

**MINUTES**  
MEETING OF THE OAK PARK PLAN COMMISSION  
VILLAGE HALL- ROOM 201  
March 5, 2020  
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; Jeff Clark, Jeff Foster, Lawrence Brozek, Iris Sims, Paul May, Tom Gallagher and Nick Bridge.

**EXCUSED:** Commissioner Joseph Flowers

**ALSO PRESENT:** Craig Failor - Village Planner, Gregory Smith – Plan Commission Attorney, Bill McKenna –Village Engineer and Rich Van Zeyl, Wight & Co. – Village Architectural Design Review Consultant

**Roll Call** - Chair Mann called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Roll was called. A quorum was present.

**Non-Agenda Public Participation** - None

**Approval of Minutes** –February 20, 2020

**Public Hearings** -

**PC 2019-07: Special Use Amendment - Major Modification;** Rush Oak Park Hospital -520 S. Maple Avenue; The Applicant is proposing to Amend Special Use Ordinance ORD 17-264 to allow for the construction of a 713 space parking garage located at the northwest corner of Wenonah Avenue and Monroe Street. **Street Vacation:** The Applicant is proposing to vacate a portion of Monroe Street between Wisconsin Avenue and Wenonah Avenue. This item was continued from the February 6, 2020 meeting.

Attorney Smith provided an overview of the procedure and process for the Plan Commission to take a revote on the Rush Oak Park applications originally voted on at the February 20, 2020 meeting.

Commissioner Gallagher made a motion to recommend approval of the special use application with stated conditions regarding lowering the garage by a level (10' 8"), the applicant hold quarterly meeting with the neighbors throughout construction plus one year thereafter, incorporate the recommendations in the applicants traffic analysis, place a \$50,000 bond with the Village relative to potential infrastructure improvements to the east-west alley north of the subject site, and update their traffic report with information about the road diet impacts. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brozek.

Roll Call Vote: 7-1

Motion by Commissioner Gallagher –yes

Seconded by Commissioner Brozek - yes

Commissioner Sims – yes

Commissioner Bridge –yes

Commissioner Foster – no

Commissioner May – yes

Commissioner Clark - yes  
Chair Mann - yes

Commissioner Brozek made a motion to recommend approval of the vacation application and authorize the Plan Commission Chair to sign the plat of vacation. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sims.

Roll Call Vote: 8-0  
Motion by Commissioner Brozek –yes  
Seconded by Commissioner Sims - yes  
Commissioner Gallagher – yes  
Commissioner Bridge –yes  
Commissioner Foster – yes  
Commissioner May – yes  
Commissioner Clark - yes  
Chair Mann - yes

Commissioner Brozek made a motion to approve the findings of fact report for the special use application. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sims.

Roll Call Vote: 7-1  
Motion by Commissioner Brozek –yes  
Seconded by Commissioner Sims - yes  
Commissioner Gallagher – yes  
Commissioner Bridge –yes  
Commissioner Foster – no  
Commissioner May – yes  
Commissioner Clark - yes  
Chair Mann - yes

Commissioner Brozek made a motion to approve the findings of fact for the vacation application. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gallagher.

Roll Call Vote: 8-0  
Motion by Commissioner Brozek –yes  
Seconded by Commissioner Gallagher - yes  
Commissioner Sims – yes  
Commissioner Bridge –yes  
Commissioner Foster – yes  
Commissioner May – yes  
Commissioner Clark - yes  
Chair Mann - yes

**PC 2019-08: 435-451 Madison Street: Planned Development – Residential Development;** The Applicant seeks approval of a Planned Development to allow for the construction of a 48 unit apartment building with 48 first floor parking spaces within the MS-Madison Street zoning district at 5-stories tall. The Applicant is requesting zoning relief for the following; 1.) Increase in density from 24 allowed dwelling units to a not-to-exceed unit count of 48 dwelling units, 2.) Increase in height from an allowed 50 feet to a not-to-exceed height of 63 feet, 3.) A reduction in the rear yard setback from a required 25 feet to a not-to-exceed distance of 8 feet, 4.) A reduction in side yard landscape area width from 7 feet to a width of 3 feet, and 5.) A reduction in the required number of on-site load areas to zero (0).

Planner Failor stated on the record the list of information provided the plan commission and posted on the website. He also indicated design consultant Van Zeyl, and village engineer McKenna were in attendance and available for questions.

Applicant, Tom Meador with Michigan Avenue Real Estate Group provided a brief overview of the changes and enhancements made to the project.

Architect, Jay Keller with Space Architects, provided an overview of architectural changes to the building including massing and design changes including material selections. He also spoke to the proposed public art for the building façade.

Architect, Meredith Vlahakis provided a brief overview of the landscaping modifications.

Parking and Traffic Engineer, Bill Grieve with Gewalt Hamilton, provided an overview of the updated traffic and parking analyses. He indicated additional information was added, such as counts on a Saturday and changes based on moving the driveway from Gunderson to Madison Street.

Viktor Jakovljevic with Vivify Construction discussed the alley closure relative to timing for foundation and façade work.

John Schiess with JCSA Chicago provided an update on the Tracy Cross study.

Developer Tom Meador concluded the presentation with an overview of the financial component, compensating benefits and thanked village staff for their professionalism throughout the process.

Village Design Consultant Van Zeyl provided an overview of his memorandum. Mr. Van Zeyl stated that they support the revised architecture, but noted the massing and height did not change which still needed to be considered.

Village Engineer McKenna provided an overview of his memorandum. Mr. McKenna stated that staff did not support the drive relocation to Madison Street and stated the reasons for staff's concerns which included conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as vehicular traffic. He also indicated that there would be sight line issues and too many curb cuts already exist in this block of Madison.

## **CROSS EXAMINATION**

Stephen Legatzke. Mr. Legatzke was concerned with size and safety. He questioned the solar panel height, garage entrance door setback, height of the building, meetings with residents, net benefits, values of nearby homes, and whether or not there would be construction cranes.

Tina Birnbaum. Ms. Birnbaum was concerned with the garage. She questioned the clear site line, installation of garage door indicators (strobes & flashing lights), the loading area, bike parking, and garage layout.

Stanley Birnbaum. Mr. Birnbaum questioned deliveries, south side step back, alley closure, and the donation for affordable housing.

Adam Korchek. Mr. Korchek questioned the scale of the renderings, why more wasn't considered for the south wall, economics, appreciating/depreciating property values and context to the neighborhood.

## **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Tim Kelley. Mr. Kelly stated he supported the driveway on Madison Street.

Steve Legatzke. Mr. Legatzke stated the development was too big, too dense, had safety issues, site issues, and more work was needed on shrinking the building.

Justin Brown. Mr. Brown provided handouts. He stated that the development should be reduced as it was too big, too tall and was an optical illusion.

Anna Johnson. Ms. Johnson compared this development to the applicant's Evanston development, discussed compensating benefits, allowances, not meeting the standards, not meeting the purpose and intent, and variances making the developer a profit.

Jeorg Albreiht. Mr. Albreiht was concerned with lot coverage and provided a comparison with historical regulations. He felt the lot was too covered and was impacting light and ventilation for the building itself and surrounding properties.

Rick Kuner. Mr. Kuner provided a PowerPoint presentation and discussed the Envision Oak Park recommendations regarding the Gunderson district. He discussed standards, submarkets, livable streets, rights of street dwellers, utility poles in the alley, architecture relative to the Gunderson district, burden of proof for the developer, and zoning reliance.

Jim Polaski. Mr. Polaski stated the development was a "block" of building no matter what the façade looked like.

Maribeth Stein. Ms. Stein indicated the proposed development did not compliment the historic district and was concerned about the affordable housing donation.

Michael Papierniak. Mr. Papierniak was concerned about safety and economics.

Stanley Birnbaum. Mr. Birnbaum stated his concern about zoning codes, variances, and economic feasibility.

Tina Birnbaum. Ms. Birnbaum was concered about the village breaking their social contract relative to zoning regulations.

Amy Korchek. Ms. Korchek was concerned about personal issues and how disruptive new apartment neighbors would be. She was concerned for her children's safety and dog walkers in her neighborhood. She was also concerned about property values diminishing and disruptive construction activities.

Elisabeth Loentz. Ms. Loentz was concerned about contextual relationships and privacy. She also quoted the Comprehensive Plan on various items.

Dan Figatner. Mr. Figatner wanted to see retail at this location, enforce union labor, enforce zoning regulations and redesign the site.

Romina Tonucci. Ms. Tonucci stated the development was still too big, not contextual and they didn't listen to the community.

John Duffy. Mr. Duffy stated the development didn't match Oak Park values. There was no racial or financial equity in this development. Support affordable housing units not money for affordable housing units.

Judy Fitchett. Ms. Fitchett stated the building would be a visual and audio intrusion into the neighborhood. There was no place for dogs to go outside, so they will end up in their yards. She was also concerned about visitors parking on their street.

Jeffrey Harris. Mr. Harris was concerned about the south side setback and that the Zoning Ordinance should be changed regarding the definition of front yard.

Gretchen Savoy. Ms. Savoy stated there will be a lot of dogs relieving themselves on the neighbor's lawns.

Adam Korchek. Mr. Korchek provided a short presentation and was concerned that he would have difficulties pulling into his driveway from the north down the existing 8 foot wide alley if the proposed building were to be built right up to the east lot line. He stated that the whole development was out of balance.

The applicant provided a brief rebuttal. Mr. Schiess corrected the public in that the setback from the south property line was 7 feet not 3 feet and the top floor was 16 feet from the south lot line. He also stated that if the height increased it would be a change in construct type and be more costly. Mr. Meador stated that a four story building was not economically feasible and the compensating benefits guidance from the EDC was good. He was not willing to increase the setbacks either.

## DELIBERATION

The Plan Commission deliberated on this application. Statements were made about height, setbacks, proximity to an historic district, massing, architecture, precedence, retail, design, alternatives, south side buffer, and density.

Mr. John Lynch was asked to make a statement. He talked about his involvement in the application and advice as well as economics of the project.

The Plan Commission asked the developer if he would be willing to provide more distance from the south property line. Mr. Meadow could not support this request and stated he wished to move forward regardless of how the Plan Commission votes.

The plan commission indicated their main concerns were the set back from the south property line and height of the building. Additional concerns were regarding the density and the need for more compensating benefits.

Commissioner Brozek made a motion to recommend approval of the planned development application. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Clark.

Roll Call Vote: 0-7-1

Motion by Commissioner Brozek -no

Seconded by Commissioner Clark - no

Commissioner Gallagher - Abstain. Commissioner Gallagher stated he had past experience with the developer and with this application.

Commissioner Bridge -no

Commissioner Foster - no

Commissioner May - no

Commissioner Sims - no

Chair Mann - no

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 p.m. – Motioned by Commissioner Bridge, Seconded by Commissioner Brozek.

Prepared by: Craig Failor, Village Planner / Staff Liaison