

**City of South Lyon
Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 12, 2023**

Approved: _____

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Scott Lanam at 7:02 p.m.

Roll Call: Commissioner Steve Mosier
 Commissioner Tyler Finnegan
 Commissioner Erin Kopkowski
 Commissioner Kory Frost
 Commissioner Michael Joseph
 Chair Scott Lanam, Present, South Lyon, Michigan

Planning Commission has one vacancy.

Also in attendance: Hannah Smith – CIB Planning
 Kelly McIntyre – CIB Planning

Motion to approve Agenda, as amended

Motion by Mosier, Second by Frost

Voice Vote: Ayes: Unanimous
 Nays: None

Motion Approved

Motion to approve Minutes (9-8-2022)

Motion by Joseph, Second by Kopkowski

Voice Vote: Ayes: Unanimous
 Nays: None

Motion Approved

Public Comments (Non-Agenda Items): None

New Business:

- a. **Site Plan Review: SPR#23-01 Ivy Townhomes, located at vacant parcel on south side of 11 Mile (parcel #21-19-201-012). The applicant is seeking site plan approval for the**

development of a total of 25 townhomes in three two-story buildings. The property identification number is #21-19-201-012.

Hannah Smith, CIB Planning

Smith states that they have completed their review of the site plan to construct 25 townhomes on a vacant parcel on the south side of 11 Mile between Lafayette and Dixboro, east of Colonial Acres. The proposed plan includes three buildings, each two stories, total 25 attached single-family units. One building has seven units, one with eight, one with ten. The plan also includes an interior street, resident and visitor parking, landscaping and recreation areas, and other improvements. The property is zoned RM-1, Multiple-Family Residential, within which townhomes are a permitted use.

Smith added that these are revised plans and the applicants have been working over the last few months to get the plan in line with City standards. The plan generally meets requirements, however, some additional information is needed.

Smith discusses the setbacks. The 10' parking setback is not met where parking is adjacent to Alexandria Court in Colonial Acres. The applicant is proposing a breakaway emergency gate there. Smith adds that the parking requirements are met and visitor spots are provided. She adds that striping details for parking spaces are needed.

Smith goes on to discuss the landscaping, which generally meets requirements. The applicant is proposing to substitute some of the greenbelt canopy trees with evergreen trees, which requires Planning Commission approval. Smith says the intent of the ordinance is met and the trees are acceptable. Additional trees are beyond the required amount and are provided throughout the site. Buffer landscaping is not required, but the applicant is proposing fencing along the south property line. It's recommended that a fence also be provided on the west property line.

Smith states that an emergency vehicle turn around area will be striped and have no parking signs to ensure fire truck access.

Smith discusses the building elevations and renderings provided and that there is further clarification needed. Elevations are only provided for one building and the applicant should confirm that all buildings have the same design and materials. The applicant needs to clarify the material of the roof above the doorways. The renderings show neutral colors that meet the ordinance, but specific color information is required. Floor plans are provided and all units appear to be 3-bedroom with similar layouts, but the applicant needs to clarify.

Smith says that sidewalks are provided and residential recreation areas are provided with two pocket parks, benches, and pedestrian pathways. The applicant needs to clarify if the pathways are paved.

Smith states that individual air conditioning units are shown but screening details are needed. The lighting plan meets standards but the applicant needs to provide the height of the pole lights.

Smith advises that a number of clarification items or additional information is needed from the applicant. These are items that can be addressed tonight and provided within supplemental materials to the Planning Commission or administratively.

Smith states that the Engineering and Fire Department reviews had no big issues. Smith advises that based on the comments, they recommend that the site plan for Ivy Townhomes be approved, subject to the following conditions:

1. Planning Commission approval of a waiver to allow 5-foot parking setback adjacent to Alexandria Court, where 10 feet is required;
2. Planning Commission approval of a waiver for substitution of evergreen trees for required canopy trees in greenbelt landscaping;
3. Additional information where requested be provided by the applicant in supplemental materials;
4. Review and approval from all applicable consultants, departments and agencies.

Allan Pruss, Monument Engineering Group Associates, 298 Veterans Drive, Fowlerville, MI Pruss states that they've been working with the Planners for a few months now. They don't have any issues with any of the comments from the Planners and have worked with the Engineers over several years in different communities. He states that Mr. Veri has samples of building materials. Pruss adds that they do have room to move the parking over to meet the 10' setback if the Commission does not want to grant the waiver.

Chair Lanam inquires if the applicant has had discussions with Colonial Acres to connecting to Alexandria Court. Pruss states they have not discussed with Colonial Acres based on past experiences with opposition to the Thomasville site. They are willing to have that conversation. Commissioner Finnegan asks to repeat the question and Chair Lanam clarifies. He states that the policy of the City and nation-wide is to create cross connections where possible to minimize left turns out on main roads. Pruss states that right now it's set up for emergency access, they are willing to pave to the property line if the City wants that. Chair Lanam asks if there is pavement to the property line on the Colonial Acres side and Pruss confirms there is not. Chair Lanam states that shifting the parking to meet the setback likely will change the radiuses or create the need for a waiver elsewhere. He states the Commission would like to see that connected at some point, so the waiver is a moot point in that sense.

Chair Lanam asks the purpose of the evergreen trees rather than canopy trees in the greenbelt. Pruss states that it is for more screening. Commissioner Frost asks that it is mostly evergreen trees along Eleven Mile in the area, correct? Pruss confirms.

There is some discussion about the elevations and renderings. Danny Veri, Livonia Builders, 4902 Dewitt Suite 101, Canton, MI 48188, stated that the owner wanted to have the stone as shown on the elevations. He stated that it will be a metal roof on the porch as shown on the rendering, and the color will be exactly what is shown on rendering. The stone will be a dark gray to match, light gray siding, black windows. Chair Lanam asks the proposed dimension of the stone that will be included. Veri says it will be about three feet. Veri states that he will get revised elevations, including the proposed stone, to the Planners.

Commissioner Joseph asks if vertical siding will be used on the gable on the end. Veri confirms it will be as shown on the elevations. Chair Lanam notes that there are some inconsistencies between the elevations and renderings.

Chair Lanam states that traditionally siding is not approved all the way to the ground. Veri states that there is no issue in taking the 3-foot stone around the back of the building. Veri explains that the floor plans provided for the 7-unit building are the exact same building just extrapolated for the 8-unit and 10-unit buildings.

Commissioner Joseph asks if decks are proposed. Veri states that just concrete slabs are proposed. They are not proposing landscaping lighting. There will be garage lights on a photo cell so they will all turn on at night and off in the morning. Veri confirmed that the AC units will have bushes around them as screening.

Commissioner Joseph asked Veri to confirm the color scheme. Veri states that it will be light gray with white trim, black roof, black frame windows, and dark gray stone.

Commissioner Kopkowski asks if the units are proposed to be rentals, and Veri confirms. Commissioner Kopkowski asks what the price point of the rental is. Veri states close to \$2,000.

Commissioner Kopkowski expresses concerns about the rear elevation. She asks about the break in the center and if it is done with materials or with the building. Veri explains that it is to give it some dimension and confirms it is about a 2-foot step and the 10-unit building would have a second step. Commissioner Kopkowski states that it doesn't make a huge difference and it is a big box on the back. She thinks the back needs more life to it. There is some discussion about the stone being added to the back of the building. Veri confirms it will be three (3) feet up from the bottom, the same as the other sides of the building.

Commissioner Kopkowski further expresses concern about the façade. She says she thinks it can look better and is not impressed. Even with the three-foot porches on the front, it is a rectangle. She states that even with change in materials and elevations, there is not a lot of life to it. She explains that that area is already a mish-mash and this is not adding anything to the area.

Commissioner Kopkowski states she wants to compliment the applicant for having the plan within a lot of our guidelines. She states that is a pet peeve of hers when developers ask for a lot of waivers. She appreciates that it came to the Planning Commission with a lot of that already taken care of. Veri states that they've worked on it a lot.

Commissioner Finnegan states that he agrees with Commissioner Kopkowski that that corridor is a hodgepodge. He states that the bigger issue is that they will look good today, but what is to ensure that they will look in five, ten, twenty years or end up another rundown building along that corridor. Veri states that he thinks it's a different product than what is there right now and the amount of money going into it – it is an expensive project. Commissioner Finnegan expresses that he thinks they won't get \$2,000 dollars for it and will need to bring the price down, since it's not a nice area to look at out the window. Veri explains an example of another project they've done next to a very high-crime area and people expressed a lot of concern; however, it's been 100% full and has a waiting list.

Chair Lanam states that the Commission's vote is not based on what we think, it is based on the standards. Planner McIntyre reminds the Planning Commission that something cannot be evaluated as to whether it's a rental or for sale.

Commissioner Kopkowski states that a lot of corrections are needed. Planner Smith noted that some things were mislabeled on the plans. Veri states that they are preliminary plans, and the Commission clarified that the plans are done as combined preliminary and final.

Commissioner Kopkowski asks if all the units are the same size. Veri clarifies that they are – same layout and floor plan, except that the end units have extra windows.

Commissioner Mosier says that he thinks the plans will be good with the changes that the applicant has agreed to.

Commissioner Frost asks how far out the back patio area will go. Veri states that they are usually about 8x10, enough to have a few chairs. Frost asks if there will be bushes screening the AC units. Veri confirms that each patio will have a privacy wall on one side. Chair Lanam asks if the patios fall under the impervious surface calculation for lot coverage and Planner Smith confirms that it does count towards lot coverage, but not as part of the building calculation. Commissioner Kopkowski notes that the lot coverage maximum is 35% and proposed is 18.27% - is that correct? Planner Smith confirms that's that what the plans indicate and there is a lot of open area. The road does not count, only the buildings. Pruss adds that behind Building B there is a large open area and to the east there is undeveloped area.

Commissioner Finnegan asks if there was a traffic study done. Pruss states that there is not and that it did not meet the threshold to be required. Planner McIntyre confirms that it was not required.

Commissioner Finnegan asks if the landscaping will be on all four sides. Chair Lanam states that the landscaping plan is just missing the landscaping around AC units. Commission Finnegan would like to see landscaping on all four sides. Planner Smith states that a landscaping buffer is not required where adjacent to the multiple-family zoning district. Chair Lanam clarifies that Commissioner Finnegan means against the building.

Commissioner Joseph asks about the meandering paths and if they will be woodchipped or paved. Veri states they will be paved – more than likely will be asphalt.

Chair Lanam says that he likes the overall appearance of the front, and the rendering only shows three units so it will be much larger in reality. He calls them cozy because the front yards are tight and there is absolutely no street parking. He asks about where the trash and recycling cans will be stored. Veri states that the rental agreements require that they are stored in the garage, and can add that note. There is some discussion about the size of the proposed garages in order to accommodate cars and trash cans.

Chair Lanam asks if there is a requirement for façade materials for multiple-family. Planners McIntyre and Smith clarify that that is just for commercial.

Chair Lanam asks about the existing well on the property. Pruss states that it likely belongs to the other house and might be encroaching, but is fine to stay there. Veri adds that it does not affect them.

There is some discussion about if storm retention is required. Pruss states that the site was originally designed as part of Colonial Acres, so this is tying into their storm sewer system and providing pre-treatment and sedimentation structure. The property has rights to Colonial Acres system for storm sewer and sanitary sewer. Planner Smith adds that Mr. Pruss has worked with the City Engineer to get that worked out.

There is some discussion about the landscape plan. The entire site will have irrigation.

Chair Lanam asks if the applicant has an issue with adding some overhang over the patios to break up the siding. He states that although it has the two-foot jog, it will look like one long run of siding. Veri states that they can look at something for the back patio, like a four-foot porch roof. They will include that on the revised plans. Commissioner Kopkowski offered the idea of a pergola.

Commissioner Joseph states that the apartments currently being built on 11 Mile have a self-supporting roof over the side doors.

Veri asks if they hypothetically put an entire covered patio on the back if that will then count as part of the building envelope. Planner McIntyre states that even if they put something covered over the back they would be well within the building envelope, setbacks, and lot coverage. Chair Lanam clarifies that it does go into the impervious calculation, but they have plenty of room.

There is some discussion about on street parking and no parking signs. Planner Smith states that the main concern from Fire about no parking is for the turnaround, and that there is at least one no parking sign along that portion of the street to ensure the fire truck can get in and out. Fire is comfortable with what is being shown. Pruss states that otherwise, there is not really room for on-street parking between driveways but more signs can be added. Chair Lanam states that a sign could be added at the entrance.

Chair Lanam asks the dimensional requirement for on-street parking. Planner Smith states that the road width is in the Engineering Standards, but the planners believe it is about 37 feet. The parking requirements are met between the driveway spaces and garage spaces, and additional visitor parking is there so people don't have to park on the street. Pruss confirms that the intent of the additional parking is to keep the street open.

Commissioner Finnegan asks about the street name Jamie Vista. Chair Lanam states that that is the name of the old development. Veri states that it was part of the sale of the property.

There is discussion that additional information needs to be shown on the plans – Chair Lanam states that this includes striping details, if a fence will be added along the west, show the patios, add that the paths will be paved.

Commissioner Finnegan asks about the entranceway sign. Planner Smith states that the location is shown, but the actual sign will have to be reviewed as a sign permit separately.

Planner Smith states that the only other item that needed clarification was the height of the pole lights. Veri states that they will meet the 20-foot maximum requirement, and will be between thirteen (13) and fifteen (15) feet. That information will be added to the plans. Chair Lanam asks that also it be added that all the units have the same layout.

Motion to table SPR#23-01 Ivy Townhomes until the Planning Commission meeting on 2-9-2023, to allow the applicant to provide the additional information required on a revised site plan.

Motion by Frost, Second by Finnegan

Voice Vote: Ayes: Unanimous

Nays: None

Motion Approved

There is further discussion between the Commission about the need in South Lyon for this type of housing. Planner McIntyre and Planner Smith state that there is not a lot of “missing middle” type housing available in the City. There is not currently somewhere for young people to come back to in the community, and the City doesn’t want to age out the community. Planner Smith states that there is a need for this type of housing everywhere. There is discussion that the percent of renters in this generation is much higher than in the past. Planner McIntyre adds that the trend is for people to rent in a community first, and then buy. Commissioner Joseph adds that there is not a lot of room left within the City.

b. 2023 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Planner Smith states that this is the schedule for this year’s meetings. The deadlines are shown as well.

Motion to approve the 2023 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule

Motion by Moser, Second by Finnegan

Voice Vote: Ayes: Unanimous

Nays: None

Old Business – None

Consultant Report –

Smith shares that the City is actively trying to build up the Housing Commission and get it properly formed. If the Commission knows anybody interested, the information is on the website to apply. McIntyre adds that the Commission is part of the City Charter, it just needs to be properly constituted according to that Charter.

There is some discussion about the need to amend the City’s Master Plan to reflect the existing conditions of properties along Lafayette in the downtown.

Staff Report – None

Adjournment

Approval to Adjourn

Motion by Mosier, Second by Kopkowski

Voice Vote: Ayes: Unanimous

Nays: None

Motion Approved – Meeting Adjourned – 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Hannah Smith, CIB Planning