

MINUTES
ANN ARBOR CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

7:00 p.m. – July 18, 2006

Time: Vice Chair Lipson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Place: Council Chamber, Second Floor, 100 North Fifth Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, D'Amour, Emaus, Kunselman, Lipson, Potts

Members Absent: Pratt

Staff Present: Foondle, Vaughn

INTRODUCTIONS

None.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

a. Minutes of June 6, 2006.

Moved by D'Amour, seconded by Carlberg, to approve the minutes as presented.

Bona asked that on page 8, the word "removed" in the fourth line of paragraph 12 be changed to "taken."

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, D'Amour, Emaus, Kunselman,
Lipson, Potts

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Pratt

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Carlberg, seconded by D'Amour, to approve the agenda.

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS: Bona, Borum, Carlberg, D'Amour, Emaus, Kunselman,
Lipson, Potts
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Pratt

Motion carried.

REPORTS FROM CITY ADMINISTRATION, CITY COUNCIL,
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES, PLANNING COMMISSION
OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES, WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

D'Amour announced that the next meeting of the Allen Creek Greenway Task Force was July 19 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber. The task force would discuss the public meeting scheduled for August 2, he said, adding that a location for that public meeting had not yet been determined. He said the task force was nearing the end of its mission, as it was scheduled to provide a report to Council in October.

Lipson urged the public to continue to participate in this important process.

Potts announced that the next Ordinance Revisions Committee meeting would be July 28 at 3:00 p.m. in the sixth floor conference room of City Hall. She asked that the committee be provided a copy of the latest revisions to the C2A zoning district for the South University area, as well as the alternative mapping. She explained that the City was reviewing the possibility of revising the C2A zoning district in response to a request by merchants and property owners on South University who were interested in the ability to build taller buildings and increased density.

Bona reported that City Council postponed action at its meeting of July 17 on the recommendation for the First and Washington property made by the DDA Partnership Committee in order to review and become more familiar with the two proposals being considered for the site.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS SCHEDULED FOR NEXT MEETING

Lipson announced the public hearings scheduled for the Commission meeting of August 1, 2006.

REGULAR BUSINESS

a. Public Hearing and Action on Zion Lutheran Church Annexation and Zoning, 0.67 acre, southwest corner of Liberty Street and Ridgemor Drive. A request to annex this parcel into the City and zone it for single-family residential use – Staff Recommendation: Approval

Vaughn described the proposal.

Jack Snyder, representing the petitioner, stated that he would be available to answer questions.

Jim Mogenson, 3780 Greenbrier, stated that he recently was elected president of the Religious Action for Affordable Housing, which brought funds to the table in different ways to allow non-profits to borrow money at very low interest rates in order to assist people in obtaining affordable housing. He said the group also assisted in the provision of affordable housing through grants. He offered this type of option to the petitioner.

Noting no further speakers, Lipson declared the public hearing closed.

Moved by Carlberg, seconded by Bona, that the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Zion Lutheran Church Annexation and R1C (Single-Family Dwelling District) Zoning.

Kunselman asked if there currently were infrastructure to serve this site, referring to a comment in the staff report about having to extend the sewer. He also asked if there were a public water main in Ridgemor Drive.

Vaughn replied that the infrastructure existed and that the sewer would need to be extended.

Snyder stated that a public water main with fire hydrants existed in Ridgemor Drive.

Kunselman confirmed that this parcel was not on the City's tax roll.

Snyder replied that this was correct, that it was part of the church and not on the City's tax roll. He said the church intended to sell the property, which would then place it on the tax roll.

Kunselman asked if this property, if it were divided, would likely have frontage on Ridgemor Drive.

Snyder replied yes, to keep curb cuts from being developed on Liberty Street.

Lipson noted that staff also recommended minimizing curb cuts on Liberty.

Bona stated that the driveway to the church was immediately adjacent to Ridgemor Drive. She asked if the church had ever considered sharing a curb cut with Ridgemor, which would help reduce impervious surface.

Snyder stated that this has been discussed and the residents of Ridgemor Drive did not favor it. He said there was a plan for expansion to the church that was still in the planning stages and said a combination of the drives may or may not happen as part of that. If it did, he said, the parking lot would need to be reworked and circulation improved to eliminate confusion between the three driveways.

Bona suggested that the church might want to approach this option before selling the property.

Potts believed the annexation and zoning were a logical proposal and expressed her support.

Lipson agreed that the curb cuts were confusing, although he was not sure what the solution was. He did not think the residents of Ridgemor Drive would want to be backed up trying to get out of their homes during peak church traffic periods. He said this property had a fair amount of change in grade going from the west to the east and asked if there were any steep slope issues here.

Vaughn replied that the slope was not steep enough to qualify as a natural feature steep slope.

Lipson understood that the surrounding area was zoned R1C, but in looking at this site, he thought it might be conducive to a small cluster of homes, such as was done on Tulip Tree Court on West Huron Street, which contained four duplexes on a small site. He said the Tulip Tree Court property was zoned R2A, which he did not think would be incompatible with this area.

Vaughn said the Master Plan specifically recommended R1C zoning for this site. He said R2A zoning could be appropriate, noting that R2A zoning existed across Liberty Street. This would allow an increased density on the site, he said.

Lipson said this type of development would also reduce impervious surface and provide existing residents with more of a buffer. Zoning the property R1C at this time would give prospective buyers the expectation that this was how it would be developed, he said.

Bona asked if this property were zoned R1C, which would allow four single-family homes per the State Land Division Act and other regulations, would there be an opportunity to develop a cluster housing design through a planned project.

Vaughn said a planned project could only be done if the property were sited planned. If the buyer were developing individual lots, which would not require a site plan, then a planned project could not be used, he said.

Bona encouraged whoever developed this property to do so in four lots and, because of its proximity to Liberty Street, she thought smaller homes would be appropriate.

Snyder did not believe four lots could be achieved, as this was a corner lot and there were setbacks along both Liberty and Ridgemor to be followed. He believed two single-family lots could be achieved through a land division.

Lipson asked what the church would think about zoning the property R2A.

Snyder stated that the neighbors would be opposed to R2A zoning, noting that the homes along Ridgemor were valued around half a million dollars. He was also concerned that this would require individual curb cuts on Liberty Street.

Lipson noted that Tulip Tree Court had one curb cut on Huron Street serving the four duplexes.

Potts thought this was an idea worth considering. She said if this property were zoned R1C, as requested this evening, and whoever was developing the property wanted to put in duplexes, the developer could then ask for a zoning change. She said it would not be an inconsistent use, noting the many duplex homes across Liberty Street. Perhaps two houses on two individual lots were all that would fit here, she said.

Lipson stated that if the petitioner were interested in doing something more creative, a request for a zoning change could be submitted. He suggested that the idea for R2A zoning and duplex development be kept on file in the event someone came to discuss the possibilities of development for this site.

Emaus asked if single-family homes could still be built on the property if it were zoned R2A.

Vaughn replied yes.

Emaus asked if the four lots immediately to the west that were recently annexed were zoned R1C.

Vaughn replied yes.

Emaus said it seemed most consistent to zone this property R1C, which was the same zoning as that of the immediate neighbors.

A vote on the motion showed:

YEAS:	Bona, Borum, Carlberg, D'Amour, Emaus, Kunselman, Lipson, Potts
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	Pratt

Motion carried.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Mike Kojis, 816 Dartmoor, said he was unable to attend the meeting when Commission discussed the CVS Pharmacy and Fifth Third Bank proposals, and he wanted to inform Commission that, as representative of the Dartmoor Circle Site Condominium Association, the association opposed any type of public pedestrian access from West Stadium Boulevard through their neighborhood. He said none of the property owners would agree to providing an access easement.

COMMISSION PROPOSED BUSINESS

Lipson stated that he had an interesting meeting with Matt Naud, the City's Environmental Coordinator, about lighting. He referred to an interesting map showing all of the streetlights in the City and what the City was paying for each light. It was remarkable, he said, how irrational the system currently was, noting that it appeared that many of the lights were in the wrong places. He believed this would come before the Ordinance Revisions Committee and ultimately the Planning Commission for review of the appropriate level and location of lighting on public streets.

ADJOURNMENT

Lipson declared the meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Mark Lloyd, Manager
Planning and Development Services

Bonnie Bona, Secretary

Prepared by Laurie Foondle
Management Assistant
Planning and Development Services