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WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP

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WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

7525 Highland Road
White Lake, MI 48383
July 7, 2016 @ 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called: Mr. Kowall and Ms. Novak-Phelps were excused.

ROLL CALL: Steve Anderson - Vice Chairperson
Merrie Carlock
Debby Dehart – Secretary
Mark Fine
Rhonda Grubb
Rik Kowall, Board Liaison - Excused
David Lewsley
Peter Meagher
Gail Novak-Phelps – Chairperson - Excused

Also Present: Sean O'Neil, AICP, Community Development Director
Lynn Hinton, Recording Secretary

Visitors: 2

Approval of Agenda

Mr. O'Neil requested to add an item to the agenda. Randy Martinuzzi is present to discuss a concept plan to redevelop the corner of Union Lake and Cooley Lake Roads.

Mr. Meagher moved to approve the agenda as amended. Ms. Carlock supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (7 yes votes)

Approval of Minutes

a. June 2, 2016

Ms. Carlock moved to approve the minutes of June 2, 2016 as submitted. Ms. Grubb supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (7 yes votes)

b. June 16, 2016

Mr. Fine moved to approve the minutes of June 16, 2016 as amended. Ms. Carlock supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. (7 yes votes)

Call to the Public (for items not on the agenda)

Mr. Anderson opened the discussion for public comment on items not listed on the agenda, but none was offered.

New Business:

- a. Conceptual Plan Review from Randy Martinuzzi of The W Investors Group, LLC.

Mr. O'Neil showed an aerial view of the Four Towns District, at which Mr. Martinuzzi is looking to redevelop 40%, or 6 acres, of the district. This area has the spirit of mixed use, similar to what the Master Plan has laid out. This concept has been discussed internally. One issue is that sewer comes down Union Lake Road, but not on Cooley Lake Road. The thought would be for the applicant to go to Township Board to seek an SAD to bring utilities to this section of the property. Without that, some of the other things discussed, i.e., high density and residential, can't happen. The idea would be to rezone to (NMU) Neighborhood Mixed Use, to allow residential and drive-thru retail. The applicant is proposing 4-story buildings, where the district only allows for 3 stories. Also, there are a few driveways that are problematic along Cooley Lake Road, most of which will be subject to approval by the RCOC, and there are cross access opportunities.

Mr. Martinuzzi noted that they are currently developing a residential project in West Bloomfield, with condos in the \$350k-\$410k range. This conceptual development for White Lake will be a different market with beautiful view of the lake. They originally looked at building commercial in the back of the property, but after a meeting with township staff, there is greater vision to have a mixed use. He is aware they are allowed up to 3 stories under Section 3.1.113.

Mr. Martinuzzi indicated there are some cost prohibitive and environmental impact issues with the property, as well as a consent judgement affecting the back of the property. First, it appears water will run south as opposed to the north. Second, coming from Union Lake Road, there is a 10 ft. gradual increase which gives them ideas for residential in the back. Sewer does not appear to be an issue, but bringing water is. Another plan discussed is that the township would like to see a boulevard breaking up the commercial from residential. They think this would help increase the value by giving some separation. He added that the boulevard would be treed and done nicely.

Mr. Martinuzzi continued that they would like to eliminate as much parking as possible and the idea is to put in underground parking. They do not want garages out front. They will probably develop this as condos, but may market as apartments if the condos do not sell quickly.

One constraint is that there is a contamination issue on the site and this may hinder their ability to put in underground parking. They will need a technical person to measure and look at what it is, with respect to contamination. According to the consent judgement, there was a major release from Buckeye Pipeline. In addition, it looks like in the 20's/30's and 40's it was a dry cleaner that was dumping. The main use on the site was for auto repair. There will be two parties assisting with this, and they could put a contingency in.

There are two major tenants (Taco Bell and a bank), looking to go in the front of the property and the criteria required will be a higher standard of residential. Taco Bell has gone to RCOC, who will not allow left turns off Cooley Lake Road. This won't kill the project, but they will have to enter from Union Lake Road. He is considering flipping the location of the bank and Taco Bell.

Mr. O'Neil noted that the area will be landscaped significantly on the northern half of the site so lake properties won't be affected by lights, etc.

Mr. Dehart asked if he was planning on underground parking plus 3 stories. Mr. Martinuzzi indicated that the building could be 3 stories or 40 ft. from the lesser of the gable. They would like 4 stories and as much density as they can get. There may be a little slope to the land and they need to know where their base is to start measuring. They are also expecting to do significant site balancing so the site looks "designed". With the Four Corners entry, Taco Bell is aware that they will not have the lead and that the corner will be dedicated to the Four Corners. Mr. O'Neil added that all monument signs cannot exceed 6 ft. in height and must have a masonry base. Mr. Martinuzzi was not aware of the sign requirement and will make note of it.

Mr. Martinuzzi stated that they were also asked to consider the idea that this project could bring kids from college, and he thinks they may be able to keep some of the units small enough. The 1st floor could be separate units and the 2nd and 3rd stories like a brownstone.

Mr. Anderson asked what the average square footage of the units would be. Mr. Martinuzzi thinks they will be closer to 1000-1400 sq. ft.

Mr. Lewsley stated that a 4 story townhouse will not work. He asked if there would be elevators, and Mr. Martinuzzi responded that he thinks so, from the basement all the way up.

Mr. Anderson questioned whether the square footage is based on a 4-story development. If this goes in as 3 stories, will the square footage be decreased to have the density to justify this project? Mr. Martinuzzi stated they would probably go with smaller apartment units.

Ms. Dehart suggested condos on the lake view and apartments in the rear. Mr. Martinuzzi indicated that because of the drop in elevation from the west side you may see 3 stories, but it would look like 4 stories and be almost like walkouts. If they can't do 4 stories, he would be looking for a 4th story on the lake view because of the drop in elevation.

Mr. Martinuzzi stated he was also told by township staff they may need a drive circle for fire department access. He would love to have a greenbelt to the north rather than a circle drive, but that will be up to Fire Marshall. They will need an SAD to spread out over time, and would also be looking for a tax abatement.

The plan does not show a detention pond, and J&A had said that based on the green area in the back and concrete in the front, what is there now, and what the run off is today, will essentially set the point zero. Where they will lose green area will cause whether they have to put in a 10/25/100 year flood system.

He would like to say in a definitive way what they will find in the upper land. Core samples will be taken in a few weeks and it will take a few more weeks to get the lab results. They understand the consent judgement. His great concern is with the residential.

Mr. Meagher feels there needs to be places for barbequing. The conceptual plan has overkill on the parking and there could be some green here.

Mr. Lewsley questioned whether the residential would be townhouses with condos above them. Mr. Martinuzzi noted they've only been into this project for about 3 weeks. When they put it under contract, they didn't know the township would want residential put into this. This is something they want to hold on to and not flip. This is a nice income-producing property.

Mr. Anderson asked if the retail there now is being considered for getting into this space. He feels it would be great if the existing law firm wanted to build above the retail. It may be useful to look at the existing tenants there now and eliminate the need for financial support from the township.

Mr. Martinuzzi stated that they may be able to phase this project out. Mr. O'Neil added that if no one were to stay, it would make it easy. Mr. Anderson added that if the dollar value is not there to displace them, they may be able to offer them something refreshing.

Ms. Dehart asked whether Mr. Martinuzzi has talked to the owners of the other buildings. This will be new and fresh and those other places won't be. Perhaps there can be communication with them to have the facades blend. Mr. Martinuzzi stated that they have not looked at those parcels.

Mr. O'Neil indicated that the area looks rough. We all appreciate they are older developments and will not look brand new. This is the first developer to come in with a project worth anything that would go with Master Plan vision. This may drive the value of the average lease up and reinvestment from the existing owners.

Commissioner Comments:

Ms. Grubb likes the idea, but has concerns with concrete and pavement. She would like to see more green. She agrees this fits with the Master Plan and ties in with the vision.

Ms. Dehart likes the general concept. She would like to see condos/apartments and green with walkability to the complex.

Mr. Meagher has mixed feelings about mixed use, and thinks the Master Plan is idealistic. This contributes economically and he likes it.

Ms. Carlock would like to see large trees and vegetation on the north border. She thinks the bank and retail can be one building with 2 stories. It is old school to have 2 buildings and 2 parking lots. She appreciates very few curb cuts. She is concerned with lake views and would like to see some trees beyond Arborvitaes. She also would like to see sidewalks on Cooley Lake and Union Lake Roads, and stretches of permeable pavement for drainage.

Mr. Martinuzzi indicated they will be looking to bring water through the boulevard as opposed to bringing it down to Cooley Lake Road. Mr. O'Neil noted they will need a variance from the water board, but agrees it would be wasteful to bring the main down Cooley Lake Road.

Mr. Fine said this is the first development project that excites him and feels this is exactly what the township needs. Aesthetically it will have what the township wants along with a nice sign for White Lake. He thinks we will be proud of this. He encourages them to pursue this concept.

Mr. Lewsley feels the applicant is meeting the objectives of the Master Plan for Four Towns. The buildings will have to be fine-tuned, but conceptually, this is meeting the intent of the Master Plan.

Mr. O'Neil said the stretch with neighborhood mixed use is with the drive thru. It would make sense to do this as a Planned Business or Planned Business Development. Special Land Use provides for 3 uses, and there is flexibility.

Mr. Anderson feels the concept is a great idea and supports what the township wants to do. Density will still have to be looked at, and the applicant needs to understand the township has requirements for the height of the gable. A 4-story development will not fly for him. Also, by juggling the location of the buildings, he could do something good with any type of green area, i.e., a gazebo, or something to give an opportunity that will make it attractive for long time tenants. From his standpoint, coming into White Lake, he doesn't know that he would like to live next door to a Taco Bell. A bank would be low profile and will not promote the look of a Taco Bell by taking away from the aesthetic they are trying to create.

Ms. Dehart thinks it would be nice if the commercial was pushed away from the intersection, to allow for green, walkability and a sitting area.

Mr. Fine feels it would be nice to keep the woodsy feel with the lake and trees. Mr. Martinuzzi noted that the center island will get that feel with the elevation, greenbelt and hills. Mr. Anderson stated it would be great to have usable space, and not just lookable space.

Mr. O'Neil noted the plan is to get feedback, and Mr. Martinuzzi needs to know there is support on utility issues. The SAD will be a big issue for water, and contamination issues would be right for an SAD for water. He spoke with Dan Hunter at Oakland County, who referred him to Brad Hanson. There could be an opportunity for Brownfield funds from the county, and Mr. Martinuzzi and Mr. Hanson will connect soon. There may be some assistance and this could depend on lots of little things to make this go.

b. Discussion on possible Zoning Ordinance 58 amendments.

Mr. Anderson indicated there was a lot of discussion on this at the last meeting. He asked Mr. O'Neil whether updates were done resulting from that meeting.

Mr. O'Neil reviewed Mr. Sloan's letter of June 27, 2016. During a review of the Zoning Ordinance, they found zoning district and land use discrepancies, and several other conflicts between the Use Matrix, the district standards in Section 3.1, and the use standards in Article 4. Attached to his report is a summary

table of the discrepancies, along with their recommendation on how to proceed based on their interpretation of the intent of the Zoning Ordinance. There are (31) discrepancies, (21) of which were minor where the intent of the ordinance is clear and a specific amendment is recommended. There were (10) major discrepancies where the intent of the ordinance is less clear and options are presented this evening for amendments. He added that they could possible do the public hearing next month.

Mr. O'Neil agrees with all of McKenna's straight up recommendations. Regarding the (10) conflicts, numbers 3-7, McKenna makes a recommendation either/or and he needs concurrence from the group

After a brief discussion, the Commission is fine with the recommendations from McKenna.

Liaison's Report

Mr. Kowall and Ms. Novak-Phelps were not present to give a report.

Ms. Grubb noted that the Parks & Rec Committee did not meet last month.

Consultant's Report

None

Director's Report

Mr. O'Neil reported there will be a meeting on July 21. Mr. Iacoangeli will be present to discuss CIP amendments and Master Plan updates. Mr. Fine, Ms. Dehart and Mr. Lewsley cannot attend.

Communications:

Next meeting dates:

- Regular Meeting – July 21, 2016 (discussion/informational)
- Regular Meeting – August 4, 2016

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.