

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 18, 2017  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER  
7:00 P.M.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** H. Jugenitz, C. Zuellig, A. Bedogne, L. Dahl MacGregor, M. Dunwoodie,  
P. Hollifield, J. Talaga

**Absent:** T. Dennis (excused)

**Staff:** Bonnie Wessler, City Planner  
Cynthia Kochanek, Associate Planner

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Hollifield moved to approve the minutes of December 21, 2016 as amended (Support: C. Zuellig) and the motion carried unanimously.

**IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

**1002 Washtenaw**, Joseph Golder, owner- stated that he shares the main entrance with Eastern Michigan University. Stated that his property was taken by EMU and that he no longer has the ability to enjoy his property. He is frustrated with the situation and he is upset that under the current zoning his property would require a site plan review at the very least. He feels for the residents of the Bell-Kramer area and what they are going through.

**V. PRESENTATION AND PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

1. Rezoning: 311 Ballard St.

Cynthia Kochanek, Associate Planner, presented the staff review of the rezoning request for 311 Ballard. This is a rezoning request for parcel #11-11-40-183-017. The parcel is 0.11 acres with an existing residence on site. The property is currently zoned C-Center. The property owner wishes to have the parcel rezoned to CN- Core Neighborhood in order to be able to utilize the structure as residential. The structure was built in 1900; prior to the existence of the City Zoning Ordinance. Previously the parcel was part of the 501 W. Cross parcel to the north and appears to have been split from that parcel at some point prior to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. No variances or special uses have been approved for the property.

Ms. Kochanek reviewed the criteria for a rezoning and findings.

Staff recommended that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the rezoning to City Council.

Chairperson Jugenitz inquired as to what the property can be used for currently and why this rezoning is needed.

Ms. Wessler stated that the house can only be utilized as a single family residential and that the house cannot be subdivided into multiple residential units under the current zoning.

Commissioner Bedogne clarified that if the rezoning was approved that the owner could utilize the structure as a multi-family up to four units by right in the proposed Core Neighborhood zoning but that if the owner want to utilize the structure as more than four units, the owner would need to request a special use approval.

Ms. Wessler confirmed that is the case. That if the owner wanted to utilize the structure as more than four residential units or a roominghouse, the owner would need to obtain a special use permit.

Commissioner Hollifield moved to open the public portion of the hearing (Support: L. Dahl MacGregor) and the motion carried unanimously.

There were no comments from the audience.

Commissioner Hollifield moved to close the public portion of the hearing (Support: L. Dahl MacGregor) and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hollifield moved that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the rezoning for 311 Ballard to Core Neighborhood to City Council with the following findings:

1. The rezoning is consistent with the goals in the Shape Ypsilanti master plan of "Anyone, no matter what age or income, can find a place to call home in Ypsilanti" and "Ypsilanti is an asset of Eastern Michigan University, and Eastern Michigan University is an asset of Ypsilanti."
2. The proposed rezoning would not affect the physical, geological, hydrological and other environmental features of this parcel.
3. Rezoning the parcel to Core Neighborhood will bring the property and any potential uses into alignment with the existing neighborhood to the south.
4. This rezoning is consistent with the trend of development in the neighborhood to the south.
5. The current zoning is inappropriate for the existing character and use.

The motion was supported by Commissioner Bedogne. A roll call vote was taken and carried unanimously 7:0.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

2. 2100 Washtenaw Ave

Bonnie Wessler, City Planner, presented the staff review of the site plan for 2100 Washtenaw. Parcel # 11-11-06-408-003 is 0.73 acres fronting on Washtenaw Ave. There is an existing 1,740 square foot single story building on site. There are 21 parking spaces in the lot, including one ADA space and one curb cut on Washtenaw Ave. No special uses or variances have been approved for the property.

The property is zoned **GC- General Corridor**, which permits medical and dental offices and clinics by right. The plans submitted call for a single story addition to the north side of the structure and associated site improvements, including a dumpster enclosure, additional parking including bike parking, a curb cut onto Whittier, and a sidewalk along Washtenaw. The Washtenaw frontage of the building will retain the same footprint; however two windows are being added to increase transparency and to reduce the nonconformity of the façade.

Ms. Wessler reviewed the waivers and conditions.

Staff recommended that the Planning Commission approve the site plan for 2100 Washtenaw. Ms. Wessler stated that she left out of the conditions that the applicant is looking to pay a fee-in-lieu of building the sidewalk on Whittier, since there is no other sidewalks along Whittier at this time.

Commissioner Bedogne inquired as to where the easement will be in relation to the building.

Ms. Wessler stated that proposed easement will be about a ½ foot from the front of the building.

Commissioner Zuellig stated that she is not a fan of the curb cut onto Whittier as it is a residential street and it will be a negative impact on the properties. She inquired as to whether that was something the applicant wanted. Ms. Wessler confirmed that it was something that the applicant wanted.

Commissioner Zuellig inquired as to why there is a jog in the driveway.

**Andy Wakeland, engineer with Giffels Webster, for the applicant-** stated that he jogged the driveway in order to attempt to alleviate the problem with headlights shining into the house just north of the property from cars pulling into the drive on Washtenaw.

Commissioner Zuellig inquired as to why the driveway is proposed for Whittier.

**Beth Williams, construction manager with Innovative Construction Systems, for the applicant-** stated that the owner requested the second driveway. That the drive on Whittier would help with truck access for the dumpster. That it is really for garbage truck and possibly employee access.

Commissioner Zuellig inquired as to why there are five additional parking spaces than what is required by ordinance. She stated that the planning commission has been trying to make an effort to eliminate any unnecessary parking along this corridor.

Williams- stated that since this is a family dentist that sometimes multiple vehicles are driven to the site for one family if they meet up at the dentist office and they are trying to make sure there is ample parking

Commissioner Zuellig inquired as to what is happening in the two feet between the proposed sidewalk and the street.

Wakeland- stated that it will be grass in that area.

Commissioner Zuellig requested that the sidewalk be shifted more north onto the site and that the entire area up to the street be paved since 2 or 3 feet of the grass will more than likely not survive.

Commissioner Bedogne stated that a lot of the green space could be added on site if the rear access drive was eliminated. That he would be fine with retaining the extra parking if the back drive was eliminated.

Commissioner Dahl MacGregor stated that if she was a dental patient at this site, knowing how crowded Washtenaw Ave can be, she would utilize the back drive if it existed.

Commissioner Zuellig requested that the four trees on Whittier be lined up similar to how street trees would usually be while still working around the utilities. The same with the trees on the Washtenaw Ave side. She requested that the first space in the lot be eliminated to create some more space to maneuver, increase the safety and in order to create space for a tree in that area.

Chairperson Jugenitz inquired as to what the rest of the commission thought about the second curb cut on Whittier.

Commissioner Hollifield stated that he can take it or leave it. He did look into it and there are six more similar drives already in existence on Whittier.

Commissioner Dahl MacGregor stated that she is on the fence. She stated that when she first saw it she thought that it would make for a safer flow of traffic but that Commissioner Zuellig makes a good point.

Commissioner Bedogne stated he does not believe that it would make it any less safe if the second drive was eliminated and that it would be a win for the neighborhood to have more green space.

Williams- stated that the client would probably be fine with eliminating the second drive if they could retain the parking.

Ms. Wessler requested that staff be able to confirm with emergency services to see if eliminating the drive off of Whittier would work for emergency access.

Chairperson Jugenitz inquired as to whether the applicants would be ok with the elimination of the southernmost parking space to help allow for the tree to be placed farther back.

Williams- confirmed that would be fine.

Commissioner Zuellig moved that the Planning Commission approve the office expansion at 2100 Washtenaw with the following finding, waivers and conditions:

Finding

1. The application substantially complies with §122-127.

Waivers

1. Planning Commission waiver requested from off-street parking landscaping screening along Washtenaw frontage for visibility concerns.
2. Waiver from street tree standards sought for the north (Whittier), due to utilities in the ROW.

Conditions

1. Applicant to provide a master sign plan for all existing and proposed signage with sign permit applications.
2. Barrier-free access within the parking area appears challenging; there is not a clear path from accessible spaces to the entrance. Applicant to revise and resubmit.
3. Applicant to submit photometric plan to ensure compliance with outdoor lighting standards.
4. Provide off-street parking landscaping screening from Whittier on the east side of the parking lot.
5. Applicant to provide additional detail about how the Washtenaw sidewalk will cross the curb cut.
6. Applicant to provide estimate for fee-in-lieu of construction for the Whittier sidewalk.
7. Applicant to provide details on the landscape wall as indicated in plans for staff review.
8. Engineering conditions as noted in the engineer's letter.
9. Applicant to consider granting an easement to the City for non-motorized transportation purposes over the future right-of-way area. Such an easement could allow for the existing ground sign to remain in place and be refaced as needed.
10. Remove the Whittier access driveway contingent on emergency services review and approval.
11. Reorient the trash enclosure and access from the south.
12. Eliminate the southernmost parking space in the parking lot.
13. Align the proposed street trees on Whittier and along Washtenaw Ave to emulate traditional street tree placement.
14. Shift the Washtenaw Ave sidewalk as far north as possible and pave to the existing curb.

The motion was supported by Commissioner Dahl MacGregor. A roll call vote was taken and carried unanimously 7:0.

3. Annual Report

Ms. Wessler reviewed the report with board members. Commissioner Jugenitz noted four corrections of dates on the graph on the second page. Commissioner Hollifield moved that the Planning Commission adopt the 2016 Planning Commission Annual Report with corrections as noted (Support: J. Talaga) and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Calendar of Meetings

Chairperson Jugenitz reviewed the calendar of meetings. Commissioner Hollifield moved that the calendar of meetings be adopted (Support: J. Talaga) and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Non-Motorized Advisory Committee Appointments

Chairperson Jugenitz reviewed the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee reappointments of Sarah Walsh and Bob Krzewinski for two year terms. Commissioner Dunwoodie moved that the Planning Commission reappoint Sarah Walsh and Bob Krzewinski for two year terms to the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee (Support: P. Hollifield) and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Dahl MacGregor moved that the Planning Commission reappoint Bob Krzewinski as the Committee Chair for a two-year term to the Non-Motorized Advisory Committee (Support: C. Zuellig) and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Non-Motorized Advisory Committee Resolution to MDOT on Non-Motorized Improvements

Commissioner Zuellig suggested that a request or resolution be taken to City Council for more signage on MDOT roads throughout the City. Ms. Wessler suggested that staff could work on a report and bring it back to the Planning Commission to get a better idea of the issues. She also suggested drafting a resolution to City Council for their action. Chairperson Jugenitz requested that staff also look into different funding sources, if MDOT funds are unavailable.

**VII. OLD BUSINESS**

None

**VIII. FUTURE BUSINESS DISCUSSION/UPDATES**

Ms. Wessler noted that the MDOT research and report will be upcoming. A site plan application has been submitted for 539 S. Huron. There are some upcoming changes to the medical marijuana legislation with the State of Michigan. Also the PMD nonconformity update will be going to City Council on January 24<sup>th</sup>. The Zoning Ordinance update will be going to council for the second meeting in February.

**IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Non-motorized Advisory Committee –2016 Annual Report  
Non-motorized Advisory Committee –2017 Project Priorities  
Non-motorized Advisory Committee –January minutes

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

Since there was no further business, Commissioner Hollifield moved to adjourn the meeting (Support: A. Bedogne) and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.