MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF ROMULUS PLANNING COMMISSION HELD ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2016

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Freitag at 3:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call Showing: Jerry Frederick, Melvin Zilka, Edna Talon-Jemison, Mike Glotfelty, Daniel McAnally, Mike Prybyla, David Paul and Cathy Freitag

   Excused: Celeste Roscoe

   Also in attendance: Carol Maise, City Planner, and Christina Wilson, Planning Secretary

3. Motion by Zilka supported by Glotfelty to approve the amended agenda and hear old business (a) before public hearings and then old business (b) last.


   Agenda

   1. Pledge of Allegiance

   2. Roll Call

   3. Approval of Amended Agenda

   4. Approval of Minutes

   5. Comments from Public on Non Agenda Items

   6. Public Hearings

      A. SLU-2016-003/SPR-2016-015; Gateway Park Phase III, requesting special land use and site plan approval for an 11,360 sq. ft. commercial building for retails and restaurants including a drive-thru located at 8300 Merriman. Parcel #80-040-99-0003-722. Zoning – RC, Regional Center District. (Action required: hold a public hearing and recommendation on special land use request to City Council to approve, approve with conditions or deny site plan).

   7. Old Business


      B. PC-2015-020; City of Romulus Master Plan Amendment (Action required: make recommendation to City Council).

   8. New Business – None.

   9. PC-Cases Involving Advice or input from the Planning Commission
10. Reports
   A. Chairperson
   B. City Planner
      1) Planning Department Status Report

11. Reports on Interest Designation

12. Communications

13. Adjournment

4. Approval of Minutes

   A. Motion by Glotfelty supported by Paul to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the Planning
      Commission held on Monday, November 21, 2016.

      Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Glotfelty, Paul, Frederick, Prybyla, McAnally, Zilka and Freitag. Abstain –
      Talon-Jemison. Nays – None. Motion Carried.

5. Comments from Public on Non Agenda Items – None.

6. Public Hearings

   A. SLU-2016-003/SPR-2016-015; Gateway Park Phase III, requesting special land use and site plan
      approval for an 11,360-sq. ft. commercial building for retail and a drive-thru restaurant located at

      Julie Allison, on behalf of the property owner, Group 10 Management, 11545 St. Aloysius,
      Romulus, MI 48174, and Thom Dumond, Boss Engineering, 3121 E. Grand River Ave., Howell,
      MI 48843 stepped forward to speak.

      • Mr. Dumond stated that this is a new project on Merriman Road in front of two existing
        hotels. It is part of a larger development, Gateway Park Commercial Center that includes the
        two hotels and a vacant lot. This new building would complete the project. He presented a
        site plan presentation to the commissioniers showing the location of the proposed site.
      • Mr. Dumond explained that the site plan shows an 11,000 sq., ft. building for restaurant
        and restaurants with a drive-thru at the south end of the building. There will be parking
        around the majority of the building, making it easy for customers to get in and out of the site. He
        explained that with the drive-thru at the south end of the building, the stacking will be at the
        rear of the building.
      • Mr. Dumond showed the elevations to the commissioniers noting that the architect did a
        really nice job on the building with materials; a mix of brick and block and a nice color
        scheme. The front will have black awnings.
      • Mr. Dumond stated that they hope to get site plan approval so that they may get through
        engineering and building review and get started building, hopefully in the spring of 2017.
      • Ms. Freitag asked Mr. Dumond if they have any tenants yet.
      • Mr. Dumond replied that they have a tentative agreement with a national coffee shop to be
        placed at the south end of the building where the drive-thru is to be located.
Let the record show that an affidavit of first class mail has been shown and is on file.

Chairperson Freitag opened up the public hearing portion of the meeting for questions and comments from the public. Seeing no one, Chairperson Freitag closed the public portion of the meeting and opened it up to questions and comments from the commissioners.

- Mr. Glotfelsky commented that the plans are very nice and he asked Mr. Dumond where the grease dumpster will be located.
- Mr. Dumond replied that it will be something that they will have to add but it will most likely be located in an enclosure at the rear if the building; instead of two enclosures, there will be three.
- Ms. Freitag commented that they will leave approval of the grease dumpster and enclosure to administration.
- Mr. Paul commented that the grease traps from the sanitary sewer appear to be tied into the storm sewer.
- Mr. Dumond replied that it was not the intent and that they end just before the sewer.
- Mr. Frederick commented that he had concerns about the flow of traffic onto Merriman Rd. The plan shows that the split driveway and to exit the site there may be individuals that take the first drive out onto Merriman Rd. What will prevent them from doing that?
- Mr. Dumond replied that they will need signage there, “Do Not Enter” signs.
- Mr. Frederick suggested misaligning the driveway so that the driver has to go right and won’t turn left. Or perhaps install an island so that the drive has to do a Michigan turn-around.
- Mr. Dumond stated that there really isn’t room in the parking lot to do that and for the vehicles to turn around. He believes that signage is the best option.
- Mr. Prybyla asked Mr. Dumond if on the wish list of future tenants, do they plan to have specialty stores or fast food operations?
- Mr. Dumond replied that it is typically a mixed variety of cell phone stores and sub sandwiches, things of that nature. They look at a lot of national companies for tenants.
- Ms. Maise noted that the rendering that he presented to the commissioners is different from the one in the packet and she wanted to confirm which set of elevations were they proposing.
- Mr. Dumond commented that the ones presented are from the previous plans and that they are requesting approval on the drawings in the commissioner’s packets.
- Ms. Freitag commented that the City of Romulus enjoys working with Mr. Dumond and Julie Allison because they always do a great job in building first class facilities.

Motion by Paul supported by Prybyla to recommend to City Council special land use approval for a restaurant with drive-thru window for SLU-2016-003; Gateway Park Phase III at 8300 Merriman based upon the findings that the proposed drive-thru restaurant is consistent with the Master Plan, compliant with the standards of the Zoning Ordinance, and compatible with adjacent land uses; and the proposed use will not negatively impact the environment, traffic or public services. The approval is conditioned upon site plan approved by the Planning Commission.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Paul, Glotfelsky, McAnally, Glotfelsky, Zilka, Talon-Jemison, Frederick and Freitag. Nays – None. Motion Carried.

Motion by Glotfelsky supported by Zilka to approve the site plan for SPR-2016-015; Gateway Park Phase III located at 8300 Merriman. Approval is subject to:
1. Special land use approval by the City Council;
2. Administrative site plan review of the outdoor seating area;
3. Parcel reconfiguration through the Assessor’s Office.
4. Pavement removal per Sheet C12;
5. Additional screening of the rooftop mechanical units if visible from the street;
6. Addition of a grease dumpster; and
7. Additional signage to direct traffic circulation at the south driveway.


7. Old Business

A. SPR-2016-004; US Park Entryway, requesting revised site plan approval for a new building and canopy entrance at 9601 Middlebelt. Parcel #80-050-99-0003-007.

Julie Allison, property owner/representative, 11545 St. Aloysius, Romulus, MI 48174, and Thom Dumond, Boss Engineering, 3121 E. Grand River Ave., Howell, MI 48843 stepped forward to speak.

- Mr. Dumond stated that the commissioners have seen this project before. On March 7, 2016 they received conditional site plan approval however after more thought on the design of the building they decided to come back to the Planning Commission with revised site plans.
- Mr. Dumond explained that the original design of the site would have made it difficult for vehicles to enter and exit the facility. Previously the building was situated east to west, so you would enter the site from Middlebelt, turning 90 degrees, going through it and turning again to go into the parking lot. After further review it was determined that the site plan just didn’t function. This new design shows the building rotated at 90 degrees. It is the same building, just rotated and now the flow of traffic is east to west. Some minor adjustments were also made to the parking and drive.
- Mr. Glotfelty asked Mr. Dumond about the proposed 46 percent brick on the building and asked if they would bring that up to 50 percent.
- Mr. Dumond replied yes if it is required. The reason for all of the glass is from a security standpoint to see all traffic coming and going.
- Mr. Glotfelty also asked Mr. Dumond if he would supply a knox box at the entry gate, per the City’s Fire Chief recommendations in his review.
- Mr. Dumond replied yes.
- Mr. Glotfelty also asked Mr. Dumond if they would be installing an oil/water separator.
- Mr. Dumond replied yes.
- Mr. Frederick stated that the appearance of the rotation of the building from the road would be raised, as opposed to the previous site plan and the design will produce more bang for the buck.
- Ms. Freitag commented that Boss Engineering and Julie Allison always do a nice job in Romulus, they go above and beyond.
- Ms. Maise asked Mr. Dumond if the glass was included as part of the calculations for building materials. She also informed the commissioners that a waiver was granted on the previous site plan for the building materials to go with 46 percent brick. Looking at the elevations, it appears that there is a lot of glass, which is not included as part of the calculations.
Mr. Dumond replied that he was unsure and that he would have to check with Scott Bowers the architect.

Ms. Maise suggested that Mr. Dumond rerun the figures because it may meet the requirements now.

Ms. Maise also asked Mr. Dumond if he planned on seeking a variance for the front setback or if he is able to push the parking back.

Mr. Dumond asked Ms. Maise how far they would need to go back.

Ms. Maise replied that a 40 foot setback as it exists now is required. The previous site plan met requirements however the revised parking encroaches into the setback.

Mr. Dumond replied that he could just lose a couple of parking spaces. It would be easier than seeking a variance.

Mr. Paul asked Mr. Dumond about the 2 catch basins on the revised site plan. These are full of debris and he was unsure of where these go.

Mr. Dumond replied that currently what is happening is that storm water is gathered in the existing catch basins and they will tie into them and head to the southeast to an existing detention basin. As part of their construction process, the first thing they plan to do is clean all of the basins out. When the parking lot was resurfaced a few years ago, a lot of debris ended up in them. They will be vacuumed out so that they have a clean system.

Motion by Paul supported by Glotfelty to approve SPR-2016-004; US Park Entryway, revised site plan for a new building and canopy entrance located at 9601 Middlebelt. Approval is conditioned upon:

1. Approval of front yard parking and fence variance by the BZA or elimination of the pavement and fence from the front setback area.
2. Submittal of a manufacturer’s specification sheet must be provided to verify that the fixtures are in compliance.
3. A site inspection will be conducted to determine if screening of the parking/vehicles is adequate, and if necessary, additional plantings must be provided.
4. Any other items identified by the ARC committee being addressed during engineering/building review.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Paul, Glotfelty, Zilka, McAnally, Prybyla, Talon-Jemison, Frederick, and Freitag. Nays – None. Motion Carried.

B. PC-2015-020; City of Romulus Master Plan Amendment

Ms. Maise informed the commission that the master plan update is referenced with a PC number because it’s a project that started last year. As the commissioners know, there are two critical areas of the city that are included in the plan that require further discussion, that being the Vining Road Development District and the downtown. To not hold up the rest of the master plan, it may be best to not consider the proposed changes to these areas until further study is done.

Ms. Maise noted that LSL Planning has made some tweaks since the June 2016 draft, more from a grammar and formatting standpoint.

Ms. Maise recognized that there was a question about truck routes from the Planning Commission. OHM Engineering is adding a second map to the master plan to show existing routes versus future proposed routes.
• Ms. Maise noted that the language for the Vining Road Development District and the Downtown area will state something like “needs to be discussed further as a separate sub-area plan” which could then become a master plan amendment next year.

• Mr. McAnally asked Ms. Maise if this would allow the city to get on with the master plan and not rush through the sub-areas.

• Ms. Maise replied yes. The master plan that is in place now is from 2009 and the enabling legislation says it should be updated every 5 years.

• Ms. Maise reminded the commissioners that the City of Romulus did Envision Romulus first, which was a great way to kick off the master plan update. This is why we didn’t hold to the 5 year time frame. Envision Romulus gave us a lot of great information that ties into the master plan and 2 new sub-areas that are more detailed.

Motion by McAnally supported by Zilka to recommend City Council approve PC-2015-020; City of Romulus Master Plan Amendment and to adopt the resolution of adoption as follows:

WHEREAS, Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, provides for the preparation of a Master Plan for the physical development of the municipality, with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing development of the municipality and its environs that is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient and economical; considers the character of the planning jurisdiction and its suitability for particular uses, judged in terms of such factors as trends in land and population development; will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare; includes, among other things, promotion of or adequate provision for 1 or more of the following: 1) system of transportation to lessen congestion on streets; 2) safety from fire and other dangers; 3) light and air; 4) healthful and convenient distribution of population; 5) good civic design and arrangement and wise and efficient expenditure of public funds; 6) public utilities such as sewage disposal and water supply and other public improvements; 7) recreation; and 8) the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability; and

WHEREAS, development of a future land use plan is pivotal in accommodating development in an organized manner while retaining its unique characteristics and promoting economic development; and

WHEREAS, the updated Master Plan is needed to address the documented public health, safety and welfare concerns with un-managed growth and an incompatible mixture of land uses; and

WHEREAS, a Master Plan update was necessary to respond to changing land use conditions in the City, changes related to large land holdings such as the Detroit Wayne County Metropolitan Airport, the desire to protect the City’s various neighborhoods and low density residential areas, to need to provide a high quality of life for its residents, and offer residents and businesses the needed services and support to be successful; and

WHEREAS, a Master Plan is important to provide a sound basis for zoning, other related regulations, and community investments; and

WHEREAS, the planning process involved analysis of existing conditions and an analysis of the basic needs of the current and future population; and

WHEREAS, the planning process included a public hearing to allow opportunity for the public to comment and to respond to the draft plan; and
WHEREAS, the plan contains recommendations for future land use arrangement and density, neighborhoods, multiple mode transportation improvements, community facilities improvements, non-residential design guidelines, natural feature preservation, and specific sub-area plans to guide growth and development; and

WHEREAS, the plan includes implementation strategies and responsibility for completion of each recommendation to ensure the plan is able to be accomplished; and

WHEREAS, the City complied with required plan development steps of notifying and involving surrounding communities and outside agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Romulus City Council has also asserted their right to also adopt the plan; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on the Master Plan update amendment on September 18, 2016 to formally receive community input.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Romulus Planning Commission adopts the City of Romulus Master Plan, in accordance with Section 43 of Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes – McAnally, Zilka, Glotfelty, Paul, Frederick, Talon-Jemison, Prybyla and Freitag. Nays – None. Motion Carried.

8. New Business

9. PC Cases involving Advice or Input from the Planning Commission

- Ms. Maise informed the commissioners that she will be looking for their advice on possible ordinance amendments in the coming year.
- Ms. Maise stated that requests for powder coating in the industrial district have been common. Painting is the most similar use and it falls under the M-T and M-2 districts but not allowed in the M-1 District. There are buildings in the M-1 district that include both uses however the ordinance isn’t clear as to what’s allowed. There is currently a possible occupant that’s looking to do painting in a paint booth in the M-1 District so we need to look closer at the ordinance and possibility suggest an amendment. Ms. Maise stated that some of the concern is the proximity to residential and the thought was that they could be allowed in the M-1 District if the use was interior. A residential boundary line was suggested.
- Ms. Maise suggested that the city open up the districts to allow for keeping up with industry standards.
- Ms. Freitag stated that it would be compatible with other allowances in those districts.
- Mr. Glotfelty stated that he has done some underground work for companies of that nature and unless they are using less harmful products, they had to use clay pipe. There may be something more environmentally friendly now but typically they couldn’t use pvc.
- Mr. Frederick commented that powder coating is not liquid based. You use a positive and a negative charge and that pulls the paint onto the metal and then it gets melted on with heat. There is no mixing or spraying with powder coating.
10. Reports

A. Chairperson

1. Chairperson Freitag wished everyone a safe holiday, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
2. Chairperson Freitag challenged everyone to do an act of random kindness instead of a new year's resolution.

C. City Planner

1. Planning Department Status Report
   - Ms. Maise informed the commissioners that if there is a January meeting it will be on Wednesday due to the Martin Luther King holiday.
   - Ms. Maise stated that there are a few projects in the hopper.

11. Reports on Interest Designation
   - Mr. Prybyla discussed the Wolverine Pipe Line project running through Romulus.

12. Communications
   - Mr. Zilka wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

13. Adjournment

Motion by Zilka supported by Prybyla to adjourn the meeting at 4:00 p.m. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Zilka, Prybyla, McAnally, Frederick, Talon-Jemison, Glotfelty, Paul & Freitag, Nays – None. Motion Carried.

Michael Prybyla, Secretary
City of Romulus Planning Commission