



CITY OF MADISON HEIGHTS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

November 21, 2023
Council Chambers – City Hall
300 W. 13 Mile, Madison Heights, MI 48071

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Champagne called the meeting of the Madison Heights Planning Commission to order at 5:32 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Josh Champagne
Mayor Roslyn Grafstein
Mayor Pro Tem Mark Bliss
Commissioner Eric Graettinger
Commissioner Melissa Kalnasy
Commissioner Cliff Oglesby

Absent: City Manager Melissa Marsh, Commissioner Grant Sylvester

Also Present: City Planner Matt Lonnerstater
Assistant City Attorney Tim Burns
Business Services Coordinator Mary Daley

3. EXCUSE ABSENT MEMBERS

Motion by Commissioner Oglesby, seconded by Commissioner Graettinger to excuse Commissioners Marsh and Commissioner Sylvester.

Motion carries unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Kalnasy, seconded by Graettinger to approve the minutes of the regular Planning Commission meeting of October 17, 2023.

Motion carries unanimously.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

The applicant who submitted the rezoning request PRZN 23-02 to rezone a parcel of land located at 1035 W. 12 Mile Road, has formally requested to postpone the public hearing and action to a later date. Because the City has already posted the request and sent notices to surrounding property

owners as legally required, the item was kept on the agenda to allow anyone from the public to speak on the matter.

The Chair opened the Public Hearing to the public at 5:35 pm. Seeing no comments, the public hearing was closed at 5:36 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Grafstein, seconded by Commissioner Oglesby to postpone rezoning request PRZN 23-02 to a later date to be determined by Staff and the applicant.

Motion carries unanimously.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT - For items not listed on the agenda

Chair Champagne opened the floor for public comment at 5:38 pm. Seeing none, public comment was closed at 5:38 pm.

7. NEW BUSINESS

A. Pre-Application Discussion [PPD 23-08] - 30901 Dequindre Road - Gas Station and Convenience Store

Chair Champagne introduced the first item under new business, pre-application discussion [PPD 23-08] - 30901 Dequindre Road - Gas Station and Convenience Store. City Assistant Attorney Burns noted before discussion was opened up, that this an informal discussion with the applicants. Commissioners should not make statements that express approval or denial.

Planner Lonnerstater introduced the applicant and their intent to seek preliminary feedback for a proposed 24-hour gas station and convenience store at 30901 Dequindre Road, located at the southwest corner of E. 13 Mile Road and Dequindre Road. There has been no application formally submitted.

The development features a 6,132 sq. ft. convenience store and a gas station with 8 fueling stations (16 total pumps). The property is zoned B-1 and is currently occupied by a strip retail center and parking lot. The applicant potentially would demolish the strip center to build the development. This would be a 24-7 operation.

Planner Lonnerstater explains that the convenience stores are permitted by right in the B-1 district but the gasoline station *would* require a special land use approval through City Council. He described the surrounding properties.

Planner Lonnerstater noted that Staff met with the proposed applicant and relayed their concerns to them. One is compatibility with adjacent land uses especially the residential in relationship to the B-1 standard that says it should not be adjacent to a residential district. It does abut to two properties zoned residential. A second concern is the compatibility with the intent of the B-1 district which is

our lowest intensity business district and is intended primarily to support the local neighborhood surrounding the site rather than have a regional presence. The third concern from Staff would be the land use pattern at this corner since this would be the third gas station and the fourth automobile related use at this corner. A fourth concern would be the impact on the current businesses in that strip mall and their plan for relocation.

The applicant introduced themselves and speak to the Commission about their proposed application. Derrick Rebo, with Sheetz Developer spoke first and introduced his team. David Brucklemeier, engineering manager, spoke on the history and background of the Sheetz Stores. Sheetz originally started out in the restaurant and convenience store business and moved into the fuel industry. He also described the construction and materials of their prototypical stores. This store would have space for 32 people. He discussed the company culture and wages and benefits and additional details of how the store gives back to the community.

Eric Williams of Stonefield spoke on the landscaping plans. 63 parking spaces are proposed and Sheetz would maintain two driveway approaches. He detailed more about the landscaping they plan to propose.

Chair Champagne opened the floor to the public at 5:50 pm to address applicant.

Resident Rachel Champagne spoke during public comment. She is a resident of the neighboring condos. She has concerns about another gas station on that corner and doesn't believe it is necessary. She does like the idea of updating that space but has concerns about a 24-hour convenience store being there.

Seeing no other comments, Chair Champagne closed the public comments at 5:52 pm.

Prior to further discussion between the Commissioners, Commissioner Kalnasy disclosed that she has done work with one of the Petitioners team and has current ongoing work with them and wonders if she should participate in this discussion. Per the recommendation of Asst. Attorney Tim Burns, and at the request of Mayor Grafstein, Commissioner Kalnasy voluntarily exited the room during this discussion. Chair Champagne also disclosed that he knows one of the members of the Sheetz team from a past work relationship but he does not work with him presently.

Discussion continued. Commissioner Bliss asked the team about average salaries and wages for Sheetz employees. The Sheetz team answered that there are multiple wage categories and it depends on the store location. A store sales associate on average earns \$15 per hour, supervisor earns about \$18 per hour, assistant store manager approximately \$60,000-\$70,000 while a general manager can earn up to \$100,000. They also offer extensive benefits to full-time employees.

Another concern raised by the Planning Commission is the potential increase in traffic. The Sheetz team stated they did submit a preliminary income traffic study and mentioned some statistics on passerby traffic. A more detailed report would be submitted by the Sheetz team with a formal application.

Concern is also expressed about the 24 hour and 365 days a week hours of the facility and the noise and or increased traffic that poses for the neighboring residential area.

Another planning commissioner voiced concerns were about the view of the gas canopy for the residents. The petitioner will take that into consideration prior to the formal application.

Some additional concerns expressed by Planning Commission members are the following:

- Another vehicular oriented business adjacent to residential is not desirable per the master plan
- Infrastructure and noise since it abuts to the residential condos
- Future business of the gas station in relation to the increase of electric vehicles
- Length of lease at this site
- What happens if a business shuts down within the lease period and there is contamination and underground tanks left behind. Sheetz explains that they will remove the contamination and are fully responsible for that.
- Possible increase in pollution

After the Sheetz team left, Commissioner Kalnasy reentered the Council Chambers.

B. Adoption of 2024 Meeting Calendar

A recommendation is to remove one meeting in the summer in the presented 2024 meeting calendar. Consensus amongst Commission members is to remove the meeting in July 2024.

Motion by Commissioner Oglesby, seconded by Commissioner Graettinger to approve the 2024 planning commission meeting calendar as amended.

Motion carries unanimously.

8. MEMBER UPDATES

Commissioner Bliss gives an update on litigation that came before Council.

9. PLANNER UPDATES

Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Update

Planner Lonnerstater gives an update on the current zoning ordinance rewrite. The first complete draft from the zoning consultants is done. They intend to have the draft review ready at the February planning commission meeting.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned by the Chair at 7:16 p.m.