

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE OAK PARK PLAN COMMISSION
REMOTE PARTICIPATION
March 4, 2021
7:00 p.m.

A recording of this meeting is available on the Village of Oak Park Website: <https://www.oak-park.us/your-government/citizen-commissions/commission-tv>

PRESENT: Chair Iris Sims, Commissioners; Lawrence Brozek, Jeff Clark, Jeff Foster, Paul May, Nick Bridge, Paul Beckwith, Tom Gallagher and Jon Hale

EXCUSED: None

ALSO PRESENT: Craig Failor - Village Planner, Greg Smith – Plan Commission Attorney, Bill McKenna - Village Engineer and Tammie Grossman - Development Customer Services Director

Roll Call - Roll was called at 7:00pm. A quorum was present.

Village Planner Failor read into the record a statement regarding remote participation and reviewed the public hearing procedures.

Non-Agenda Public Participation – None

Approval of Minutes – February 18, 2021

Commissioner Gallagher made a motion to approve as submitted, Seconded by Commissioner Foster. Roll Call Vote as follows: Commissioners; Gallagher–yes, Foster- yes, May–yes, Hale–yes, Beckwith–yes, Bridge–yes, Clark–yes, Brozek–yes and Chair Sims–yes.

Other Business – Village Planner Failor provided updates at the end of the meeting.

Public Hearing - PC 21-01: 203 S. Marion Street; The Petitioner, Focus Acquisition Company, LLC, is requesting planned development approval for a seven (7) story, mixed use residential development consisting of approximately 1,200 square feet of retail, 153 rental apartments, 6 maisonette residential units and 123 covered parking spaces with the following Zoning Ordinance allowances; 1.) Article 8: Uses, Sub-section 8.3 Use Restrictions: Table 8-1 Use Matrix allows dwelling units above the first floor only, where six (6) residential maisonette units are proposed on the first floor, 2.) Article 10: Off-Street Parking and Loading, Subsection 10.4: Required Off Street Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Spaces: Table 10-2 requires one parking space per dwelling unit for a total of 159 space, where 0.77 percent will be provided for a total of 123 parking spaces, 3.) Article 8: Uses, Sub-section 8.3 Use Restrictions: Table 8-1 Use Matrix allows a maximum building height of 60 ft, where a 85 foot building measured to the top of the roof is proposed, 4.) Article 8: Uses, Subsection 8.3 Use Restrictions: Table 8-1 Use Matrix allows for a maximum number of dwelling units of 45 units where the 159 units including the maisonette units are

proposed, 5.) Article 8: Uses, Subsection 8.3 Use Restrictions: Table 8-1 Use Matrix requires a building setback along streets to be built to a zero (0) foot lot line where a request for a ten (10) foot setback be allowed for 64 linear feet along Marion Street, 6.) Article 10: Off-Street Parking and Loading, subsection 10.3: Off Street Parking Design Standards, B. Access: requires a nine (9) foot turnaround at the end of parking stalls where a request is to not provide them in order to provide additional parking spaces on site. *This item was continued from the February 18, 2021 meeting.*

Village Planner Failor stated the order of procedure for the meeting; Applicant Summary, Opposition Summary, Applicant Rebuttal, Plan Commission Deliberations, Vote, Review of Findings of Fact.

Chair Sims asked the applicant to present their closing summary.

Mr. Justin Pelej, Focus, provided statement regarding the following matters; building quality, other Booth Hansen projects, the Pleasant Street frontage, Silver Certification is an upgrade from Bronze, public art will be installed, brick quality is good, open space, other specialties brought to the building, on-site management, rules for the building, job creation, density, height, underground parking, meeting with Mr. Fox, public benefits, retail business proposal, compliance with the comprehensive plan, and honesty and transparency of the company and presentation.

Mr. Douglas Gilbert began the opposition's summary. He commented on the following; alley use, it being a primary parcel, what is appropriate development, he stated strong objections to the height, there were no major step backs of upper floors, a concern with the parking reduction, clear sight lines from the alley, there was a wrong village staff interpretation regarding the garage entrance, compensating benefits were minimal, it is not in compliance with comprehensive plan, it is not in keeping with Historic Preservation guidelines, pedestrian safety is diminished, it is not meeting Planned Development standards, utilities usage, traffic congestion a concern, any development will boost density and tax revenue, and he compared it with 835 Lake development. Mr. Patrick Deady concluded the opposition's summary. He commented on the community's requests, lack of underground parking, other examples of underground parking in the area, compensating benefits lacking, site will be developed regardless, property tax statements were misleading. The Applicant indicated no desire for a rebuttal.

The Plan Commission Chair closed the public hearing and opened for commissioner deliberation and discussion. Commissioner Beckwith made a statement regarding ex parte communications.

Commissioner Beckwith stated disappointment with no height reduction, but indicated what the development brought to the community was positive.

Commissioner Bridge stated while development is a balancing act, the proposed development does not fit this location.

Commissioner Brozek indicated he agreed with Commissioner Bridge and felt the development was not a good balance and that there were not enough compensating benefits and does not meet the comprehensive plan.

Commissioner Clark felt the scale and context were questionable. There was a lack of compensating benefits, no underground parking and that if this doesn't get approval, another development could.

Commissioner Foster indicated he was satisfied with their outreach and upgrades to the project. He stated that the entrances to the parking garage was appropriate off the alley and that the building is only about 15 feet taller than what is allowed by code. He indicated that the façade could use some improvements with a more residential-style modifications. He indicated there is already a step back along Marion Street of the top floor and believes the price point between the proposed development and 835 Lake Street were different.

Commissioner Gallagher stated that the proposed development and a development by zoning code are not much different.

Commissioner Hale stated that this use is best and meets the comprehensive plan. He indicated that it is better to have more people living in the Transit-Oriented Development areas like downtown Oak Park. He referenced the housing fund increase and the increased tax base being a win for the village. He referenced the goals, objectives and standards and felt the building design will compliment the surrounding neighborhood. He also stated that there is a large public park across the street.

Commissioner May felt that the parking lot owned by Mr. Fox was a lost opportunity, but appreciated the attempt. He recognized the subject property as a prime development site and that the proposed building at the height and scale is appropriate and needed at this location. He indicated that the affordable housing fund contribution was good. He too felt there was need for improvement on the east and north facades toward a more residential aesthetic.

Chairperson Sims reviewed and summarized each planned development standard. She indicated no concerns with the redevelopment proposal, however indicated that a more unique design would be more attractive. She supported Commissioner Foster's statements and felt the development offers a diverse housing type.

The Commissioners discussed additional conditions that they wanted to incorporate into the Findings of Fact report. They were related to on-site management, MBE/WBE retail business operators, no ability for tenants to obtain on-street / overnight parking permits, and façade improvements.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Gallagher to recommend approval with conditions. Seconded by Commissioner Hale. Roll Call Vote as follows: Commissioners; Gallagher—yes, Hale—yes, Brozek—no, Beckwith—yes, Foster- yes, Bridge -no, Clark—no, May-yes, and Chair Sims - yes.

The motion passed 6-3

The Plan Commissioners discussed the findings of fact report after a short break to modify them based on the above changes.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Gallagher to approve the Findings of Fact report. Seconded by Commissioner Brozek. Roll Call Vote as follows: Commissioners; Gallagher—yes, Brozek—yes, Hale—yes, Beckwith—yes, Foster- yes, Bridge -yes, Clark—yes, May-yes, and Chair Sims - yes.

The motion passed 9-0

Public Hearing - PC 21-02: Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment – The Petitioner is requesting a text amendment to Article 8 (“Uses”), Section 8.3 (“Use Restrictions”), Table 8-1 (“Use Matrix”) of

the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance, by adding “Live/Work Dwelling” as a Special Use (“S”) within the “Use” column for the MS – Madison Street Zoning District. *Companion with PC 21-03.*

Village Planner Failor provided a staff review for both applications.

The applicants, Tim and Kim Rasmussen presented their proposal on both applications.

Public Hearing - PC 21-03: Special Use - The Petitioner is requesting a Special Use Permit to allow a live/work dwelling within the MS-Madison Street Zoning District at 1114 Madison Street. *Companion with PC 21-02.*

There was no one in attendance for the hearing. Village Planner Failor read into the record an email received from Ms. Teresa Jurgens, a local realtor regarding a history of marketing the applicant’s property at 1114 Madison Street.

The Plan Commission asked questions regarding the intended use and indicated the proposal was positive for the site and other areas along the corridor due to the road diet initiative.

A Motion was made by Commissioner May to recommend approval of both applications. Seconded by Commissioner Gallagher. Roll Call Vote as follows: Commissioners; May-yes, Gallagher-yes, Brozek-yes, Hale-yes, Beckwith-yes, Foster- yes, Bridge -yes, Clark-yes, and Chair Sims - yes.

The motion passed 9-0

A Motion was made by Commissioner May to approve both Findings of Fact reports. Seconded by Commissioner Gallagher. Roll Call Vote as follows: Commissioners; May-yes, Gallagher-yes, Brozek-yes, Hale-yes, Beckwith-yes, Foster- yes, Bridge -yes, Clark-yes, and Chair Sims - yes.

The motion passed 9-0

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 p.m. Motion by Commissioner Bridge, Seconded by Commissioner Foster. Roll Call Vote as follows: Commissioners; Bridge-yes, Foster-yes, Hale- yes, Gallagher-yes, Clark-yes, May-yes, Brozek-yes, Beckwith-yes and Chair Sims – yes.

Prepared by: Craig Failor, Village Planner / Staff Liaison