

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE OAK PARK PLAN COMMISSION
VILLAGE HALL- COUNCIL CHAMBER
September 1, 2016
7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair David Mann; Commissioners Lawrence Brozek, Jeremy Burton, Mark Gartland, JoBeth Halpin and Greg Marsey

EXCUSED: Commissioners Doug Gilbert, Kristin Nordman and Monica Sanders

ALSO PRESENT: Craig Failor, Village Planner; Jacob Karaca, Attorney; Arista Strungys and Chris Jennette, Camiros Ltd

Roll Call

Chair Mann called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. Roll was called. A quorum was present.

Non-Agenda Public Comment

None.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Marsey motioned to approve the minutes from July 7, 2016. Commissioner Brozek seconded. A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Hearing(s)

None.

Other Business

Zoning Ordinance Revision

Mr. Failor gave an overview of the process completed so far.

Chair Mann asked for public comments.

Ms. Judith Alexander, representing the North Avenue District, said their group has provided comments for North Avenue. She asked for another look at some of the group's suggestions that were not agreed upon previously, especially increasing the allowed height to 65 feet. She said this would help attract residential development. She asked that live/work residences be allowed without a special use permit. She said these would provide vitality to the district. She added that reducing impermeable surfaces to help reduce flooding was a good recommendation.

Commissioner Brozek said he supported a higher height limit for North Avenue.

Commissioner Marsey said he was a member of the North Avenue organization and would not add to any discussion of the area as it was a possible conflict; he clarified he did not have a financial stake with the group or area and it was a volunteer position.

Ms. Arista Strungys, from Camiros Ltd, gave an overview of what would be reviewed tonight. Mr. Chris Jennette reviewed the Zoning Map and highlighted any significant changes. Chair Mann asked about the public land use designation being applied to private schools as 'public land' typically signifies public schools rather than private schools. Ms. Strungys clarified that the name applied to public use rather than ownership or taxing bodies; also, smaller private schools were still permitted uses within districts even if they weren't captured on the zoning map. She suggested it was typically called an institutional district and

that might be less confusing. The new zoning would require some oversight should the institutions want to expand. Commissioner Gartland asked why some schools were included and others not. Ms. Strungys said they only included the more significant private schools. Chair Mann suggested just including the school rather than other buildings like a parsonage or church, if it was nearby. Commissioner Brozek suggested changing the name to institutional. Mr. Failor said changing to institutional might pick up churches into the district, as traditionally those were considered institutional; he suggested excluding the churches from the zone. Commissioners discussed the various private schools that were not included on the map. Commissioner Halpin suggested leaving private schools out of the district. Ms. Strungys said something to consider was a situation like Fenwick, which has a large campus and would be designated under that specific zoning district. Mr. Failor suggested using size as criteria to classify. Commissioner Marsey asked what the benefit to having this zoning district was. Ms. Strungys said it would protect the use should a school close; it would need to come for a rezoning and the village would get some control over what would be appropriate there. Commissioners discussed whether all private schools should be included and what standards should be used if not. Ms. Strungys suggested using a lot size and clarifying in the purpose statement that it was only the larger schools. Commissioners suggested changing the name to institutional district.

Chair Mann asked about open space district designations and if that applied to only Park District properties. Ms. Strungys clarified that open space would be any open space used by the public, including fields owned by schools.

Chair Mann asked commissioners to notify staff if there were any small errors or details that needed to be changed on the zoning map.

Chair Mann moved to the comments and responses compiled by the consultants from the public open houses. Ms. Strungys highlighted items that needed direction from the commissioners. Topics generating discussion included:

- Eliminating parking maximums for multi-family developments within proximity of transit locations: Commissioner Marsey said he would be in favor of eliminating this as demand exists for parking. Chair Mann said a compromise proposed to eliminate if near the parking structures made sense. Commissioner Burton was troubled by moving parking to a village-owned structure but agreed with a maximum of possibly 2 spaces. Ms. Strungys said it was in line with transit-oriented principles already in place in the village. Mr. Jennette suggested 1.5 spaces per unit. A short discussion ensued with commissioners agreeing to 1.5 spaces in proximity to a village-owned parking structure.
- Nonconforming Accessory Structures can these be rebuilt as before if they are destroyed or torn down from disrepair: Commissioners agreed this should be allowed in cases where an act of God destroys the structure. The building's foundation would need to be in the same location and stay the same size as before.
- Flooding issues in the North East Residential Neighborhoods, reducing the amount of impermeable surface permitted: Ms. Strungys said the current requirement was 60%. Commissioner Marsey suggested the Village should incentivize replacing driveways and pavement with permeable surfaces through a program to help reduce flooding for the area, rather than through the zoning code. Commissioners agreed.
- Remove retail use restrictions in the Neighborhood Commercial District along South Oak Park Avenue: Ms. Strungys said they were in agreement with this suggestion. Commissioners agreed.
- Remove Downtown District Use restrictions: Ms. Strungys presented suggestions from business districts to tweak or clarify some of the uses. Commissioners debated the inclusion of interior design studios under personal services. Ms. Strungys suggested allowing office uses in the first 50 feet as long as there was a retail component to the office. Mr. Failor suggested limiting to design studio with a retail component. Commissioners suggested changing "copy shop" to "business service center".

- Two-Family Homes in R-2 and R-3: Commissioners agreed that keeping two-family homes as a nonconforming use was appropriate.
- North Avenue Height increase requested from 45' to 65': Camiros recommended a compromise of 55'. Commissioner Brozek suggested going to 65'. Commissioner Burton worried about an increase so close to residential properties. Mr. Failor suggested commissioners revisit the issue after the North Avenue plan and economic incentive study were completed. Commissioners agreed to keep the height at 45'.

Commissioners took a five minute break. Roll was called and a quorum was present. Discussion continued on the following:

- Permitting all dwelling types in the North Avenue district, including live/work dwellings: Commissioners agreed this would be appropriate.
- Commissioner Brozek suggested consolidating zoning districts into generic names and more typical zoning districts rather than location names like Roosevelt Road, Hemingway, etc. Ms. Strungys explained that even with changing names the zoning districts would need to be separate as they were unique. She said, in addition, stakeholders were clear that place names were important to them and eliminating those would be a policy decision. Commissioners agreed to keep the suggestions in place.
- Commissioner Halpin suggested St. Catherine-St. Lucy School should be added back to the zoning map for public use/institutional use if the size requirements were appropriate.

Mr. Failor said the next step would be a public presentation of the revised draft and then a public hearing before the Plan Commission. Mr. Failor anticipated the hearing in October and a possible Planned Development hearing in November.

Adjournment

Commissioner Burton moved to adjourn. Commissioner Halpin seconded. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Angela Schell,
Recording Secretary