

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2018  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
7:00 P.M.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** M. Dunwoodie, J. Donnelly, J. Talaga, P. Hollifield, J. McGadney, M. Simmons

**Absent:** H. Jugenitz (excused)

**Staff:** Bonnie Wessler, City Planner  
Nan Schuette, Executive Secretary

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Hollifield moved to approve the minutes of August 15, 2018 with corrections as noted by Commissioner Simmons (Support: J. Talaga) and the motion carried unanimously.

**IV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

None

**V. PRESENTATION AND PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

1. 445 S. Huron

Staff presentation was made by City Planner, Bonnie Wessler, who stated that this is a request for a Special Use Permit for approval for "food store less than 15,000 sf with sales of alcohol".

This property is currently a gas station, with a small convenience retail shop. The property was purchased by the current owner in 2016 and began operating in 2017. Prior to that, it had been off-and-on vacant for some time. It was initially constructed in 1971 as a filling station with three auto repair bays. In 1992 and again in 1998, there were confirmed releases of gasoline from the site; the latter being from a leaking underground storage tank. The property is zoned NC, neighborhood corridor. This allows for Automobile Filling Station (without repair) as a special use; it also allows for retail stores and food stores by right. The City requires a special use permit be sought when the sale of alcohol is proposed in a building less than 15,000 sq. ft. Staff is recommending denial of this request with findings as listed in the staff report dated September, which is included in the city website under "Planning Commission". Staff is

also recommending denial of the Limited Site Plan and included a list of findings and noted deficiencies, in the staff report of September.

Planner Wessler referred to comments from residents Steve Pierce and Joe Lawrence, who voiced strong objection to this request.

Planner Wessler also added that the applicant for 445 S Huron has requested that we table the application tonight, for two reasons. First, they'd like more time to address the issues that were brought up in the staff report, and second, the lead on this project for their team was hospitalized last night and will be unable to attend. They can still send \*a\* representative, but it won't be the person most familiar with the site and the application. Planner Wessler recommended that the application be tabled, but that the public hearing continue to be held, as it was extensively noticed.

Commissioner Dennis moved to open the public portion of the hearing (Support: P. Hollifield) and the motion carried unanimously.

**Bob Doyle, 210 S. Washington** – commended planning staff for the thorough report – has lived in this area for 28 years. He hopes that the commission will deny this request.

**Steve Pierce, 118 S. Washington** – confirmed that this item will be tabled until October and that another opportunity will be available at that time for the public to participate. He added further information on the business, and also added that this is a gateway to the City and it is his opinion that they do not need another liquor business there since currently there is a party store right across the street, as well as a medical marijuana facility within close proximity.

**William Allende** – stated that he is not a resident of the city but does have family in the area on Madison. He is an assistant pastor at Messiah Church and the members are quite concerned. He is quite opposed to granting this request.

**Louise Betsy, 210 E. Ainsworth** – Lived in the area for 60 years, complained about non-resident business owners who do not take care of the business. Ypsilanti used to be clean – she is anti-marijuana and it is her opinion they should ban both liquor and marijuana.

**Brenda Bird, formerly lived at 450 Burton** – she currently lives in Superior Township. She is a member of Messiah Church. The community needs to think of the children – doesn't know how the weed store got in. This is not what we are trying for here. Another liquor store does not fit.

**Cherissa Lamarr, 123 Bell** – she feels that liquor and drugs equal's crime. Home violence and crime goes up. This does not fit and it is not a positive image for the entryway to the city. She hopes that the commission will deny. Not conducive to the community.

**Stephanie Smith**, stated that she was born in Ypsilanti and attends Messiah Church. She is anti-marijuana. This is close to the Historic District and is not benefitting the children. Not supportive.

**Bishop Grayson, Messiah Temple Church** – was born and raised here – the residents in the community feel threatened and do not feel that their representatives are listening to them. It used to be safe for people walking dogs. They need better communication and is asking for denial of this request.

**Norman Burgess, 29 Bell** – referred to 9 Casler and asked if it is a halfway house. He asked if he had missed the notice. Feels there is no communication from the board to people. Chair Dunwoodie reminded the resident that the issue being discussed was the application for Special Use Permit at the gas station.

**Lee Tooson** – stated that the liquor license is a state issue. He also feels there is no need for drugs or alcohol – that is not the remedy. He proceeded to quote various bible scriptures and stated that we need to chase the rats out of town.

Commissioner Hollifield moved to close the public portion of the hearing (Support: T. Dennis) and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hollifield agreed that we should table this item giving the applicant the right to speak on their behalf.

Commissioner Talaga moved to table Site Plan Review and Special Use for 445 S. Huron until October meeting (Support: P. Hollifield) and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Dunwoodie also took the opportunity to reiterate to the audience that we appreciate the amount of comments from everyone. A question came up during the public comment as to why we are continuing to table given the fact that there is a recommendation from staff to deny. It is the commission's responsibility to hear the applicant and in the interest of fairness, and due to the unforeseen circumstances by the applicant, we will give the applicant that opportunity.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. 307 N River – Site Plan Review.**

No action – will continue to table.

### **2. Medical Marijuana Provisioning Centers: Increase in buffer**

No action – will continue to table.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

None

## **VIII. FUTURE BUSINESS DISCUSSION/UPDATES**

1. Application for child care home
2. Text Amendment – Accessory buildings

A resident asked where information could be obtained on notifications. Planner Wessler distributed copies of a pamphlet that has been put together for the public. More copies are located in the lobby.

## **IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **1. Non-motorized Committee Report**

Had a meeting. Commissioner Talaga stated that they are updating the non-motorized plan. They plan to have a draft before November. They are looking for another member and asked if anyone else on the board would be willing to commit.

### **2. Master Plan – Housing Affordability/Access subcommittee report**

Chair Dunwoodie attended a meeting where they revisited the timeline on consideration of the gathering of public input and how they will put their findings and reports together in a report. This would be an amendment to the Master Plan instead of a part of the Master Plan update.

They also divided into a new set of sub-groups that can concentrate on other paths for gathering information.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

Since there was no further business, Commissioner Donnelly moved to adjourn the meeting (Support: J. Talaga) and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.