

City Of Birmingham
Regular Meeting Of The Planning Board
March 26, 2025
City Commission Room
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Planning Board held on March 26, 2025.
The meeting was convened at 7:30 p.m.

A. Roll Call

Present: Vice Chair Bryan Williams; Board Members Robin Boyle, Bert Koseck, Daniel Share, Janelle Whipple-Boyce; Alternate Board Members Duncan Currie, Nasseem Ramin (left 8:23 p.m.)

Absent: Chair Scott Clein; Board Member Stuart Jeffares; Student Representatives Carter Anderson, Olivia Betanzos

Staff: Planning Director Dupuis; City Planner Aldred-Arens, City Planner Blizinski, City Transcriptionist Eichenhorn

B. Approval Of The Minutes Of The Regular Planning Board Meeting of February 26, 2025

03-11-25

Motion by Share

Seconded by Whipple-Boyce to approve the minutes of February 26, 2025 with the corrections noted.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Koseck, Currie, Ramin, Whipple-Boyce, Williams, Share, Boyle

Nays: None

C. Chair's Comments

The Vice 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

G. Rezoning Applications

H. Community Impact Study and Site Plan Review

I. Special Land Use Permits

- 1. 280 E. Lincoln – Grace Baptist Church – Request for Special Land Use Permit Review for Renovation & Addition to Existing Religious Institution**

CP Blizinski presented the item and answered informational questions from the Board.

Craig Hurley, Pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Andrew Walters of Metro Consulting Associates, and members of Grace Baptist Church spoke on behalf of the project.

Board members raised the following points during discussion:

- The parking lots should be modified to improve traffic circulation for the benefit of health, safety, and welfare. The southern parking lot as proposed would be challenging for drivers to exit if all the parking spots were occupied. If a modification is not feasible, a visual demonstration of that would be helpful.
- The Church should not be required to enter into a shared parking agreement with the City. It should be required to enter into negotiations with the City regarding a shared parking agreement.
- The applicant should attempt to improve the safety of the parking lot layout and options should be presented to the Board at its April 9, 2025 meeting.

03-12-25

Motion by Share

Seconded by Boyle to amend the rules of procedure to designate the April 9, 2025 meeting as a hybrid meeting to consider both site plans and study sessions.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Koseck, Currie, Ramin, Whipple-Boyce, Williams, Share, Boyle

Nays: None

03-13-25

Motion by Whipple-Boyce

Seconded by Koseck to postpone consideration of the special land use permit and site plan and design review for 280 E. Lincoln to April 9, 2025.

Motion carried, 7-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Koseck, Currie, Ramin, Whipple-Boyce, Williams, Share, Boyle

Nays: None

J. Site Plan & Design Reviews

- 1. 280 E. Lincoln – Grace Baptist Church – Request for Final Site Plan & Design Review for Renovation & Addition to Existing Religious Institution**

Postponed to April 9, 2025.

- 2. 479 S. Old Woodward – Birmingham Towers – Request for Final Site Plan & Design Review to Modify Floor Plans and Seek Approval of the Collective**

Provisions of the Required Off-Street Parking of the Subject Property and the Birmingham Place Pursuant to Article 4, Section 4.45 (G)(3) of the Zoning Ordinance

The Board took a brief recess, and returned from recess.

Citing a potential business relationship with the applicant resulting in a potential conflict-of-interest, Ms. Ramin recused herself from the item and departed the meeting.

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

Doraid Markus, owner, spoke on behalf of the project.

Public Comment

Pat Hardy commented regarding how Birmingham Towers would impact the view for some 411 S. Old Woodward (Birmingham Place) residents.

Kate MacNevin commented regarding parking concerns in Birmingham Place and the surrounding area and how the view from her condominium within Birmingham Place is impacted by Birmingham Towers.

Heidi George commented regarding how Birmingham Towers impacts the view from her condominium within Birmingham Place.

Mike Preza commented regarding the comparative heights of Birmingham Towers and Birmingham Place.

Bill Kolb commented regarding parking concerns in Birmingham Place and the surrounding area.

Dan Feinberg, attorney for the Birmingham Place residential condominium association, commented regarding a potential parking agreement between Birmingham Towers and Birmingham Place.

Larry Rochkind commented regarding parking concerns in Birmingham Place and a potential parking agreement between Birmingham Towers and Birmingham Place.

Sam McKnight commented regarding the City's approval process for Birmingham Towers, a potential parking agreement between Birmingham Towers and Birmingham Place, and parking concerns in Birmingham Place.

Board members raised the following points during discussion:

- There was no indication presently that Birmingham Place was receptive to a shared parking agreement.
- The Board should postpone evaluating a potential shared parking agreement between Birmingham Place and Birmingham Tower until the legal representation of both entities presented a legally enforceable shared parking proposal.
- 479 S. Old Woodward was zoned to allow a building of this width, depth, and height for many years.

- If the management of Birmingham Towers could provide the Board with data from the parking key fob system, that might help make these deliberations more data-driven.
- Staff should conduct a parking survey of the southern part of S. Old Woodward.
- It would be helpful for the Board to have the definitions of office, commercial, and retail uses and the required parking to square footage ratios.
- Staff should inspect 479 S. Old Woodward to ensure that it remains in compliance with the previously approved site plan.
- The Board needs to consider how any approval might impact the long-term parking situation for both Birmingham Place and Birmingham Towers, as well as the surrounding area.
- The Board must also consider how the intensity of uses and the likelihood of different future uses might impact the parking in both buildings and the surrounding area.
- Birmingham's zoning intended to encourage residential use at Birmingham Towers.
- The Board required clarification as to whether a mixed use building is an 'other than residential purpose building' as mentioned in Article 4, § 4.45 (G) of the zoning ordinance.

03-14-25

Motion by Share

Seconded by Boyle that the matter of the site plan and design review for 479 S. Old Woodward – Birmingham Towers be postponed without date.

Public Comment

Mr. Markus supported the Board voting to approve the final site plan and design review request contingent on a shared parking agreement or a special land use permit.

Mr. Rochkind supported a denial of the final site plan and design review request.

Motion carried, 6-0.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Koseck, Currie, Whipple-Boyce, Williams, Share, Boyle

Nays: None

The Board took a brief recess, and returned from recess.

K. Study Session

L. Miscellaneous Business and Communications

1. Pre-Application Discussions

i. 458 N. Old Woodward – Wilders – Outdoor Dining Platform

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

Board members raised the following points during discussion:

- Making the dining platform safer would be beneficial.
- If this proposal were approved, the dining platform would extend three feet less into the road.

- The grade of the street impacts the dining platform's ability to be flush.

There was Board consensus that this proposal would be an improvement versus the present conditions.

Samy Eid, owner of Wilder's, was present on behalf of the request.

ii. 525 N. Old Woodward – Luxe – Outdoor Dining

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

Board members raised the following points during discussion:

- The stanchions with ropes dividing the pedestrian walkway and the outdoor dining are likely to be moved around.
- The ADA requires a five foot minimum clear path along the sidewalk. The distance between the stanchions and either the parking meters or the tree grates may cause that clear path to fall below five feet.
- Previous discussions with this applicant indicated that the Board would not permit outdoor dining both adjacent to the building and in the furnishing zone.
- This proposal raises some concerns. Board concerns could be conveyed to the applicant, and the applicant could address those concerns during another pre-application discussion before submitting a special land use permit revision request.
- It is difficult to walk between the outdoor dining tables.
- Luxe has been responsive to the Board's concerns in the past.

2. Communications

3. Administrative Approval Correspondence

4. Draft Agenda

5. Action List

6. Other Business

The Board congratulated CP Aldred-Arens on her promotion to City Planner, and Mr. Boyle and the Chair on their reappointments to the Board.

M. Planning Division Action Items

- 1. Staff Report on Previous Requests**
- 2. Additional Items from tonight's meeting**

N. Adjournment

No further business being evident, the meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.



Nick Dupuis, Planning Director



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist