

CITY OF GRAND HAVEN  
GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

June 8, 2021

A regular meeting of the Grand Haven Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Bill Ellingboe at 7:01 p.m. at the Grand Haven Community Center. On roll call, the following members were:

Present: Collin Beighley, Ryan Galligan, Robert Grimes, Kevin McLaughlin, Tamera Owens, Kirsten Runschke, David Skelly, Mike Westbrook, Chair Bill Ellingboe

Absent: none

Also present was Jennifer Howland, Community Development Manager

Ellingboe informed the commissioners that we would hold officer elections towards the end of the agenda.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Runschke, seconded by Grimes, to approve the May 11, 2021 and May 18, 2021 minutes was approved unanimously by voice vote.

**Call to Audience – First Opportunity** *No comments*

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**Case 21-23: An application for an amendment to the Special Land Use Permit for proposed accessory uses (training center and membership-based food center) to the existing Sheltered Housing Facility located at 1615 South DeSpelder Street (parcel #70-03-28-376-010).**

David TenCate represented Love In Action. He provided an overview of the proposed programming addition, which will include coaching services and food services. He emphasized it is not a store or retail in the technical sense; it will be a food club where there is no exchange of money for food. Membership will be based on income eligibility. The facility today already provides case management, coaching, training, and giving of food. They considered a text amendment and rezoning but that was more than what was being asked for and would impact a larger area. It's a good accessory use and won't change the neighborhood or public demand for services.

Josh Bytwerk, LIA Director, reviewed LIA programs. This is an addition that will serve sheltered housing clients and a few others on top of that. Coaching is offered at Hope House and Harbor Hall. Now, coaching will be available for others. There is 7000 sq. ft. on the north end of the building available. Only about 1100 sq. ft. will be used for the market; the rest will be used for education and coaching.

Chair Ellingboe opened the public hearing. There were no comments and no correspondence was received.

Motion by Runschke, seconded by Grimes, to close the public hearing carried unanimously by voice vote.

At Ellingboe's request, Howland explained what an accessory use is and emphasized the importance of not being retail to protect the neighborhood.

At Skelly's request, Bytwerk stated that there will be 10 to 25 clients per day. They do not want to go beyond that, but rather focus on volunteerism and keeping costs minimal.

Galligan stated that he appreciates them not asking the city to rezone the property. The proposed use can be operated without negative impacts to the neighborhood. Westbrook and McLaughlin agreed.

Per Beighley's request, the applicant stated that they intend to move the existing ground sign further north to center on the property and add a small wall sign like those on the rest of the building. Howland confirmed that wall signage was allowed.

Grimes questioned whether the proposed hours of operation would need to be expanded to accommodate families that would come during later hours. Bytwerk said that they have found that being open later serves fewer clients.

Owens, Runschke, and Ellingboe supported the request as proposed.

Motion by Grimes, seconded by McLaughlin, to APPROVE Case Number 21-23, an application for a Special Land Use Permit for proposed accessory uses (training center and membership-based food center) to the existing Sheltered Housing Facility located at 1615 South DeSpelder Street (parcel #70-03-28-376-010), subject to the following condition(s):

1. Hours of operation for Harbor of Hope Center will be Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 10am-5pm; Thursday 10am-7pm, and Saturday 10am-12pm.
2. Signage will be limited to what is allowable per city standards.

The motion carried unanimously on roll call vote.

**Case 21-25: A proposed amendment to the site plan at Lucy's Market, 133 Columbus Avenue, related to the proposed dumpster enclosure (parcel #70-03-20-403-012).**  
Howland introduced the case.

Joe Bockheim, property owner, explained his request to enclose the dumpster with the same fencing that will surround the outdoor dining area. He is asking for a waiver because pricing is high and he is having trouble scheduling the construction to coincide with the rest of the project. The fencing around the patio is 62 inches tall right now, but they may take a board down to make it shorter. The area surrounding the dumpster will be 6 feet tall.

Runschke had no issues with the proposed materials changing but the reason to approve it should not be due to cost. Everyone is dealing with higher costs.

Per Grimes' request, Howland stated that the dumpster enclosure is required, and that the owner must maintain the enclosure as long as there is a dumpster on the property. The outdoor dining

expansion triggered the requirement to have a dumpster enclosure.

In response to a concern raised by Beighley, Bockheim stated that a concrete pad and bollards are in place to protect the fencing from the garbage truck.

McLaughlin, Owens, and Westbrook had no issues with the request. Galligan was concerned about setting a precedent. Howland stated that the reasons for granting this waiver should be particular to this property.

Per Skelly's request, Bockheim confirmed the proposed dimensions will be 8 feet 4 inches wide, 7 feet deep, and 6 feet tall. He will add additional protection (bollards) to protect his fence from garbage trucks.

Ellingboe was comfortable with the proposed fence enclosure, as long as it is maintained. He suggested that the motion include a reference to being consistent with the approved plan and fencing materials surrounding the site. Howland agreed that would be appropriate and pointed out that the masonry dumpster enclosure would not have been visible from the street due to other fencing surrounding the site.

Motion by Owens, seconded by McLaughlin, to APPROVE Case Number 21-25, a request for an amendment to the site plan at Lucy's Market, 133 Columbus Avenue, parcel #70-03-20-403-012, to allow the dumpster enclosure materials to match the screening used on the rest of the site, subject to the following:

1. The dumpster enclosure may be constructed of a maximum 6-foot-tall wood privacy fence as proposed.

The motion carried unanimously on roll call vote.

**Case 21-26: A proposed minor amendment to the final development plan for Peerless Flats Planned Development related to reducing the height and changing the shape of Building C, reducing the size of the community building, and making associated changes to the parking lot layout.**

Howland introduced the case.

Jake McGraw, River Caddis Development, reviewed the proposed changes and how they benefit the project: increased green space, especially across from the farmer's market and reduced height of building C to reduce visual disruption to neighbors.

Ellingboe asked commissioners to verify it is a minor amendment rather than a major amendment.

Grimes stated that it was a major amendment because the garage will be eliminated, creating an open parking lot.

Pete Lazdins, Progressive AE, stated that the garage that was originally planned to be north of building H was large enough for 5 to 6 cars. Eliminating the garage created a more functional dog park and more green space. Green space around building C is also increased, creating a longer sight line at that busy intersection.

Grimes said the garages maintained a condo-type feel to the development. Now feels cheaper and more apartment-focused. Lazdins offered that carports will be provided in some areas to provide verticality to the parking lot. Grimes also stated that Building C was the bigger, nicer one with the views and higher rents. Now making Building C and D identical will make it feel like just apartments.

Lazdins stated that Building C and D were originally to have similar facades and now will still look very similar. That is intentional for a consistent look and feel.

Runschke and Owens agreed with Grimes; it changes the feel of the northwest corner.

Howland reviewed the zoning ordinance sections that describe a minor amendment when related to a final development plan.

McLaughlin and Westbrook stated that the proposed changes were minor.

Galligan asked if this was the same process as the Grand Landing landscaping. Howland stated that Grand Landing was an approved, developed PD so all changes were considered major.

Skelly and Grimes asked about apartments vs. condos. Lazdins stated that they would all be apartments. Howland stated that the zoning ordinance doesn't make a distinction between owner-occupied and long term rented dwellings. Ellingboe reinforced that the Planning Commission cannot make that distinction in their decision-making.

Howland explained her thought process when evaluating the proposed changes initially and how she determined it was likely a minor amendment. The biggest building, which was criticized by the community for being too tall was now shorter and pulled away from the corner. There was not much discussion originally about the community building, and there were no proposed reductions in amenities. There was originally considerable discussion about the number of parking spaces rather than garages vs no garages.

Motion by McLaughlin, seconded by Westbrook that the proposed changes are minor, passed on roll call vote: Ayes: Owens, Skelly, Galligan, McLaughlin, Westbrook, Beighley, Ellingboe. Nays: Grimes, Runschke.

Per Skelly's request, Howland explained that the site plan had been updated since the staff memo was published. The changes related to turning two parking lot islands into striped islands to accommodate the fire apparatus. There would be no loss of parking. The ratio is 1.48 parking spaces to 1 dwelling unit.

Galligan stated that he likes the original design of building C but is fine with the changes. Westbrook, McLaughlin, and Beighley supported the amendment as proposed. Owens said she likes the new layout of Building C.

Per Grimes' request, the applicant stated that they decreased the overall size of Building C but added 2 units. The shape of the building was inefficient and there were originally larger units on the top floor. Lazdins also clarified that the design comparison table on the plans is accurate.

Runschke and Ellingboe had no additional comments.

Motion by McLaughlin, seconded by Galligan, to APPROVE Case Number 21-25, Case 21-25, a minor amendment to the final development plan for Peerless Flats Planned Development, located on the property commonly referred to as the Stanco property (parcel #70-03-20-278-005, -006, -015, and 70-03-20-279-008, -017, -019, -020, -023, -026), based on the information submitted for review, and subject to the following conditions:

1. Cladding materials must meet the standards set by the approved PD.
2. Site changes are subject to approval by the Public Works Director and Fire Marshal.

The motion passed on roll call vote: Ayes: Owens, Skelly, Galligan, McLaughlin, Westbrook, Beighley, Ellingboe. Nays: Grimes, Runschke.

**Case 21-17: The Planning Commission will continue its discussion of a proposed text amendment related to window ratios in the Central Business District and begin discussing minimum transparency requirements in nonresidential zoning districts.**

Denny Dryer, applicant, reviewed the information he prepared since the last meeting, which included a drawing of a typical two-story commercial building, an example of an existing building downtown, and the drawings for a new building at 1021 Jackson Ave. Dryer stated that it is difficult to meet the transparency standards because they don't consider the use of the building or energy codes. Meeting the minimum transparency requirement on the back of buildings is challenging, and even more so on upper floors. He suggested that the commissioners consider no minimum on upper floors, and adjust the main level downward to focus on the pedestrian level and energy code requirements. He made a distinction between downtown and Centertown being pedestrian-oriented and all others being vehicle-oriented. Having so much glass can also make it difficult to provide a base to the building design, and sometimes ceiling heights get dropped simply to meet the transparency standard.

Howland stated that a recent issue of Michigan Planner had an article on pedestrian scale design, and the article suggested a 60% minimum transparency standard.

Runschke said that the energy code is very challenging to meet with so much glass. Transparency needs to be reduced, but maybe not as far down as 40%.

Dryer emphasized that transparency should not govern proportion of a building; solid walls are also needed. He also was concerned about city landscaping requirements screening the building over time, making transparency less impactful.

Grimes was concerned that the Planning Commission has limited authority to require good design, and if a non-architect is proposing a project, it could look worse.

Dryer would like to see the focus on proportionality rather than prescriptive numbers. He also said that commercial buildings require an architect per building code.

Runschke said the existing text calls for looking at the rhythm of existing buildings in the neighborhood for context.

Ellingboe would like to review the Michigan Planner article and seek MSDDA input.

Runschke suggested that staff review the Grand Rapids ordinance for transparency. She also supports the proposed text amendment related to proportion shown in the staff report.

Motion by Runschke, seconded by Skelly to set the public hearing for the proportion text amendment in the CB District carried unanimously by voice vote.

### **Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison Report**

McLaughlin reviewed two cases heard by the ZBA in May.

### **Community Development Manager's Report**

Howland expressed her appreciation for Bill and Kirsten's dedication to the Planning Commission, as this was their last meeting; other commissioners echoed her comments.

### **Election of Officers**

Motion by Skelly, seconded by Grimes, to elect McLaughlin as chair, Robert Grimes as vice chair, and Westbrook as secretary carried unanimously by voice vote. The appointment of the ZBA Liaison will take place at the July meeting.

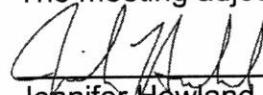
### **Call to Audience – Second Opportunity**

Bob Monetza, 945 Washington Ave, thanked the commissioners for all the work they do. Bill and Kirsten have been a valuable resource to the Planning Commission and City. He looks forward to them serving on another board in the future.

Mike Dora, 501 Friant St, recognized Bill and Kirsten's devotion of time and energy to the Planning Commission. Their gained and shared knowledge will be missed. Our city boards and commissions members are very valuable and appreciated.

### **Adjournment:**

Motion by Grimes, seconded by Beighley, to adjourn was unanimously approved by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.



Jennifer Howland  
Community Development Manager