

APPROVED
MARCH 28, 2022

**CITY OF WIXOM
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2022**

This meeting was called to order by Chairman Day of the Planning Commission at 7:30 p.m. at which time allegiance was pledged to the American flag.

PRESENT: William Day (Chairman), Phillip Carter (Vice Chairman), Ray Cousineau, Mark Lada, Anthony Lawrence, Cheryl Tacy

ABSENT: Excused: Sandro Grossi

OTHERS: Carmine Avantini (CIB Planning), Kelly McIntyre (CIB Planning), Drew Benson, Assistant City Manager & Director of Economic Development; and Mona Freiburger (Recording Secretary)

Determination of a Quorum:

A quorum of the Planning Commission was present for this meeting.

Changes or Additions to the Agenda:

None

Approval of Minutes:

None

Correspondence:

None

Call to the Public: (Limited to 5 minutes per speakers, addressing Agenda items on Agenda only)

No public comments.

Old Business:

1. **CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION: DAMAS PROPERTY - 48200 ALPHA DRIVE.** An informal discussion on an updated conceptual plan for a multiple-family development on the property. The property is zoned Industrial Research Office, IRO. The parcel number is 22-08-426-034.

Discussion:

Mr. Carmine Avantini, CIB, gave some background information regarding the conceptual plan for a multiple-family development on this property.

Mr. Avantini indicated Mr. Damas came before the Commission and inquired about using a back portion of their property that is located at the corner of I96 and Beck Road. This property contains a lot of woodlands, wetlands and steep slopes. Mr. Damas has appeared before the Commission two prior times to get feedback each time in terms of refining the project proposed. Since that time, Mr. Damas has retained an architect, and has been working on a plan. Mr. Avantini met with Mr. Damas to talk about the Commission's comments. Mr. Avantini gave him feedback and the applicant has put together a revised set of plans to address the Commission's comments.

The concern is the desires for this development to be upscale and they are targeting a market with a higher rent structure. In particular, Mr. Damas has heard there is a demand for, in particular, companies that are bringing in professionals for short term stays and they are having a hard time finding rental housing.

Ms. Denae Diccico, Gateway Engineering and Surveying, gave a presentation outlining the proposed project. This property is approximately 81 acres; the site area would be approximately 9 acres. For these luxury apartments, the total parking proposed is a total of 282 parking spaces. There would be 36 attached garages, 52 detached garages, and 196 open parking spaces. There is a requirement of 246 parking spaces.

For the site, there would be a clubhouse which would offer a fitness center, a lounge and a kitchen for the residents to host indoor events as well as a covered patio for outdoor events. There would be a total of six buildings, 22 units each building for a total of 132 total units. There would be 36 one bedroom units, 92 two bedroom units. The first floor of each housing unit would have six units and then eight on the second and third floors. Each unit would be approximately 930 square feet with their own balcony and the third floor units would feature a vaulted ceiling. Each building would have elegant and modern materials which would be selected to complement the surrounding area and attract young professionals.

Chairman Day commented there are 36 attached garages, which means 96 units have either open space parking or detached garages. He indicated he saw this as being glorified storage areas and not actual garages.

Ms. Dicicco indicated the attached garages are all one car garages. The strip of the detached garages is approximately 20 feet off of the end of the building. This is a preliminary, conceptual plan. The first floor would have the attached single car garages on the far ends of each building. There would be a heated, enclosed staircase. The end units would have the typical ADA units, wheelchair accessible. The two bedroom units are throughout the center of the first floor.

Commissioner Cousineau commented he liked the architecture; it is creative, different and does not have the typical apartment appearance. He shared some of the concerns with respect to the parking.

Mr. Dino Damas indicated they would oversee the construction; they have built mostly commercial and office spaces. Commissioner Cousineau indicated he has been associated with multi tenant projects with attached units and he would recommend to sound deaden the common walls and ceilings.

Commissioner Cousineau shared the same concerns as Chairman May. It is nice to have the upper scale units in this price range (\$1,800 or \$1,900 per month) with each unit having an enclosed garage as part of their unit, especially if the target is an upper scale market.

Commissioner Tacy commented it appeared the garages that are attached are not directly accessible by the apartments. Ms. Dicicco indicated the garage does have a door that leads into the stairwell on the side.

Chairman Day commented Shearwater Development at Beck and Maple were able to put in two car attached garages for entry into each unit. Chairman Day asked who gets the attached garages. Ms. Dicicco answered it could be anyone who is willing to pay for the attached garage. Each garage is separate and at an additional cost.

Mr. Joseph Vaglica, Gateway Engineering, commented this is his first meeting before the Commission. He indicated one of the constraints is the fact that the property is very narrow. If the property were a little bigger, they would be able to get behind these buildings and create some garages behind or underneath the units. The intent is an apartment building; it's not going to be a townhome where you have a garage underneath and then one or two stories above it.

Mr. Vaglica indicated this is not a full set of plans. They are still working on the square footage of the units. They made the plans to have a conversation with the Commission to see if this is in the right direction. Based on the constraints and based on the type of property, they have not worked all of these details. They would like to have a path that goes around the entire site, some gazebos, covered picnic shelter for the tenants, and

fitness center. At this point, they want to make sure that this is architecturally what the Commission would like to see in this area.

Commissioner Cousineau indicated, from his perspective, when he joined the Planning Commission, he said he would never approve a rental property in Wixom again. This project is a little bit different but he said it would be difficult for him to get his arms around it. Commissioner Cousineau indicated, for an upper scale rental for professionals, he would want a parking space close to his unit, or walk in an enclosed garage space as part of that unit.

Mr. Vaglica indicated they have designed many apartment complexes and this plan is trendy without garages in other communities.

There was a discussion regarding moving the buffer closer to the wetlands, but some Commissioners indicated the buffer is there for a reason, and they would like the applicant to come up with a plan which would not disturb the buffer.

Mr. Avantini indicated the challenge is to have enough units that the applicant is going to have onsite management. When you drop below a certain number of units, the project will not support this. This site is a long, narrow site. The project that was mentioned is a much wider site with the ability to put in driveways. They are constrained by the width of the property and the natural features. It doesn't mean it wouldn't be an upscale project; it is just a different type of project.

Mr. Avantini also indicated having different designs would hit a different market point for different people to rent as a result of having a variety of rental units.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented the current apartment units in Wixom are doing a lot of uplifting lately, where they are submitted for building permits to retrofit them to be higher end with new countertops, new cabinets, etc. With that, they are seeing an increase in rental rates. Also, it does seem to indicate vacancy rates are low and they are improving them to get closer to the market rates that are available.

There was a discussion regarding conditional rezoning which has to be approved and recommended by the Planning Commission and also go through the full approval process with City Council, as well. Mr. Avantini indicated this would be handled very similar to a regular rezoning request at the City Council level.

New Business:

1. **PUBLIC HEARING FOR SPECIAL LAND USE SLU#21-009: 29413 SOUTH WIXOM ROAD, WIXOM, MI 48393:** The applicant is seeking a special land use permit from Section 18.09.004. (F) Standards applicable to specific uses. Outdoor Storage, to permit the outdoor storage of trucks, trailers, and equipment in the District. The parcel number is 22006-400-028.

Discussion:

CIB Planning completed their review of the special land use request for the outdoor storage and parking of trucks and trailers for Buildings C, D, and E at 29413 S. Wixom Road. The subject site is located at the northern portion of the 104, 4 acre Wixom Assembly Park. The property is zoned GPUD. Outdoor storage and parking of trucks and trailers is considered a special land Use in the GPUD District. The property was previously zoned M-2, General Industrial, however, rezoned to GPUD, Gateway Planned Unit Development, to accommodate the distribution and logistics uses. Outdoor storage is considered a special land use in both the M-2 and GPUD Districts.

Ms. McIntyre commented the applicant must demonstrate in writing that the proposed use or activity shall meet the general standards of Section 18.18.050 of the Zoning Ordinance which are listed and defined in her letter dated March 2, 2022, addressed to the Planning Commission. The opinions of the report are based on a review of the special land use application submitted by the applicant and conformance to City plans and ordinance standards. In making a decision on this request, Ms. McIntyre indicated the Planning Commission should apply appropriate standards in consideration of CIB's review, additional comments from the applicant, and relevant factual new information presented at the public hearing. The applicant and their design professional shall be responsible for the accuracy and validity of information presented with the application.

The applicant, Flint Development, on behalf of Wixom Logistics Park, proposed a five (5) building industrial development including warehouse, logistics, and distribution uses to be constructed in phases. Phase 1 includes Buildings A and B. Buildings C, D, and E are proposed as part of Phase 2 as follows: Building C is 307,912 square feet and Building D is 258,465 square feet; both with 77 interior trailer spaces, 30 dock spaces and 26 future dock spaces; and Building E is 81,881 square feet and includes 13 trailer parking spaces, 46 land banked trailer spaces, and 16 dock spaces in the loading areas on the west side of the building. The users of the buildings are unknown at this time. The outdoor storage of trucks and trailers is considered a special land use subject to the conditions of Section 18.09.040.F.

The applicant must demonstrate in writing that the proposed use or activity shall meet the general standards of Section 18.18.050 of the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

1. Be compatible and in accordance with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Wixom Master Plan.
2. Promote the intent of the zoning district in which the use is proposed.
3. Be constructed, operated and maintained so as to be compatible with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity and so as not to change the essential character of the area in which it is proposed.
4. Be served adequately by public facilities and services, such as traffic operations along street, police and fire protection, drainage structures, water and sewage facilities and primary and secondary schools.
5. Not involve uses, activities, processes, materials and equipment or conditions of operation that, in comparison to permitted uses in the district, will be detrimental to the natural environment, public health, safety or welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, odors or other such nuisance.

In addition to the general standards above, the applicant also must demonstrate, in writing, that the proposed use or activity shall meet the specific standards of Section 18.06.040(F) of the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

1. All outdoor storage uses shall be located within the rear yard or side yard.
2. Outdoor storage areas shall be located no closer than one hundred fifty feet from any street right of way. Outdoor storage areas shall comply with building setbacks of the district for all other yards.
3. The height of any item stored outdoors shall not exceed twelve (12) feet. The Planning Commission may increase this standard if the storage area will not have a negative impact on surrounding properties and all storage is in accordance with the fire code requirements.
4. All storage facilities shall be enclosed within a building or within an obscuring wall on those sides abutting all residential, office or business district, and on any yard abutting a public street. The extent of the wall may be determined by the Planning Commission on the basis of usage. The wall shall not be less than six feet in height, and may, depending on land usage, be required to be eight feet in height.
5. Landscaping shall be provided around the exterior boundary of the storage area. All planting plans shall meet the requirements of Section 18.14.020 and shall be subject to the approval of the Planning Commission.
6. All outdoor storage areas shall be paved with a permanent, durable and dustless surface and shall be graded and drained to dispose of storm water without negatively impacting adjacent property; the Planning Commission may approve a gravel surface for all or part of the storage area for low intensity activities, such as landscape materials, upon a finding that neighboring properties and the environment will not be negatively impacted.

7. A dedicated fire lane through the storage yard shall be provided for emergency services.

Based upon CIB's analysis, Ms. McIntyre recommended that the Planning Commission approve the special land use request for the accessory outdoor storage of trucks and trailers for Buildings C, D, and E at 29413 S. Wixom Road, as it meets the special land use standards listed above and to include conditions listed below:

1. Approval of the GPUD Final Site Plan; and
2. The height of the trucks and trailers exceed 12 feet; and
3. Additional landscaping for the complete obscuring of the trucks, trailers and loading docks along the West Road extension; and
4. Review and approval of the other consultants, departments and agencies involved in project evaluation.

Chairman Day indicated he had a question regarding the report from HRC which is dated January 14, 2022. It states HRC believes it is highly unlikely that all 390 employees on the same shift would arrive and depart during off peak hours. In not knowing who the user is, Chairman Day did not understand why that assumption would be made and if they are all arriving, would mitigation need to be needed.

Mr. Nicholas Nicita, PE, PTOE, Project Engineer, Transportation Department, HRC Consultants, submitted his report dated January 14, 2022, February 16, 2022, March 1, 2022 to the City of Wixom, which is included in the Planning Commission packet.

Mr. Nicita indicated HRC assisted the City with a traffic review. They do agree with the Chairman's concerns. The developer indicated to HRC that the end user would come and go outside of the peak hours. It was a concern to them because if that shift changes or if the end user changes, then their capacity analysis would change. They had requested for them to provide some information to substantiate their claim that the actual end user would not impact the a.m. peak hour between 7 to 9 a.m. along with the 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. block. They did provide additional information stating that their end user would be arriving and department outside of that peak hour. A disclaimer was put in place. If that does change, if their end user does start arriving or department within that peak hour block, they would have to provide another analysis.

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated for Building B, two users have been identified. To his knowledge, they have not officially announced an end user for Building A. The City is in discussions with the tenant that they believe is likely, but it has not been officially confirmed.

Commissioner Lada asked if the study was done on around a holiday, traffic would be less. He indicated he would rather plan or assume the most drives at peak hours rather than hope it is not.

Mr. Nicita clarified the original study took place a few years ago and they did existing body counts outside, not around the holidays. It was acceptable at the time that they did it. The latest memo, two years later, a memo, it was predicted how many end users would be related to that site, separate from the actual existing traffic, itself, which was provided by them two years ago. The original study was after COVID but they had a comparison with traffic counts before COVID. They indicated the a.m. peak was similar but the p.m. peak had to be adjusted. There is an adjustment factor to that existing traffic post COVID. They adjusted the post COVID numbers to account for pre-COVID numbers.

Ms. McIntyre indicated there are thresholds within the development agreement that if they are not based on traffic counts and information, that additional mitigation is to be put in place; they are itemized, specifically. If they hit certain numbers, then the dual left turn on NB Wixom Road, would have to be revisited to see if that would be required to turn into their site at West Road. That was the biggest mitigation threshold and the biggest change, if it hits a certain amount of vehicles. They are not required to construct a dual turn now. They are far from the threshold, currently. They are, currently, 150 vehicles, less than their original estimate.

Chairman Day asked if there was consideration given to the amount of truck traffic that this project is going to generate. Given the number of loading docks, there may be some stacking problems trying to make the left turn, if there is not a dual left turn lane. Mr. Nicita answered the modeling did not indicate any stacking issues, but, unfortunately, the modeling isn't perfect. When they were doing their review, they considered it but it does not appear to be initiating with the number of trucks going in at the moment.

Chairman Day indicated there is going to be further development on this site, and he would like to see the dual left turn lane done now. Mr. Avantini commented it is important to keep in mind this road is owned by the county. They have been in partnership with them, the parties working together throughout, but, ultimately, they are the ones who make the call on when different improvements go in. That was all accounted for in the development agreement and with each tenant that comes in, the amount of vehicles and trucks, etc., is reexamined. There are thresholds in the development agreement that get us the ability to look at it.

Mr. Jason Longhurst, Nowak and Fraus Engineering, 46777 Woodward Avenue, Pontiac, MI 48342, provided additional clarification on a couple of the traffic study and the modeling. The development agreement that has been in place for the project, basically, requires every time that they have a new tenant, they have to come in with a new traffic study reflecting the trip generation from that specific tenant. Up to this point, everything

has been speculative because there are no tenants lined up. As they secure tenants, they have to update the model to confirm that their assumptions are correct, or if they are incorrect, what adjustments need to be made. The development agreements have thresholds for when the different mitigation measures need to be put in place. Mr. Longhurst clarified the tenants that have been secured and the trip generation that was noted being 150 less, that 150 less was estimated for that specific building, not for what was required for the dual left turn lanes. They are 150 less than what was actually anticipated for the building that those tenants are occupying; so significantly less than the dual left turn lane threshold that is mandated in the development agreement.

Mr. Longhurst commented the Road Commission asked for an extension to the south, and he clarified the letter they issued back in 2020, was not requesting a third lane across the front of their site, it was requesting a third lane across the frontage of the Menard's site. They have submitted to the Road Commission, secured all of the improvements and permits for what has been constructed. They have already constructed all of the drive approaches on the southern part of the site.

Mr. Longhurst presented the PUD plan that was submitted to the Commission and approved back in 2020 for the Phase One development with the drive approaches. The overall site plan was included for the Phase Two portion of the development which was included in the packet. There, originally, was an approach proposed at the middle of the building and speaking with the City staff, consultants and the Road Commission, they received an email and correspondence from the Commission opposing this drive approach. It has been removed and submittal sheet have been added to the packet that shows the new layout. There are two approaches at the northern end.

Commissioner Cousineau commented with respect to the double left turn lane, he doesn't like to overstep the jurisdiction policies of the Road Commission. Mr. Longhurst indicated the development agreement has a threshold in there that would trigger this; it is already built into the project.

Commissioner Cousineau asked if a dual left hand turn lane was installed today, if they would have to retrofit what exists today. Mr. Longhurst indicated the signals were master planned to accommodate this; additional signals would have to be added but poles and infrastructures are all installed. The bulk of the work would be the repaving of the east side of Wixom Road to widen it to add the additional lane.

Commissioner Lada asked if the trip generation looks at car and trucks, separately. Mr. Nicita answered no; there is no differentiation for vehicles and trucks. The threshold is set off of industry practice when another lane should be added.

Assistant City Manager Benson asked, from the Economic Development standpoint, with the end users not being known, would the improvements, the second left turn lane, be

required to be paid for by the tenant? Mr. Longhurst answered that he would not know; he was not involved in those negotiations.

Chairman Day commented he had concerns about the traffic; he did not have any problems with approving the special use or the site plan as proposed with the conditions as recommended by HRC and CIB.

Commissioner Tacy inquired about the color grade, if it was the same as the current buildings. Mr. Longhurst answered the color pallet is very similar, there is a mixture of the similar architecture. Commissioner Tacy commended the variety of landscaping.

Commissioner Lada inquired if there were the same number of doors as the other units. Mr. Longhurst commented he could not speculate. The tenant for Building B, they removed a lot of the dock doors and switched those to overhead doors. It was master planned for all of the docks and there is flexibility to address this concern.

MOTION by Commissioner Lawrence and second by Vice Chair Carter to approve SPECIAL LAND USE SLU#21-009: 29413 SOUTH WIXOM ROAD, WIXOM, MI 48393:

The applicant is seeking a special land use permit from Section 18.09.004. (F) Standards applicable to specific uses. Outdoor Storage, to permit the outdoor storage of trucks, trailers, and equipment in the District. The parcel number is 22006-400-028; with the following conditions:

1. Approval of the GPUD Final Site Plan; and
2. The height of the trucks and trailers exceed 12 feet but no greater than 15 feet in height; and
3. Additional landscaping for the complete obscuring of the trucks, trailers and loading docks along the West Road extension; and
4. Review and approval of the other consultants, departments and agencies involved in project evaluation.

All in favor.

None opposed.

2. **SITE PLAN REVIEW SPR#21-013: 29413 SOUTH WIXOM ROAD, WIXOM, MI 48393.** The applicant is seeking final GPUD site plan approval for Phase 2, Buildings C, D, and E, of a five (5) building industrial development including warehouse, logistics, and distribution uses. The property is located on the west side of S. Wixom Road between I-96, north

of Aldi, Menard's and General RV, in the GPUD, Gateway Planned Unit District. The parcel number is 22-06-400-028.

Discussion:

MOTION by Commissioner Lada and second by Commissioner Lawrence to approve SITE PLAN REVIEW SPR#21-013: 29413 SOUTH WIXOM ROAD, WIXOM, MI 48393. The applicant is seeking final GPUD site plan approval for Phase 2, Buildings C, D, and E, of a five (5) building industrial development including warehouse, logistics, and distribution uses. The property is located on the west side of S. Wixom Road between I-96, north of Aldi, Menard's and General RV, in the GPUD, Gateway Planned Unit District. The parcel number is 22-06-400-028; with the following conditions:

1. Special land use approval for the outdoor truck and trailer storage; and
2. Construction of the land banked/future parking and storage areas may be initiated by the owner or required by the building official, based on parking needs or observation, and shall require administrative approval of an amended site plan; and
3. Additional landscaping for the complete obscuring of the trucks, trailers and loading docks between Building C and D be provided for screening along the Wet Road extension; and
4. Modifications to the site plan and landscape plan to address the waste receptacle enclosures and landscaping calculations; and
5. Compliance with the recommendations from HRC traffic engineers and RCOC; and
6. Review and approval of the other consultants, departments and agencies involved in project evaluation.

All in favor.

None opposed.

Call to the Public:

No public comments.

Staff Comments:

No staff comments.

Commission Comments:

Commissioner Lada indicated he was still uncomfortable with not having the dual lanes for the above project.

Commissioner Cousineau indicated that at the prior meeting, there was outside storage, the applicant requested a waiver in the height restriction. It was his perspective that this was a completely different situation. Chairman Day indicated each project stands on its own.

Commissioner Tacy commented regarding the conceptual discussion above, she would rather see the applicant not push the wetland setbacks on the development. She would like see the applicant come up with a unique way to accomplish what it is the Commission is asking within the constraints of that piece of property. Commissioner Tacy would like to see the applicant develop a higher end product with attached garages that the resident can get to from within the apartment which, in her mind, makes it a higher end development.

Chairman May and Commissioner Cousineau agreed with Commissioner Tacy's comment.

ADJOURNMENT:

This meeting of the Planning Commission was motioned and adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Mona Freiburger
Recording Secretary