the motion was unanimously approved 9-0.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Myer, to recommend to City Council that the Conceptual Plan Amendment for Trade Centre CPD, 300-1150 Trade Centre Way, be approved including the requested building height modification to allow construction of the proposed hotel building to a height up to 65-feet and the requested screening waiver. The motion included a finding that consistent with Section 42-414.G of the Zoning Code and based on information provided by the applicant: 1) strict adherence of the height and screening requirements would be inconsistent with the planned development as a whole; 2) the objectives of the requirements can be satisfactorily met without strict adherence; 3) the requested height modification and screening waiver will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to other surrounding properties; and 4) because of the particulars of the development plan it would be unreasonable to require strict adherence to these requirements. Upon a roll call vote: Schimmel (yes); Corradini (yes); Joshi (yes); Fries (yes); Patterson (yes); Harrell-Page (yes); Baldwin (yes); Pezzoli (yes); and Myer (yes), the motion was unanimously approved 9-0.

SITE/FINAL PLANS

1. **Specific Plan: Trade Centre Hotel, 850 Trade Centre Way.** Mr. West summarized the April 30, 2020 staff report regarding a request by Trade Centre Holdings, LLC to construct a new 4-story, 62,318 square foot hotel building and associated site improvements on a new approximate 2-acre parcel at 850 Trade Centre Way. Mr. West stated the applicant has requested concurrent review of the conceptual plan amendment and specific plan in order to expedite the development review process and meet construction deadlines. Mr. West next discussed the access arrangement and the removal of the Trade Centre Way cul-de-sac bulb, the relocation and reconstruction of the combined city/private storm water system, and proposed landscaping and outdoor lighting at the site. Mr. West stated the specific plan was recommended for approval subject to the three conditions identified in the staff report.

Greg Dobson of American Village Builders (applicant representative) called-in to support the application and discuss the proposed new hotel project. The Commission, Mr. Dobson and Mr. West next discussed various aspects of the proposed hotel project including the distance measurement between the hotel building and the nearest residence to the north, the relocation of the MDOT storm water box culvert and economic impacts the virus may have on the hotel project.

A motion was made by Commissioner Myer, seconded by Commissioner Harrell-Page, to approve the Specific Plan for Trade Centre Hotel, 850 Trade Centre Way, subject to the following conditions: 1) City Council review and approval of the Conceptual Plan Amendment; 2) Review and approval of the storm water basin controlled rate discharge to the adjacent wetland area and Portage Creek by the Michigan Department of Environment Great Lakes & Energy; and 3) Finalization of engineering related details associated with the storm water system and public water main extension. Upon a roll call vote: Myer (yes); Pezzoli (yes); Baldwin (yes); Harrell-Page (yes); Schimmel (yes); Corradini (yes); Joshi (yes); Fries (yes); and Patterson (yes), the motion was unanimously approved 9-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS/COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Joshi thanked the City Council for pursuing an ordinance that will prohibit the clear cutting of trees with the site development proposals.

Commissioner Baldwin stated it was National Nurse's Week and also the Year of the Nurse and encouraged people to thank nurses that they may know for their service during this national health crisis.

Chairman Corradini indicated that he worked the recent elections and wanted to thank the City Clerk (Erica Eklov) and Deputy City Manager (Adam Herringa), along with the many volunteers, for all their hard work during these challenging times.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Respectfully submitted,



Michael West, AICP
Senior City Planner