MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF ROMULUS PLANNING COMMISSION HELD ON MONDAY, JUNE 18, 2018

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Freitag at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call Showing: Jerry Frederick, Melvin Zilka, Jessica Workman, Mike Glotfelty, Daniel McAnally, Edna Talon-Jemison, Celeste Roscoe, Dave Paul and Cathy Freitag

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

3. Motion by Zilka supported by Glotfelty to approve the agenda as presented.


Agenda

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Agenda

4. Approval of Minutes

5. Comments from Public on Non Agenda Items

6. Public Hearings

7. Old Business

A. PC-2012-005/006; Romulus Village

Applicant: Ecorse Development, LLC
Frank Jarbou, Jarbou Development

Request: Site plan approval extension #3
Location: 39325 Ecorse (Parcel # 82-80-026-99-0016-701)

(Action required: action on site plan extension for 12 months to expire 7/28/2019)

B. SPR-2018-008; M & K Truck

Applicant: Steve Barber, 28101 Ecorse Road, LLC
Matt Cole, Paradigm Design

Request: Landscape Plan Approval
Location: 29275 Citrin Drive (Parcel #82-80-047-99-0024-704)
Project: Development of a 49,672-sq. ft. semi-trailer truck sales and service facility with associated parking

(Action required: Approval, approval with conditions or denial of the landscape plan or postpone action)
8. New Business

9. Election of Officers

10. PC-Cases Involving Advice or input from the Planning Commission

11. Reports
    A. Chairperson
    B. City Planner
       1) Planning Department Status Report

12. Reports on Interest Designation

13. Communications

14. Adjournment

4. Approval of Minutes

    A. Motion by McAnally supported by Workman to approve the minutes of the special Planning Commission meeting held on May 21, 2018 and the regular Planning Commission meeting held on May 21, 2018.


5. Comments from Public on Non Agenda Items

6. Public Hearings

7. Old Business

    A. PC-2012-005/006; Romulus Village, requesting a 12-month extension of approved site plan for retail development including a 16,000-sq. ft. shopping center with drive-thru window, 2,400-sq. ft. fast food restaurant with drive-thru and stand-alone ATM on Ecorse Road east of Hannan. DP #80-026-99-0016-702.

Frank Jarbou, Symmetry Management/Ecorse Development, 4198 Orchard Lake Rd., Suite 250, Orchard Lake, MI 48323 stepped forward to speak.

- Mr. Jarbou stated that the first phase consisted of a gas station and after it was built they started Phase 2, which includes Tim Hortons. He commented that the business is steady now and they are moving towards a positive ground. In order to attract new tenants corporate businesses want to see a track record of what kind of business that they are doing. They also want to see a nice place, which he believes that they have a nice place. They are aggressively moving the next phase and they have been talking to a few credit unions, mom & pop stores, cellular stores, etc. to fill in the retail center that they want.

- Mr. Jarbou also stated that they want to develop the out lot with a couple of fast food restaurants. They have also talked to a couple of banks. This project is on the cusp, where
these businesses want to be there but, they also want to see numbers that would help substantiate the investment.

- Mr. Jarbou commented that they have not sat on the sidelines, this is something that he has been personally involved in. He travels across the country to talk to these possible tenants and he respectfully asks the commissioners for another extension so that they can finish the development.
- Chairperson Freitag asked Ms. Maise if this would be the third and final extension.
- Ms. Maise replied yes.
- Mr. Glotfelty complimented Mr. Jarbou on how nice the site looks. He mentioned that they should be proud of their business.
- Mr. Jarbou thanked Mr. Glotfelty.

Motion by Glotfelty supported by Talon-Jemison to approve a 1 year extension for PC-2012-005/006; Romulus Village located at 39325 Ecorse Road/Parcel #80-026-99-0016-701. Approval will expire on July 28, 2019.

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

B. SPR-2018-008; M & K Truck; requesting approval of the building elevations and landscape plan for 29275 Citrin. DP# 80-047-99-0024-704.

John Walsh, Paradigm Designs, 550 3 Mile Rd., Grand Rapids, MI 49544 stepped forward on behalf of M & K Truck. Steve Barber, M & K Truck was also in attendance.

- Mr. Walsh reminded the commissioners that they were before them in late March in which they presented them with application for the proposed development on Citrin. He mentioned that it was an expedited application that went through the process and he recalls that there was a lot of good discussion. He believes that there was a building rendering that the commissioners saw and the commissioners wanted to see a revised landscape plan.
- Mr. Walsh noted that they went before the Board of Zoning Appeals soon after their meeting with the Planning Commission and received a favorable response on parking in the front yard and a fence in the front yard, which is the I-94 frontage. He mentioned that the BZA liked what they had proposed but, they asked that we bring it back before the Planning Commission to make sure that this closes the loop. So, that is what is being seen here today.
- Mr. Walsh commented that the site concept stayed the same but, they added a hedge row and a building rendering. Although they didn't make any changes to the initial submission they just put it in a colored 3D version.
- Mr. Walsh noted that as discussed in the previous PC meeting, as you travel along I-94, the expectation is that you see new truck sales. The hedge row does help shield the service bays on the north side of the building, which is 30 – 36 inch hedge row that they did add to address the ARC and Planning Commissioners concerns to shield the bumpers.
- Mr. Walsh stated that they are respectfully back before the commissioners to discuss their input on the plan. They are happy on how it turned out and reminded the commissioners that in March they looked at the auto parking area and what the commissioners expected to see when they drive into the site. They felt right making the code compliance and they do meet the interior landscaping and perimeter plantings along that auto and visitor car parking to the east of the facility. They tried to dress up the area immediately north and northeast of the facility, the public areas seen as you drive into the site. He added that the one big change was adding a solid hedge row on the bumpers of the trucks and as you move west to the site, with
some of the truck turning patterns, they did add some lines of plantings on the very far west. They believe that they did a good job in transitioning from heavy landscaping on the east side to more of a utilitarian operation aspect on the west side.

- Mr. Walsh commented that he noticed on the ARC report that he doesn’t recall discussing or reading in the meeting minutes that there is talk of dressing up the west side of the building. They did have that discussion at the March meeting and they still want to stand firm that they have plans for some additional future expansion on the west side of the property. Although M&K have a facility on the north side of I-94 on Ecorse, they are moving to a much larger facility here and there may be a future building expansion to the west of the building. This would impact an area that is already impervious since they intend to grow the site.

- Ms. Maise commented that this was a comment from the OHM letter and explained that what that will do is require a waiver. Once she spoke with the landscape architect about the trees on the west side of the property they do break it up.

- Mr. Walsh explained that as you move away from new tractor parking there is a solid hedge row and larger plantings and doesn’t believe that the west elevation will be seen. They are leaving that area plain so that maybe in a couple of years they can expand the building.

- Ms. Maise stated that she believes that they just wanted it on record that OHM granted a waiver to that.

- Mr. Walsh thanked the Planning Commissioners for their time and stated that since they were last before them they were granted Wayne County Soil Erosion approval and they are getting ready for Engineering approval, they have the site contractor up and ready to go and they have worked through 2 rounds of comments from Wayne County. Pending some favorable resolution tonight, they are excited to bring some dirt onto the site and get through the nuts and bolts of the permitting process.

- Mr. McAnally commented that this is a good improvement from what they started with, he is pleased to see what the applicant has done. He asked Mr. Walsh if the hedge row along the front will grow and wondered if they intend to keep it at 36 inches, as shown on the site plan.

- Mr. Walsh replied that they are 30-36 inches at planting, he believes there is a 36 inch minimum requirement, and he would expect them to grow to 5 feet and to be maintained somewhere along there. This type of plant would be difficult to maintain at 3 feet all the time but, he thinks that the intent was to just get the bumper.

- Mr. McAnally was hoping that the hedge row would be a little higher than what was shown on the site plan.

- Mr. Walsh commented that the rendering is a bit arbitrary and it appears to be a little shy and that it is possibly the size at planting.

- Ms. Maise commented that some of the concern that ARC has, after speaking to the landscape architect, is the spacing requirements. The ordinance requires 2.5 feet on center and these are a little more than that.

- Mr. Walsh commented that they will make them 2.5 feet on center, they will comply. It was a mishap on their part and it is their intent to comply with the ordinance.

- Mr. Paul commented that although he was not at the first meeting, he did read the minutes and he thought that the reason that they pushed for a conditional approval was that they could get started on the project, yet there is nothing done.

- Mr. Walsh stated that was the hope and since then they just signed a site contractor. They bid and had to re-bid the job. They have also had discussions with Wayne County, which were favorable. He is thankful for the commissioner’s approval, which has allowed them to really get going and allowed them to start some building design, which has allowed them to get further along. So, it’s not that nothing has been done, he apologizes that the commissioners haven’t seen anything on site. They are anxious to get going.
Mr. Glotfelty commented that this is an improvement in landscaping since March but, wondered if the west side of the property is going to have black decorative fence or vinyl chain link fencing.

Mr. Walsh replied that the intent was black chain link. It looks a little invisible as you drive by with the black instead of galvanized.

Mr. Paul inquired about what appears to be a driveway on the northwest side.

Mr. Walsh replied that it is an odd shaped lot and that the landlord for DTE’s solar panel has legal access for that drive for maintenance. They will come through our site and we are maintaining a gravel drive and sub-lease it back to DTE. This drive will be discouraged from any employee to use.

Mr. McAnally commented that in the last meeting there was discussion about building materials and was under the impression that the applicant would bring samples to show the commissioners what they would be using.

Mr. Walsh commented that he did not bring any samples but, if the commissioners would like, they can prepare a board and leave it for everyone to see.

Ms. Maise commented that she believes that some of the issue was the colors and asked Mr. Walsh to talk a little about that. She also asked Mr. Walsh if one of the colors was changed to match better.

Mr. Walsh replied that one of the big discussion topics was that the overhead doors would not be very visible and the site plan is grade accurate, driving westbound I-94, you may just see the tops of the doors. The doors do blend in because the intent is to match the metal siding on the building. He went on to describe the colors on the building. White metal panels, that go along with the Volvo requirements, tan or earth tone split-faced concrete block, a slightly darker tone, to give some variation to the building - at the service center portion of the building and the doors, they want those to blend in as you go by. He believes that the truck sales will blend in and they would be happy to provide staff with a materials board if the commissioners would like.

Mr. McAnally commented that as long as there isn’t a heavy contrast, that is where there commissioners are at.

Ms. Maise stated that there was some concern with the white, noted in 1(a) in her report, the prefinished metal color that will match the Sherwin Williams Gray Matters and the last plan had more of that detail opposed to the white. That was the applicants solve and she noted that it sounds as though the commissioners are ok with that.

Mr. McAnally inquired about the metal siding.

Mr. Walsh stated that they view it as 2 separate buildings and the service center is a basic engineered metal building with vertical metal siding and overhead doors on the bulk of the canopy. He noted that these are metal panels either 2x4 or 3x6 architectural panel. He compared them to a car dealership how they pop out a little with a sign background with split-faced block with a lot of windows. They think of the whole building as an office area and a service area.

Mr. McAnally commented that he was looking at more of the color, he wondered if the color was embedded into the metal or if it was a painted surface.

Mr. Walsh replied that the paint is a factory applied finish. A 20-30 year warranty, high impact finish that is pretty standard for the warehouse industry.

Chairperson Freitag apologized that she wasn’t at the previous meeting and asked Mr. Walsh some questions regarding the project and materials.

Mr. Walsh summarized the project for Chairperson Freitag by using the site plan in his PowerPoint presentation.
Mr. Walsh described the traffic flow, parking, staging, and building layout. He stated that the tractor sales will occupy the frontage of I-94. The intent of the canopy is to have the trucks that are in need of repair to pull up in front of the service bays and a technician will come out and assess.
Chairperson Freitag asked Mr. Walsh if they will be doing heavy engine overhauls.
Mr. Walsh replied no.
Mr. Paul asked Mr. Walsh since they are going to have 150 tractors will they have as many trailers.
Mr. Barber replied that the trailers that come in for repair with a trailer will off load them to the back so that they can service the trucks.
Mr. Paul wondered if they will have trailers for sale as well.
Mr. Barber replied no, they will only be selling trucks.
Mr. Paul commented that he has spoken with some of the members of the BZA and they informed him that M&K will be selling trailers.
Mr. Barber replied that he was not aware of that.
Mr. Walsh stated that M&K does sell new trailers and they thought originally that they would have a few on site but, it’s truck sales that drives their business. The intent is that if 25% of the service vehicles come in and they have a trailer attached its short term and they would repair the trucks and get them on their way.
Mr. Glotfelty inquired about the surface area where the trailers will be stored while the trucks are being repaired. He didn’t have the original plan in front of him and wondered if the surface is concrete to support the dolly legs of the trailers. He stated that when you drop a trailer it should not be dropped on asphalt, it should be dropped on a concrete dolly pad.
Mr. Walsh commented that they looked at a bid alternate of all concrete pavement and in which case, that dolly pad goes away and if there is asphalt on the site plan they would want a dolly pad. He mentioned that the trailers will be there short term but, they would not want their parking lot tore up.
Mr. Walsh stated that if the plan shows asphalt they will put in a dolly pad.
Chairperson Freitag asked Mr. Walsh if they could possibly have 150 trucks across the front of I-94.
Mr. Walsh replied yes, staggered over 3 rows of parking and he understands that it is a bit of a mind boggling number but, to really stock this site, it’s necessary. M&K have 18 other facilities and they are comfortable with these numbers and are excited to have that volume of trucks ready for sale.
Mr. Paul commented that the applicant said that they could easily have as few as 25-40 trucks, depending on the delivery and sales.
Mr. Walsh commented that it would be few and far between to see the parking lot that sparse. They are a three time Volvo of the year dealer and they move a lot of trucks. They are excited to have the space to do this because they can’t do this at their current facility now.
Mr. Frederick commented that he looked at other M&K facilities on Google Earth and this appears to be very similar to the others, like Indianapolis. He commented that it looked like a nice operation.
Mr. Walsh thanked Mr. Frederick. He commented that Google maps aren’t usually flattering but, if it looked good on that map M&K will do just as good if not better here.
Mr. Frederick stated that he had made reference at the March PC meeting that at Birch Run there is a Ford dealer and a General Trailer on the east and west sides of the freeway, he Google searched those and did the street view as well and M&K falls right in line with that type of display for new vehicles.
• Mr. Walsh commented that the trucks are all new Volvo brand and he feels it is a good fit for that busy truck route.
• Mr. Frederick stated that he feels that M&K have come back with what the Planning Commission was looking for.
• Chairperson Freitag commented that she is not happy with the shrubs across the front and feels that the applicant needs to provide more landscaping across the front. She also commented that the renderings are nice but, what the applicant is presenting shows mature trees and that won’t be the case for a few years.
• Mr. Walsh replied that they tried to balance it out as a 2-3 year snapshot and year one of the landscaping is tough but, just to reiterate for those that were not at the last Planning Commission meeting, the 20 ft. strip in the front yard there are 2 separate easements, one of which is a temporary easement that gives maintenance rights, the other is a petroleum pipeline easement. So, they are particular about overhanging branches and roots within the easement. At that time the discussion was that they thought that they could get shrubs in that easement and this has been what the pipeline company hasn’t objected to although, they are never happy when you put anything close to their pipeline. He mentioned that they are trying to keep the shrubs and trees out of the petroleum easement purposefully. They are trying to use the islands on the northeast and west to dress up where they could but, there was some thought process behind that.
• Mr. Frederick asked Mr. Walsh if there was a pipeline at the rear of the property.
• Mr. Walsh replied that there are 2 parallel pipelines on the south 50 ft. and they are allowed to encroach into the easements but, they can’t fill over the pipelines and this is what has set their building and site placement. The northerly 20-ft. they really can’t do anything within that easement. They get a little heavy handed with their easements but, they haven’t objected to the current landscape plan, they didn’t approve it but, they don’t object to it.
• Mr. McAnally commented that during the discussion at the previous meeting they went back and forth of what the commissioners wanted to see in the front, they wanted something to decorate that front hedgerow because the original proposal there was nothing. The applicant has come back with this but, they also have to bear in mind that this is a dealership where they are trying to sell their product and that’s putting it at the front of the lot and he understands that. He doesn’t think they want to cause them to absolutely block the front of their vehicles. He has been trying to think of what it could be dressed up better without doing that because again, if you put anything big, like trees or bushes they are encroaching into that easement area.
• Chairperson Freitag stated that one thing they could do is every so many spaces they could put plantings in that area or a little island with something. Maybe every 10 spaces or something.
• Mr. McAnally and Mr. Paul asked for clarification on what Chairperson Freitag wanted.
• Chairperson Freitag mentioned maybe an island or flower bed to break up the hedgerow.
• Mr. Walsh commented that they did try to do what was comfortable in an auto parking lot setting but, with past experience with trying to do that in a truck yard but, with the long term or longevity they were concerned. If they were to interject a few landscape islands with a tree they are concerned how long they would live and he doesn’t think they will provide much visual impact there. When you drive by at approximately 70 mph the hope is that the building catches you going westbound, which is a lasting image with hopefully some high quality trucks. They did try to cluster some more plantings northeast and northwest. They do have some concern as well about the tractors that will be moving around and what they can sneak in the middle of the parking lot. They are very hesitant to add anything jutting into the parking lot because just thinking of minimal impact passing at 70 mph and the survival of those plants.
Chairperson Freitag stated that even going by at 70 mph a 3-ft. hedge would be blurred too.

Mr. Walsh agreed but commented that they tried to do something to stick to what the commissioners wanted for Romulus and to work with the city. As much as they can do to try and soften the front with some reality of being along the highway they just don’t know. They are excited to be there and they came back hoping that they addressed most of the original concerns and have worked through some minor comments here today.

Mr. Frederick asked Mr. Walsh if the area between the hedgerow and the fence will be their responsibility to maintain.

Mr. Walsh replied yes, they are going to use a hydro seeded lawn that is about 3 to 3 ½ foot slope.

Mr. Frederick commented that he feels that it would be a vast improvement over what is there now.

Mr. McAnally commented that he was trying to think of something that could go in that space other than flowering trees that would drop all over the trucks and he doesn’t know enough about horticulture to say what we would request. He would like to see the hedgerow higher than what is shown on the renderings, and he assumes that it will be but, he is not in a position to offer up any other suggestions at this point. He is satisfied with the hedgerow.

Mr. Walsh commented that he wouldn’t want to minimize any of the commissioners comments but, the hedgerow will be plus or minus a foot and he’s not sure if that makes a difference or not but, they are comfortable working with city staff if 5 feet is the right number instead of 3 feet. They tried to focus on the west half of the building and tried to apply their understanding of the ordinance.

Mr. Frederick asked Mr. Walsh if the tractors will always be facing the freeway nose in.

Mr. Walsh replied yes.

Mr. Frederick stated that it is the more aesthetic side.

Mr. Glotfelty commented that he feels that the applicant has done a good job with what they have to work with. He understands that they want to display and sell their product but, this is Michigan and they need to have a place to push that snow. He feels that the islands would make it worse on the applicant’s maintenance staff.

Mr. Walsh noted that they are already concerned about salt spray coming onto the trucks from the highway and that’s 40-feet off. He also noted that it is a legitimate concern, same for any retailer.

Chairperson Freitag suggested that the commissioners approve the landscape plan with the condition that ARC will make sure that the shrubs are adequate.

Mr. Paul noted that they should be closer.

Ms. Maise replied that ARC will tighten them up with a minimum of 36 inches and 2.5 –ft. on center and a mix of deciduous and juniper, per the Planning Commission recommendation.

Ms. Maise and the commissioners ran through a list of conditions of approval for the applicant.

Motion by McAnally supported by Paul to approve SPR-2018-008; M & K Truck, a revised landscape plan at 29275 Citrin. Approval is subject to the following:

1. Waivers as follow:
   a. Section 13.02(c), to reduce the greenbelt requirements along I-94;
   b. Section 13.01(f), to reduce the required building elevation material requirements;
   c. Section 13.03(c), to allow the use of barbed wire fence; and
Subject to Planning Commission determination of acceptable landscaping and building modifications to off-set the requested waivers and variances.

2. Variances from the Board of Zoning Appeals for:
   a. Section 8.04(a) to allow a reduction in the front yard parking setback; and
   b. Section 13.03 to allow a fence in the front yard.

Subject to Planning Commission review of the landscape plan.

3. All trucks stored in the front yard must be new trucks for sale; no used truck or damaged/wrecked trucks awaiting repair or service are permitted;

4. A copy of the private road maintenance agreement to be provided as part of engineering review; and

5. Any other items identified by the ARC committee being addressed on a revised site plan or during engineering/building review as applicable.

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

8. New Business – None.

9. Election of Officers

Motion by Zilka supported by Talon-Jemison to maintain the current status of officers to include Cathy Freitag as Chairperson, Daniel McAnally as Vice-Chairperson, David Paul as Secretary.

- Chairperson Freitag accepted, Vice Chairperson McAnally accepted and Secretary Paul accepted.
- Chairperson Freitag thanked the commissioners and commented that she appreciates the confidence that they have for them.

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

10. PC-Cases Involving Advice or Input from the Planning Commission

- Ms. Maise reminded the commissioners that they have a special meeting on July 23, 2018 at 4:30 before the regular City Council meeting. She showed the commissioners a map to review of the revised future land use map that will be presented at the meeting.
- Mr. McAnally commented that the map appears to be what they had discussed and is a good baseline for what they are looking for. As they go down the road they’ll see how it works but, they need to get it in the Master Plan so that they have something to work with.
- Ms. Maise commented that Tim Keyes, Brad Strader, MKSK and Jessica Workman, OHM are working together to create some design guidelines. It is likely that it will end up in an overlay but, they are still working on it. Jessica is working on the building designs and Brad is working on the site elements and landscaping.
- Mr. McAnally asked Ms. Maise if the overlay would be for the industrial or the whole thing.
• Ms. Maise replied that it would be for the whole district. She reminded the commissioners that they looked at the current standards to see if there are changes that may need to happen and they will have the opportunity to discuss this at the special meeting.

11. Reports

A. Chairperson

• Chairperson Freitag thanked the commissioners again for their confidence in re-electing her as chairperson.
• Chairperson Freitag commented that they all had the opportunity to tour Amazon with the contractors and noted that it is something to see. She added that it is a humongous and beautiful building. She feels excited that it could lead other development in that area.

B. City Planner – Development Status Report

• Ms. Maise commented that the commissioners may see Mid-Michigan Crushing & Recycling on Ecorse this summer. There is a lot of activity in this area and slowly moving. She also mentioned other projects that the commissioners may see as well, such as GFL Recycling Center on Smith Road. They submitted for a conditional rezoning but, the city has been working with them for the past few months and she believes that they will be submitting a revised application that they feel is complete enough to bring to the Planning Commission to schedule a public hearing.
• Chairperson Freitag and Mr. McAnally commented that they didn’t think that anyone would develop the awkward parcel that M&K Truck are now approved for and they are hopeful that more development will come to Romulus.

12. Reports on Interest Designation

• Ms. Roscoe announced upcoming city events.

13. Communications – None.

14. Adjournment

Motion by Glotfelty supported by Zilka to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. Roll Call Vote: Ayes – Glotfelty, Zilka, Roscoe, McAnally, Paul, Talon-Jemison, Frederick, Workman & Freitag. Nays – None. Motion Carried.

David Paul, Secretary
City of Romulus Planning Commission