

**MINUTES**

MEETING OF THE OAK PARK PLAN COMMISSION  
VILLAGE HALL- ROOM 201  
December 5, 2019  
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 David Mann; Commissioners Nick Bridge (7:02P), Lawrence Brozek (7:34P), Jeff Clark, Jeff Foster, Paul May, Joseph Flowers and Iris Sims.

**EXCUSED:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:** Craig Failor - Village Planner, Gregory Smith - Plan Commission Attorney, Bill McKenna - Village Engineer, and Richard Van Zeyl – Architectural Consultant

**Roll Call**

Chair Mann called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll was called. A quorum was present.

**Non-Agenda Public Participation - None**

**Approval of Minutes**

November 7, 2019 – Approved as submitted- Commissioner Sims made the motion to approve; Second by Commissioner Foster.

**Public Hearings**

**PC 2019-06: 711-725 Madison Street: Planned Development – Senior Living Community;**

The Applicant seeks approval of a Special Use - Planned Development to allow for the construction of a 256,725 square foot senior living residential care facility within the MS-Madison Street zoning district consisting of 174 Unit (222 beds) at 7-stories tall. The Applicant is requesting zoning relief for the following; 1.) Increase in density from 48 allowed dwelling units to a not-to-exceed unit count of 174 dwelling units, 2.) Increase in height from an allowed 50 feet to a not-to-exceed height of 90 feet, 3.) A reduction in the rear yard setback from a required 25 feet to a not-to-exceed distance of 16 feet as measured from the property line south of the abutting alley, and 4.) An increase in foot candles at the property line from 1 to not-to-exceed 6.9. The building will be comprised of independent living units, assisted living units, and memory care units.

**Street Vacation:** The Applicant is also requesting the vacation of a portion of South Euclid Avenue right-of-way between Madison Street and the east-west alley abutting the development parcels to the south

The Applicant, American House – Redico was represented by Samantha Eckhout. Ms. Eckhout provided an introduction of the application and an overview of the corporation. She then proceeded to explain project highlights. Mr. John Myefski, the project architect detailed the building design including materials and colors, floor layouts, functions for each floor and outdoor space. Mr. Andrew Uttan, with V3 Companies, the applicant’s civil engineer detailed the public improvements surrounding the project site. Mr. Michael Wothman, the applicant’s traffic engineer detailed the

traffic study indicating that additional study was needed since the Madison Street road diet was established.

Village Planner Failor provided an overview of the staff's report.

The Plan Commissioners asked some initial question of the applicant regarding the alley design and function and terrace designs.

Village Engineer McKenna provided an overview of the village's perspective on traffic, utilities and street designs including cul-de-sacs.

The Plan Commissioners asked additional question regarding alley materials, illumination, cul-de-sacs on Wesley Avenue, tree preservation on Euclid Avenue, the Fire Department's view on the cul-de-sacs, traffic study timing, and ambulance runs to the building.

Village architectural consultant, Rich Van Zeyl provided an overview of their memorandum indicating a few minor adjustments may be necessary and stated support for the architectural design of the building.

The Plan Commission asked about or made statements about the building's height, scale and character. A discussion ensued about memory care functions.

#### Cross Examination

Ms. Stephanie Stinton, attorney represented several neighbors. She questioned whether or not the development was meeting the Zoning Ordinance standards, whether or not the building can be redesigned to minimize the southeast corner, differences in the Zoning Ordinance regulations between the North Avenue and Madison Street districts, whether the development was meeting the character of the Madison Street district, asked about the setbacks of the upper floors in relation to street views, asked about the benefits vs. detriments of the development, asked about public benefits ( The applicant indicated they were assessing the ability to allow use of the health club, terraces and restaurant for the public), asked about the need for more landscaping, affordable housing, and traffic studies.

Ms. Alexandra Pettersen asked about traffic in the alley, kitchen exhaust, response times for the Fire Department, property protections during construction, debris from construction, noise from construction, dirt and dust from construction, and asked if the proposed building can move farther away from the residential.

Mr. Richard Fobes asked about the demand analysis for senior living units, asked about other similar facilities in the area, use of parking spaces on site, cul-de-sac for Wesley Avenue, policing of traffic violators and the volume of drop off and use of the drop off area near Wesley Avenue.

Mr. Robert Niewijk asked about the development of plans for smaller building and economic viability of the development.

#### Public Testimony

Mr. Jason Fetler, lives on Euclid Avenue, welcomed them to the community. Mr. Fetler was in support of the project. He commented on good listening by the developer, supporting either a cul-de-sac or diverter on Wesley, but was concerned about trash blowing into yards, as it is currently by the Dialysis Center. He wanted to make sure the development continued to pay property taxes. He concluded that this is the best development use that could be here.

**APPROVED January 9, 2020**

Ms. Lisa Wilkenson, was also in favor of the development. She indicated that installing a cul-de-sac on Wesley was a good idea. She was still concerned about height and suggested building over Wesley with a vehicular pass thru under, which may help lower the building height.

Ms. Jill Mahaney, supported the development, but too was concerned about trash blowing around the neighborhood. She suggested that the trash door be moved from the south side to the west side of the building and possibly required the trash pick-up be from Madison Street. She indicated she wanted to save the tree on Euclid adjacent the proposed cul-de-sac. She wanted to know if the Fire Department wanted the cul-de-sac moved further north due to convenience or necessity. Overall she thought this was a great development.

Mr. Joshua Klayman, Voice Oak Park was neutral but questioned the massing, attractiveness, context to the area, the zoning ordinance provisions for planned developments and considering other possible ways to do the project.

Mr. Chris Donovan was in opposition to the development siting the recommendations in the Madison Street Plan and regulations in the Zoning Ordinance relative to height requirements. He indicated the variances were too great and was not affordable.

Mr. Robert Niewijk indicated the building was too large and was concerned that the financial pro forma was not provided. The building does not fit in with the context of the area and is not needed.

Mr. Richard Fobes stated the building was too big, he preferred a cul-de-sac on Wesley Avenue and a desire to make the area safer for children.

Mr. David Walker, who stated he represented 82 residents in the area (he provided a list) indicated that the building was too tall and should only be 4 stories. He wanted to make sure the development always paid property tax and was not converted into a non-profit organization.

Mr. Stefan Homberger stated the development was too massive next to a single family residential area and that the Wesley traffic control should be considered.

Dr. David Ubogy provided a PowerPoint presentation detailing a comparison with other recent buildings in Downtown Oak Park and on Madison Street, discussed what the neighbors want to see, safety concerns, emergency room visits and traffic data.

Public Testimony was closed at 10:28PM

Commissioners provided some direction to the applicants;

Review garbage location, generator location and garbage pick-up and grease trap area; proceed with the cul-de-sac at Wesley Avenue, save the mature tree along Euclid Avenue at the alley. Provide a green buffer between the development and residences and decrease height. Look at alternative massing for the building. Establish an urban standard height of no more than 75 feet tall buildings. Review the compensating benefits, need a better higher efficient building beyond just certification by LEED. Look at a green roof, affordable units, and affirm the development will not become a non-profit organization. Want to see an annual report on energy consumption for the next 10 years. Look at other options for public art.

The applicant indicated they would review the requests and come back at a special meeting on December 19, 2019.

Commissioner Brozek made a motion to continue the hearing until December 19, 2019. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Foster.

Roll Call Vote:

Motion by Commissioner Brozek – yes  
Seconded by Commissioner Foster - yes  
Commissioner Bridge- yes  
Commissioner Clark – yes  
Commissioner Sims–yes  
Commissioner Flowers – yes  
Commissioner May – yes  
Chair Mann – yes

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 p.m.

Prepared by: Craig Failor, Village Planner / Staff Liaison