



Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission

Tuesday May 24, 2016

7:00 p.m.

1307 Cloquet Ave, Cloquet, MN 55720

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Wilkinson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Attending: Planning Commission members: Michael Haubner, Bryan Bosto, Chuck Buscher, John Sanders and Uriah Wilkinson; City: Al Cottingham, Holly Butcher and Attorney Helwig.

Absent: Commission members: Jesse Berglund and Kelly Johnson.

Others Present: Gary Gatewood, David Johnson, Ross Peterson, Beth Kersting-Peterson, Ken Martin, Christ Medich, Patricia Johnson, Charlene Foss, Rick Breuer, Ken Scarbrough, Dan and Katie Danielson, Russ Smith, Duane Buytaert, Lara Wilkinson, Thomas and Bonnie Kloskowski, Clarence Badger John Badger, Theodore Lammi, Diana Dyste, Paul Keenan and Kelly Zink.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

None.

AGENDA ITEMS

May 10, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Chairperson Wilkinson asked for any corrections or additions.

Motion: Commissioner Bosto made a motion to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes from May 10, 2016, Commissioner Sanders seconded. (Motion was approved 5-0).

Zoning Case 16-08: Preliminary Site Plan

Chairperson Wilkinson reviewed the meeting procedures and format for Zoning Case 16-08 Preliminary Site Plan. He asked Mr. Cottingham to provide an overview of the application. Mr. Cottingham noted that Community Development Director Butcher would present an overview of the ISD 94 Request for Proposal (RFP) that was gone through that got us where we are today, Ms. Diana Dyste and Paul Keenan representing Sherman Associates would give a power point presentation about the company and the proposal before you, then City Attorney Helwig will discuss some of the legal land use aspects of the proposal.

Ms. Butcher gave a presentation on how the ISD 94 RFP process began looking at various options for the possible repurposing of the Cloquet Middle School. The RFP was sent out to numerous companies of which two showed interest in submitting a proposal for the site. When the submittal deadline was reached only one proposal was submitted by Sherman Associates.



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There were a number of meetings with the School Board and the public showing the proposal and receiving input on it.

Mr. Keenan provided a history of Sherman Associates, founded over 35 years ago by George Sherman and some of the projects they have done. He noted they develop, own and manage for the long term and have over \$2 Billion in development experience; have over 400 employees, 60 properties and over 6,000 apartment units.

Ms. Dyste provided an overview of the project noting they had reduced the number of units from 70 to 50 – one, two and three bedroom units; have 102 parking spaces; and, have added green space with a play area all based on the discussions and comments that were received at the last Planning Commission meeting.

Attorney Helwig noted the proposal before the Planning Commission was for a sketch plan and the Commission was being asked to provide feedback to the developer on the proposal. It really was not a formal approval or denial at this time. If this project moves forward then formal applications will have to be submitted that will require approvals or denials of the request. He noted the formal site plan would not be reviewed by the Planning Commission unless a variance to the regulations was sought.

Chairperson Wilkinson then opened to public comment reminding people to keep discussions to new matters.

Ross Peterson, 216 3rd Street stated the existing parking is misrepresented and there are only 35 existing spaces.

Ted Lammi, 370 Freeman Road stated this needs to be approved, they have reduced the number of units, provided parking and green space. The community needs this type of housing.

Gary Gatewood, 310 4th Street noted that fewer apartments doesn't mean less people. He was concerned with over parking in the neighborhood.

Ken Scarbrough, Cloquet Superintendent noted the short term benefit is saving a demo cost of \$1.5 million, they are committed to the city and the needs for this type of housing, the historical significant to the area. He appreciates other opinions that have been given.

Beth Peterson, 216 3rd Street stated housing like this needs to be spread out and not concentrated.

Rick Breuer, Cloquet Memorial Hospital Administrator noted that the community needs this type of housing, the project needs to be able to move forward and there will be plenty of future opportunities for more comments.



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John Badger, 1341 Valley View Drive stated if it meets the requirements then it should move on, it makes good sense to reuse the building and he is a tax payer in the community and it makes sense.

Clarence Badger, 1518 Moorhead Road believes there are many opportunities for the building, he had been in Owatonna and saw how they had converted an older building into a business incubator. He felt that we needed both housing and businesses in the community.

Kelly Zink, Cloquet Area Chamber noted the project meets the requirements and should move on, there is a need for workforce housing, the historical building should be maintained, will be able to keep the theatre in the building, businesses are looking for housing and good school districts and we do need additional housing.

Chairperson Wilkinson ended the public comment portion of the meeting.

Community Development Director Butcher noted that the developer has outreached to the YMCA Regional Office but there is no interest at this time related to this building. She stated the building in its entirety is too large to be only a business incubator and there are two active already in Duluth. Perhaps a private market office incubator but there is significant space in this building close to 180,000 square feet.

Chairperson Wilkinson inquired if they would be using Tax Increment Financing (TIF).

Community Development Director Butcher stated at this time they did not know for sure it would depend on all other financing options.

Commissioner Haubner stated this was just advisory at this time according to the attorney. They provided advise to the developer at the last meeting and they listened to this and revised their plan to meet the requirements.

Commissioner Sanders stated as mentioned certain things are advisory and they really don't have criteria to deny. They will need to rezone the property in the future and it is hard at this time to deny a sketch plan at this time.

Chairperson Wilkinson noted they did a fine job in listening to the Commission and public by reducing the units and changing other things that were identified by different people.

Commissioner Bosto thanked the developer for listening to everyone at the last meeting and revising things based on those comments and coming back so quickly.



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Motion: Commissioner Sanders made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 16-08 A, A Resolution Recommending Approval of the Preliminary Site Plan in the PI – Public/Institutional District for Sherman Associates Development LLC, subject to the property being rezoned, Commissioner Bosto seconded. (Roll Call, Motion was approved 5-0).

Mr. Cottingham noted that this recommendation would be forwarded to the City Council for their meeting on June 7th.

Commissioner’s Questions/Comment

Chairperson Wilkinson asked Mr. Cottingham for an update on upcoming meetings. Mr. Cottingham noted at this time he did not have anything specific for the June 14th meeting. He was working on the concerns raised by Commissioner Sanders at the last meeting and uses in the HI – Heavy Industry District.

Next Meeting

June 14, 2016

Meeting adjourned 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Al Cottingham, City Planner/Zoning Administrator