

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE OAK PARK PLAN COMMISSION
REMOTE PARTICIPATION
December 2, 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; Paul May, Jeff Clark, Larry Brozek, Nick Bridge, Tom Gallagher, Paul Beckwith and Jon Hale

EXCUSED: Commissioner Jeff Foster

ALSO PRESENT: Craig Failor -Village Planner, Greg Smith -Plan Commission Attorney, Sean Keane- Parking Manager, Bill McKenna – Village Engineer, Noel Weidner – Historic Preservation Commission Chair and Rich Van Zeyl – Wight and Co.

Roll Call - Roll was called at 7:04pm. A quorum was present.

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

Agenda Approval: Motion by Commissioner Gallagher, Seconded by Commissioner Clark. Roll Call Vote as follows: Commissioners; Gallagher- yes, Clark–yes, Hale-yes, Beckwith–yes, Brozek-yes, May-yes, Bridge-yes and Chair Sims – yes.

Non-Agenda Public Participation – None

Approval of Minutes – November 4, 2021: Motion by Commissioner Bridge, Seconded by Commissioner Hale. Roll Call Vote as follows: Commissioners; Bridge-yes, Hale-yes, Clark- yes, Brozek-yes, Beckwith–yes, Gallagher–yes, May-yes, and Chair Sims – yes.

New Business / Public Hearings & Findings of Fact:

PC 21-06: 7 Van Buren Planned Development: The petitioner, Oak Park Residence Corporation, requests approval of a planned development application for a six (6) story 45-unit multiple family building in the in the R-7 Multi-Family Residential Zoning District. The Petitioner seeks the following allowances from the Oak Park Zoning Ordinance associated with the Planned Development application, found in Article 4 – Table 4-1 Residential Districts Dimensional Standards: a decrease in minimum lot area from 35,100 sq. ft. to 11,085 sq. ft.; an increase in height from 45 feet to 71.85 feet; an increase in maximum building coverage from 70% to 85.17%; a decrease in minimum interior side setback from 9.05 ft. to 8.3 ft.; a decrease in minimum rear setback from 24.5 feet to 1.5 feet; a decrease in automobile parking from 34 spaces to 17 spaces; a decrease in loading area from one space to zero spaces. Continued from November 4, 2021.

Chair Sims opened the hearing with the cross-examination portion of the hearing.

Mr. Jerry Hellman was the only one registered for cross examination. Mr. Hellman began with questions regarding the cost (rent structure) of the units and how the rents for the proposed building compares to the rents of the current building at 7 Van Buren (now vacated). Mr. Hellman asked about the make up of the units, market rate vs. affordable relative the number of bedrooms. Mr. Hellman asked whether or not the former residents could access the proposed building, and would those in any affordable units have priority for parking spaces in the building. He continued to ask questions regarding the cost of the parking spaces vs. the cost of the exterior parking spaces for the former tenants. Mr. Hellman as if the building would be occupied by the very rich and very poor. He continued with question about utility cost and who paid for them. He asked if the lease agreements would have a clause that prohibited a tenant from owning a vehicle. Mr. Hellman inquired if the Residence Corporation would lobby for more on-street parking permits. Mr. Hellman then moved to questions about the loading and unloading during move in and out. Will there be hour restrictions for these operations was a question asked. He then inquired about the affordable housing application process. Mr. Hellman asked if the applicant knew of any other building along Austin Boulevard was as tall as the proposed building. He final question was regarding whether or not the applicant has a fall back plan if this application does not get approved. The applicant provided answers to each of these questions.

The Chair closed that portion of the hearing and opened the Commissioner question portion. Chair Sims began with statements and questions regarding parking. Parking Manager Keane and Village Planner Failor answered questions.

The Commissioner began with their questions. Their questions were relative to parking, taxes, affordable housing increase, opening up of the Van Buren cul-de-sac, the narrow alley and possible maneuvering issues, the reasons for the proposed height of the building, potential visibility conflicts with the building setback along the alley, bicycle parking locations, electric charging station opportunities, not a TOD project due to lack of access to amenities, no justification for low parking number onsite, questions about available parking off-site, concern over allowed compact car spaces and ability to open car doors, TOD sites need parking, wants CNT (Center for Neighborhood Technology) to perform an analysis of parking needs for the proposed building/site, property taxes, funding from government, concern of use of public property for private use, no concerns regarding parking, crosswalk across Austin Boulevard, garbage management and possibility to reconfigure the first floor layout to accommodate loading and garbage.

Van Buren Street Vacation (partial): The petitioner for 7 Van Buren is also requesting to vacate a portion of the Van Buren Street right-of-way abutting the subject property a length of 122.52 feet by 15 feet wide. There was no discussion of this item.

A motion was made to continue this hearing to December 16, 2021 [at 7:00p.m.]. Motion by Commissioner Gallagher, Seconded by Commissioner Beckwith. Roll Call Vote as follows: Commissioners; Gallagher-yes, Beckwith- yes, Brozek – no, Bridge-yes, Clark–yes, May-yes, Hale-yes and Chair Sims – yes.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:14p.m. Motion by Commissioner Brozek, Seconded by Commissioner Beckwith. Roll Call Vote as follows: Commissioners; Brozek-yes, Beckwith – yes, Gallagher- yes, Bridge-yes, Clark–yes, May-yes, Hale-yes, Chair Sims - yes.

Prepared by: Craig Failor, Village Planner / Staff Liaison