City of Ashland – Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Ashland Planning Commission was held on **Tuesday September 19th, 2023 at 6:30 P.M.** in the Ashland City Hall Council Chambers and via GoToMeeting.

Committee Members Present: Mayor Matt MacKenzie, JoAnn Erickson, David Eades, and Jeff Beirl

Committee Members Absent: Laurie Gregor, John Beirl, and Ana Tochterman

Staff Present: Steven Wiley and Mandelyn Lyons

Mayor MacKenzie opened the meeting at 6:30 P.M.

Agenda

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

2. **Approval of Agenda**

Motion to approve the agenda by JoAnn Erickson, seconded by Jeff Beirl. Passed unanimously.

3. **Statement of Conflict of Interest**

4. **Consent Agenda**
   a. **Approval of the minutes from the August 15, 2023 Planning Commission meeting**

Motion to approve the minutes from the August 15, 2023 Planning Commission meeting by JoAnn Erickson, seconded by David Eades. Passed unanimously.

5. **Public Comment (non-agenda items)**

   None.

6. **Action Items**
   a. Review and approval of a Site Plan for renovation of the new Opera House Condominiums at 206 & 208 3rd Ave W. Applicant: S.H. Warren LLC
   Mr. Wiley presented the item and provided an overview of the proposed scope of work and site. Wiley presented the staff recommendation and recommended conditions of

approval. The Commission discussed the item and invited the applicants to participate in discussion. Mr. Warren, Mr. Trudeau, and Tom Westlund were in attendance. Wiley explained the staff concerns with the work that occurred on the ground level front façade (removal of previous storefront, replacement with modern windows, etc.) The applicants explained their rationale for why they removed the previous storefront based on the new residential unit layouts. Wiley also highlighted staff's concerns with the ribbed steel siding proposed for the rear façade. Commissioners engaged in discussion and Mr. Eades stated that he believed based on applicable ordinance language staff or the Plan Commission had some flexibility to approve steel siding as proposed. Wiley explained that the ordinance allowed this in isolated areas on the outskirts of the City but that this was a downtown location in the center of the City and prominent. After discussion the Commission was supportive of approving the work as proposed on the front façade with the understanding that the applicants would revise the cladding material on the rear façade to a lap siding. Staff explained that any changes from the plans approved would require additional reviews and approvals.

Motion to approve the Site Plan with amendments by David Eades, seconded by Jeff Beirl. Passed unanimously.

b. Review and approval of a Site Plan for renovation of the new Hudson Square Coffee at 2419 Lake Shore Dr. E – formerly the Bay View Motel. Applicant: Hudson Square LLC Ms. Lyons presented the item, provided some information on the subject site and project, and the staff recommendation and recommended conditions of approval. The applicants April and Marques Jolma were in attendance. The Commission engaged in discussion. Staff explained the new proposed access and traffic patterns and parking proposed for the site. Traffic would enter using the existing driveway off of U.S. Hwy 2 and proceed to the drive-through window through the site and exit out onto 25th Avenue. The only traffic coming in from 25th Avenue would be employees and some customers looking to park. Ms. Lyons and Mr. Wiley explained that they had conversations with Public Works Director John Butler who was fine with this configuration as proposed. The presence of a center turn lane on the highway was a major factor in Mr. Butler's decision. Ms. Erickson and Mr. Eades expressed concern with the potential for backups or accidents on U.S. Hwy 2. Staff and the commission engaged in addition discussions. After further discussions the Commission was supportive of approving the Site Plan as presented.

Motion to approve the Site Plan by Jeff Beirl, seconded by David Eades. Passed unanimously.

c. Public Hearing and vote on a request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Vehicle Sales use at parcels #201-00066-3000 & #201-00066-0100. Zoned City Center with Gateway Overlay (GTWY-O) and Approx. 100 Year Flood Boundary. Applicant: Shanette Homola.

Mr. Wiley presented the item and provided an overview of the site and explained the recommended conditions of approval. Wiley explained that a Development Permit was approved in 2007 for a vehicle sales use but only on the quick lube property and what is now the small strip where the power lines run. The 2007 permit also required parking vehicles on paved areas. The subject properties were used until recently as a vehicle sales use but not legally.

Motion to go into public hearing by JoAnn Erickson, seconded by David Eades.

There was no public comment.

Motion to go out of public hearing by JoAnn Erickson, seconded by David Eades.

The applicant was not in attendance. Wiley explained that the applicant did not plan to move forward with the vehicle sales use if she needed to meet the recommended conditions due to cost. The Commission discussed the conditions and decided not to require paving the existing gravel surface onsite. The Commission discussed the number of vehicles that could fit on the existing gravel parking area and was fine with allowing whatever would fit neatly on the gravel. Commission members changed the condition limiting the types of vehicles and the new condition was that no commercial vehicles could be parked/sold onsite. Commissioners were supportive of requiring lighting and landscaping. The lighting would help from a safety and security standpoint and the landscaping would mitigate potential negative impacts the vehicle sales use could have visually on the neighboring properties.

Motion to amend the CUP conditions by JoAnn Erickson, seconded by Jeff Beirl. Passed unanimously.

Motion to recommend approval of the CUP with amended conditions by JoAnn Erickson, seconded by David Eades. Passed unanimously.

d. Public Hearing and vote on a request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for an increased sign graphic area at 319 Ellis Ave, parcel #201-01682-0000, zoned City Center (CC) with Gateway Overlay (GTWY-O). Applicant: HTG Architects

Ms. Lyons presented the item, provided relevant site information along with the staff recommendation and recommended conditions of approval. The applicant, Russ Schramm of HTG Architects was present virtually. Staff explained that the owner's existing sign exceeded the 32 square foot ordinance maximum permitted under the subject property's zoning. The proposed new sign would still exceed the 32 square foot maximum but would overall be a decrease in sign area from the current (45 square feet versus the 52 square feet of the current). Commissioners asked the architect why he wanted the larger sign. The architect explained that the current width of the street was a factor.

Motion to go into public hearing by Jeff Beirl, seconded by David Eades.

There were no public comments.

Motion to go out of public hearing by Jeff Beirl, seconded by David Eades.

Motion to recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit request by Jeff Beirl, seconded by JoAnn Erickson. Passed unanimously.

7. Announcements/Reports/Comments/Questions

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Jeff Beirl, seconded by JoAnn Erickson. Passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25 P.M. Minutes done by Mandelyn Lyons & Steven Wiley