

City of Ashland – Plan Commission Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Ashland Plan Commission was held on **Tuesday, December 1, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.** via GoToMeeting.

Committee Members Present: Matt Mackenzie, John Beirl, Ana Tochterman, David Mettillie, Laurie Gregor, Katie Gellatly, Mayor Lewis

Committee Members Absent: N/A

Staff Present: Megan McBride, Lucas Phillips

Mayor Lewis opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda

1) Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by John Beirl, seconded by Ana Tochterman. Passed unanimously.

2) Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the minutes from the October 20, 2020 Plan Commission meeting by Laurie Gregor. Seconded by Ana Tochterman. Passed unanimously.

3) Public Comment (non-agenda items)

None.

4) Action Items

- a) Public Hearing regarding Conditional Use Permit to allow up to fifteen (15) additional multi-family residential units at 522 Chapple Avenue, zoned Mixed Residential/Commercial (MRC). Applicant: Impact 7

Motion to go into Public Hearing by Matt Mackenzie. Seconded by David Mettillie. Passed unanimously.

Megan McBride provided background regarding the Class 2 Public Hearing notice that was submitted for this Conditional Use Permit for consideration, fulfilling the legal obligations. The Conditional Use Permit is coming forward at this time to allow Impact 7 to apply for a WHEDA tax credit which has a deadline in December. The proposed development would have townhomes on the property, and additional housing units developed inside of the Wilmarth Mansion itself.

No public comments were received during the meeting, and Megan McBride stated that she did not receive any comments prior to the meeting from any neighbors or community members.

Katie Gellatly asked what is currently in the Wilmarth Mansion building, and Megan McBride stated that it is currently a mixture of office space and event space. The entirety of the property will be converted to residential units.

Mayor Lewis asked if the rent range stated in the packet will be eligible for a sliding scale based on income. Kate Sullivan from Impact 7 stated that the units will be eligible for scaled rents based on WHEDA standards. Mayor Lewis asked who would manage the new construction, and Kate Sullivan answered that Impact 7 currently manages the units on that lot, and would continue to manage the new and existing units.

Megan McBride provided information regarding the Conditional Use Permit and the additional density that would be created on this site. She explained that the development would still be contingent on a Site Plan approval.

Matt Mackenzie asked if there is a setback required on this property due to its proximity to the Tri-County Corridor, and Megan McBride answered that it has a 30 foot setback from the Corridor, that is accounted for on their current plans. Megan McBride stated that their primary concerns lay in providing enough off-street parking and snow storage.

Lauren Dahl from C&S stated that she has been working with Impact 7 and the City to provide funding incentives to make the development feasible, as well as maintain the historic integrity of the Wilmarth Mansion and compatibility with the surrounding housing.

Ana Tochtermann questioned the amount of parking that is accounted for in the plan – she noticed that there appears to be one parking space per housing unit. Megan McBride explained that this has been an ongoing discussion, and there is the potential to share parking between the housing at this site and the neighboring Senior Center, which does not have a need for overnight parking.

Ana Tochtermann asked if this housing would be eligible for housing vouchers, and Michael Carlson from Impact 7 stated that it would absolutely be eligible for the voucher program, and Impact 7 has extensive experience working with these programs.

Mayor Lewis asked if the proposed development was contingent on being awarded tax credits this year. Michael Carlson answered that the tax credits do impact the design of the development, but their “fallback position” would be to combine state and historic tax credits, as well as other federal credits that would allow for restoration and adaptive reuse of the Wilmarth Mansion and the attached Robert Homes Villa.

Motion to go out of Public Hearing by David Mettillie. Seconded by Ana Tochtermann. Passed unanimously.

Matt Mackenzie stated that he feels like the development fits nicely into the area, and is well situated within the City. He stated a desire to keep operations residential at that building, and a need to ensure that there is enough parking for the tenants.

Mayor Lewis spoke in favor of the development, particularly the good management that has historically been in place at this property, and how well the residential development will fit in to that part of the City, with its proximity to downtown and the Corridor trail.

Motion to approve the Conditional Use Permit by Ana Tochtermann. Seconded by Matt Mackenzie. Passed unanimously.

5) Discussion Items

a) Discussion of 2021 meeting schedule

Megan McBride wanted to check in with Commission members to ensure that the current dates and times of the meetings are still good with the members. No concerns were expressed, so the meeting times will continue to be every other Tuesday at 6:30 pm.

6) Announcements/Reports/Comments/Questions

a) Updates on zoning and code updates related to green infrastructure and water quality

Megan McBride provided updates regarding the ongoing process of updating the waterfront code updates. She stated that they received a proposal from Greif in response to the City's RFP, and that this was the only proposal received. She stated that she is excited for Greif's Public Input process, which allows for more accessible input gathering from the public. She stated that this will probably be starting in the beginning of January. There will likely be a joint meeting between the Plan Commission and Sustainability Committee with the consultants.

Mayor Lewis asked for clarification regarding if these code updates will be rolled out across the whole city, or only parts. Megan answered that the code updates are focused on waterfront districts, including zoning in the Oredock Upland area, as well as providing incentives to promote green infrastructure.

b) Updates on public input and development process for Timeless Timber site

Megan McBride explained that she had sent out over 70 information packets to neighbors of the Timeless Timber redevelopment site, and will have a synthesis of the responses received that will be brought to Plan Commission as well as City Council. Public input will inform the Development Agreements for the residential and commercial redevelopment of the site, and Development Agreement negotiations are anticipated to take place in February 2021.

John Beirl asked about the status of the Copper Cup development off of Stuntz, and Megan McBride answered that they are moving forward in the spring – the delay has mostly been due to land surveyors in the area being very busy, but the Copper Cup developers are working on the Site Plan.

7) Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by David Mettillie. Seconded by Mayor Lewis. Passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:07 pm. Minutes done by Lucas Phillips.