

City Of Birmingham
Regular Meeting Of The Planning Board
May 22, 2024
City Commission Room
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Planning Board held on May 22, 2024.
The meeting was convened at 7:30 p.m.

A. Roll Call

Present: Chair Scott Clein, Vice Chair Bryan Williams; Board Members Robin Boyle, Stuart Jeffares, Bert Koseck, Janelle Whipple-Boyce; Alternate Board Member Jason Emerine

Absent: Board Member Daniel Share; Alternate Board Member Nasseem Ramin

Staff: Planning Director Dupuis; Senior Planner Cowan, City Transcriptionist Eichenhorn

B. Approval Of The Minutes Of The Regular Planning Board Meeting of May 8, 2024

05-14-24

Motion by Mr. Williams

Seconded by Mr. Boyle to approve the minutes of the Regular Planning Board meeting of May 8, 2024 as amended.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Whipple-Boyce, Williams, Emerine, Clein, Boyle, Koseck, Jeffares

Nays: None

C. Chair's Comments

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the meeting's procedures.

D. Review Of The Agenda

E. Meeting Open to the Public for Items Not on the Printed Agenda

F. Unfinished Business/Courtesy Review

G. Rezoning Applications

H. Community Impact Study and Site Plan Review

I. Special Land Use Permits and Final Site Plan and Design Review

- 1. 219 Elm St. – All Seasons 2 – Public Hearing to Review Request for Special Land Use Permit Amendment and Final Site Plan and Design Review for New Commercial Use on First Floor of Independent Senior Living Facility**

PD Dupuis presented the item and answered informational questions from the Board.

Mark Abanatha, architect, and Samuel Beznos, owner, spoke on behalf of the project.

During Board discussion, Board member comments were as follows:

- The high quality of the building was not adequately captured in the renderings.
- It would be positive to increase the street activation on Elm.
- The extra two floors would be worth a significant amount of money, and having a large amount of commercial on the first floor would be a priority.
- The building is very aesthetically pleasing.
- This proposal would not meet the spirit or intent of the ordinance in terms of the first floor commercial use. It would also require variances for the proposed glazing. The commercial space would be unlikely to be successful as a space, and the owner would likely request that it be changed in the future.
- In an attempt to come closer to meeting the ordinance, this proposal demonstrates poor urban design. If this were to be granted, it could be precedent-setting.
- This plan would be different than All Seasons on Maple because those first floor commercial spaces were live-work. This plan proposes strict commercial, which is somewhat different. Commercial may not actually be necessary on the first floor of this building, given the location.
- This building's commercial use should occupy the entire first floor.

05-15-24

Motion by Mr. Boyle

Seconded by Mr. Jeffares to recommend for approval the Final Site Plan & Design Review for 219 Elm St. – All Seasons 2 – subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The applicant must provide more detail on how the architectural standards of Article 3, Section 3.09 are met;**
- 2. The applicant must submit details on how they will achieve 70% glazing on the ground floor, and 60% plus the awnings with no sides; and,**
- 3. The applicant must comply with the requests of all City Departments.**

Board member discussion of the motion was as follows:

- This building would provide some level of mixed use in the Triangle, which has been one of the City's goals. While this proposal would not be commercially as large or diverse as the Board might want, it might not be fair to require more commercial of this project because it is similar to the other types of commercial nearby.
- The aesthetics of the building are very high quality.
- This project does not provide the kind of mixed use the City has been looking to achieve within the Triangle. The commercial aspect should not be considered sufficient to achieve two extra floors.

Motion failed, 1-6.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Boyle

Nays: Koseck, Whipple-Boyce, Williams, Emerine, Clein, Jeffares

05-16-24

Motion by Mr. Williams

Seconded by Ms. Whipple-Boyce to recommend to the City Commission denial of the request for the Final Site Plan & Design Review for 219 Elm St. – All Seasons 2.

Motion carried, 6-1.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Koseck, Whipple-Boyce, Williams, Emerine, Clein, Jeffares

Nays: Boyle

05-17-24

Motion by Mr. Williams

Seconded by Ms. Whipple-Boyce to recommend to the City Commission disapproval of the Special Land Use Permit for 219 Elm St. – All Seasons 2.

Motion carried, 6-1.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Koseck, Whipple-Boyce, Williams, Emerine, Clein, Jeffares

Nays: Boyle

J. Site Plan & Design Reviews

1. 245 Townsend – Parkview Townhomes – Request for Preliminary Site Plan Review for New Attached Single Family Development

SP Cowan presented the item and answered informational questions from the Board.

Chris Longe, architect, spoke on behalf of the project.

During Board discussion, Board member comments were as follows:

- The proposed front facade was aesthetically pleasing and represented an improvement over the current building.
- The offsets would not negatively impact anyone. The west elevation would complement ~~compliment~~¹ Shain Park.
- This proposal would also complement ~~compliment~~² the architecture of the building's diagonal neighbor. The east elevation may benefit from a treatment. The rear wall by the parking should be greenery if possible because of the proximity of the electrical lines.
- Adding attainable housing and more homes in general to Birmingham ~~via this project~~³ would be beneficial.

Public Comment

¹As amended at the June 26, 2024 meeting.

²As amended at the June 26, 2024 meeting.

³As amended at the June 26, 2024 meeting.

Tina Kumar commented about her driveway, the potential for a greenery wall, and the project's impact on the sewers.

The Chair answered a question from Ann Smallwood.

05-18-24

Motion by Mr. Williams

Seconded by Mr. Emerine to approve the Preliminary Site Plan for 245 Townsend St. with the following conditions:

- 1. The Planning Board approve a waiver of the required 4' variation in front setbacks between units;**
- 2. The applicant submit lighting and material specifications, samples, photometric plan and all other required information for the proposed building to complete the Design Review at Final Site Plan; and,**
- 3. The applicant comply with the requests of all City Departments.**

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Boyle, Koseck, Whipple-Boyce, Williams, Emerine, Clein, Jeffares

Nays: None

K. Study Session

PD Dupuis presented the items and answered informational questions from the Board.

1. The Birmingham Plan 2040 – Prioritization of Key Actions

During Board discussion, Board member comments were as follows:

- The political aspect of Woodward should be added to the Commission's list.
- A comprehensive parking review will be important.
- For the joint Commission-Planning Board meeting, the staff presentation should explain that the Planning Board was anticipating organizing the 2040 Plan implementation process, that updating the zoning ordinance is the most important priority, and that the second priority would be Woodward.
- It would be helpful to have a few graphics for the joint meeting in order to clarify data and priorities.
- The Woodward gateway may be more important than the N. Old Woodward streetscape. Haynes Square is also important, and would tie into aspects of Woodward. Those two items should be moved above the N. Old Woodward streetscape.
- The Planning Department did an outstanding job organizing the information.

2. Triangle District Mixed-Use Requirements – Study Session

During Board discussion, Board member comments were as follows:

- Studying LEED certification may be more of a medium-term item.
- It would be helpful to address definitions of mixed-used, commercial uses, and how the

City can better ensure it is getting a positive return for offering bonus floors.

- Public parking in the Triangle may be necessary to study as well.
- Urban design and streetscape could be a line item. Architectural standards should also be reviewed, as well as opportunities for improving vias.
- Childcare may be less of an appropriate incentive. Attainable housing is a more appropriate one. There may or may not be a way to have some kind of historic preservation as an incentive.
- Perhaps there should be fewer options for gaining extra floors, and the options should be high priorities for the Triangle.
- Deciding on these incentives posthaste is important in order to have them in place before further development occurs in the Triangle.
- It would be most expedient to modify the present incentives to make them as functional as possible for the Triangle. The parking should remain the same for now, with a planned future review to make it commensurate with costs. The plaza has not been selected by any developer, so that could possibly be changed to payment in lieu for a public park or open space. The commercial uses on the first floor could be less than 50% in most cases. Those uses should likely be accessible by the general public. LEED should be left in for now because a better sustainability incentive has not been determined yet.
- Alternatively, LEED should be removed because it should not be sufficient to receive an extra floor. The Board also needs education on all of the LEED levels. LEED at some level should be a requirement for all new buildings in the City.
- Some of the buildings should not need commercial at all for their first floors, depending on their location. Staff should return with a map of the parcels to give a better sense of where these parcels might be located.
- The focus of these uses should be activational rather than transactional.

L. Miscellaneous Business and Communications

- 1. Pre-Application Discussions**
- 2. Communications**
- 3. Administrative Approval Correspondence**
- 4. Draft Agenda**
- 5. Action List - 2024**
- 6. Other Business**

M. Planning Division Action Items

- a. Staff Report on Previous Requests**
- b. Additional Items from tonight's meeting**

There were some requests for⁴ updated computers due to technological issues during the meeting.

N. Adjournment

No further business being evident, the meeting was adjourned at 9:54 p.m.

⁴As amended at the June 26, 2024 meeting.

A blue ink signature, appearing to read 'Nick Dupuis', written in a cursive style.

Nick Dupuis, Planning Director

A black ink signature, appearing to read 'Laura Eichenhorn', written in a cursive style.

Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist

APPROVED