

MINUTES
CITY OF DEKALB
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
June 3, 2020

The Planning and Zoning Commission held a Meeting on June 3, 2020, at the City of DeKalb Municipal Building, 200 South Fourth Street, DeKalb, Illinois. Vice Chair Christina Doe called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Vice Chair Doe stated she wanted to thank everyone for being here tonight, including those who are watching on Channel 14 or streaming live. She referenced the Governor's Executive Order in March that allows Commission members to participate remotely. She mentioned for those attending the meeting the room has been set up to meet the CDC recommended distancing guidelines and the Executive Order from the Governor.

A. ROLL CALL

Recording Secretary Aaron Walker called the roll. Planning and Zoning Commission members present were: Vice Chair Christina Doe, Ron Klein, Jerry Wright, Trixy O'Flaherty, and Steve Becker. Chair Max Maxwell and Commissioner Vicki Buckley were absent. Principal Planner Dan Olson was present representing the City.

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA (Additions/Deletions)

Vice Chair Doe requested a motion to approve the June 3, 2020, agenda as presented. Ms. O'Flaherty motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Wright seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. May 20, 2020 – Mr. Klein requested a change on page 4 of the minutes from "her" to "he" when referencing his comment. Vice Chair Doe requested a motion to approve the May 20, 2020 minutes with corrections. Mr. Klein motioned to approve the minutes with corrections. Mr. Becker seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Open Floor to Anyone Wishing to Speak on Record)

None

E. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Public Hearing** – A petition by 2675 Sycamore Road Development LLC, represented by John Pappas, for approval of the rezoning of 2675 Sycamore Road from the “GC” General Commercial District to the “PD-C” Planned Development Commercial District and approval of a preliminary and final development plan to accommodate a 4-story executive suites residential complex with ground level commercial space.

John Pappas, representing 2675 Sycamore Road Development, LLC, stated he is proposing to build a 59-unit executive suite complex, to be called Isaac Suites, on the subject site. He advised he has recently worked on several commercial and apartment rental projects including Plaza DeKalb, Cornerstone, and Agora Tower. He stated there is high demand for executive extended stay rentals. He advised the average rental time would be between 6 months to a year for Isaac Suites. He noted this is an untapped market in the area and he expects his customer base to be professors, hospital staff, interns, and other business professionals.

Mr. Pappas advised this business is different than the average extended stay hotels and rental apartments, as they will conduct background checks on all their customers. He noted his customers will be offered personalized service, such as having staff sent to purchase groceries or run errands. Mr. Pappas stated the property has been vacant for 12 years and the executive suites would be a great use for the site.

Principal Planner Dan Olson went through the staff report dated May 29, 2020. He advised the property has been vacant since 2007 and is currently zoned “GC” General Commercial District. He noted the maximum building height in the “GC” district is two stories and any dwelling units above ground level require a special use permit. He advised rezoning the property to the “PD-C” Planned Development Commercial District would allow for the proposed four-story complex and dwelling units above the ground level.

Mr. Olson advised a two-story motel was previously located on the property and was demolished in 2007. He added the proposed structure would use the same building pad and access point off Oakland Dr. as the hotel used. Mr. Olson noted there are two detention ponds proposed, one along the northern portion of the site and one at the southwest corner.

Mr. Olson mentioned the development will include 59 one-bedroom, fully furnished apartments and a banquet room/conference room to be used by the tenants. He stated there will be three different types of units including 54 units at 420 sq. ft., three units at 483 sq. ft., and two handicap accessible units at 720 sq. ft. He noted there will be 2,900 sq. ft. of ground level commercial space as well. Mr. Olson advised the development is required to have 101 parking

spaces, and 112 parking spaces will be provided on the site including five handicap spaces.

Mr. Olson noted, at the request of the City, the developer will be connecting the “private” water main with the dead-end City water main that serves the townhome development to the west. He advised the connection will improve the fire flows and water quality for the residents living at 802-816 Oakland Dr., as well as the proposed development.

Mr. Olson stated landscaping is provided around the perimeter of the site with additional plantings being provided beyond the minimum UDO requirements. He advised several dead trees and underbrush has already been removed from the site.

Vice Chair Doe gave the public an opportunity to speak.

Daryl Rolland, of 812 Oakland Dr. and President of the Oakland Place Townhomes Association to the west said he had met with Mr. Pappas prior to this meeting to state their concerns. He advised they had concerns regarding parking, water runoff, and maintenance of the creek area. He noted Mr. Pappas has addressed all of their concerns. Mr. Rolland did note he would like the property lines to be more defined.

Vice Chair Doe gave the Commissioners a chance to speak.

Mr. Wright questioned Mr. Pappas, that based on his other projects downtown, if he researched the inflow and outflow of customers and if this project would fulfill a need. Mr. Pappas advised they had several inquiries for extended stays at his other properties downtown. He stated he has tried to accommodate those inquiries, but his other properties are not meant for mid-length stays. He said the new project would be able to accommodate those requests.

Mr. Klein mentioned that he remembers the old motel on the site and when it was torn down. He stated he believes this is a great idea and proposal. He stated he appreciates the effort Mr. Pappas has put forth to accommodate the neighbors. Mr. Klein questioned whether he would be able to fill the 59-units throughout the year. Mr. Pappas stated based on inquiries into his rental properties and the businesses coming to Dekalb, he will be able to keep the building occupied. Mr. Pappas advised this is not a TIF project and will be privately funded.

Vice Chair Doe advised she was skeptical of the project at first and wasn't going to approve it. She stated, however, Mr. Pappas explained the need for the project, and it changed her mind and she appreciates the work he put into the project. Vice Chair Doe questioned what the lower level commercial space

would be used for. Mr. Pappas advised the lower level banquet hall will not be open to the public and will only be available to the tenants of the building. He stated the commercial space will either be one 2400 sq. ft. space or two 1200 sq. ft. spaces.

Ms. O'Flaherty questioned if the design of the building was finalized. Mr. Pappas and Mr. Olson advised that it was.

Mr. Becker questioned if they could fill the 59 units once they opened. Mr. Pappas advised he has done the research and believes the units will be filled. He noted the rentals will be \$1100-1200 per month and will be fully furnished with all utilities paid for. Mr. Pappas this a perfect non TIF project compared to his other projects downtown, which needed TIF assistance.

Vice Chair Doe gave the public one more opportunity to speak. There was none.

Mr. Wright moved that the Planning and Zoning Commission forward its findings of fact and recommend to the City Council approval of the rezoning of 2675 Sycamore Road from the "GC" General Commercial District to the "PD-C" Planned Development – Commercial District and approval of a preliminary and final development plan as listed in Exhibit A of the staff report to accommodate a 4-story executive suites residential complex with 59 dwelling units and ground level commercial space with a banquet/conference room, subject to the standards listed in Exhibit B and subject to staff comments listed in Exhibit C of the staff report.

Mr. Klein seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Klein – yes, Mr. Becker – yes, Ms. O'Flaherty – yes, Mr. Wright – yes, Vice Chair Doe – yes. Motion was passed 5-0-2. Ms. Buckley and Chair Maxwell were absent.

F. REPORTS

Mr. Olson advised a revised meeting schedule was sent out to Commission members and also provided tonight. He noted City Hall would be moving this weekend, but the June 17th Planning and Zoning Commission meeting will be held at 200 S 4th Street. He added starting in July, Commission meetings will be held at the DeKalb Public Library.

Mr. Olson noted the next Planning and Zoning Commission meeting would be on June 17th, 2020 and will include a public hearing regarding the continued allowance of a modular classroom at Littlejohn Elementary School. He said the

meeting will not be televised live, since all the IT equipment will have been moved to the Library.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Becker motioned to adjourn, Mr. Klein seconded the motion, and the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. The Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting adjourned at 6:36PM.