

Present: Chairperson Jensen; Vice-Chair Ostrowski; Members: Abboud, Borowski, Freedman, Peddie, Ruprich and Westerlund

Absent: Stempien

Also Present: Village Manager, Wilson
Council Liaison, Oen
Planning Consultant, Brian Borden

Chairperson Jensen called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

APPROVE/AMEND AGENDA

Motion by Ostrowski, second by Peddie, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion passed (8 – 0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF A PLANNING BOARD MEETING HELD APRIL 27, 2011

Motion by Borowski, second by Ostrowski, that the minutes of a regular Planning Board meeting held on April 27, 2011 be approved as submitted.

Motion passed (8 – 0).

TACO BELL SIGNAGE REQUEST FOR REBUILT RESTAURANT AT 31305 SOUTHFIELD ROAD

Eric Rauch with Desine Engineers was present on behalf of B-B Sign Company, which is a contractor for Sundance Inc., franchisee for Taco Bell. He reviewed that signage was discussed during the site plan review process. The signs before the Planning Board conform to what was decided to be acceptable by the Planning Board and Council.

Rauch displayed the site plan and pointed out the location of the signs. The ground sign will be 48.2 sq. ft. and 11 ft. high with a 1ft. base constructed of dark brick. There are two directional signs: one on the north side of the property saying “enter” and one on the south side saying “exit only”. Both directional signs are 3 sq. ft. and 4 ft. tall. There is a 43 sq. ft. menu board and a clearance bar.

Only the front wall will have building signage. The wall signage was updated from the corporate prototype to meet the Village’s specifications. The signage has been lowered below the parapet elevation. The total square footage of the wall sign is 56 sq. ft., which meets ordinance requirements. The square footage for all of the signage on the site excluding the menu board is 111 sq. ft., which is below the 120 sq. ft. maximum allowed.

Rauch addressed questions from Board members regarding the method of calculating the wall signage and specifics of the monument sign. It was noted that the submittal did not include drawings of the ground sign.

The site plan approval stipulated that a complete sign package would be reviewed by the Planning Board at a later date. The suggestion was made to table the signage request for Taco Bell due to incomplete documentation that did not include drawings and calculations for the monument sign.

Motion by Jensen, second by Westerlund, to postpone consideration of the Taco Bell signage request until the next regular Planning Board meeting.

Motion passed (8 – 0).

CONSIDER VERIZON WIRELESS REQUEST TO REMOVE EXISTING EQUIPMENT CABINETS LOCATED AT 16125 W. 14 MILE ROAD AND REPLACE WITH EQUIPMENT SHELTER

Bob Przybylo and Rob LaBell representing Verizon Wireless were present with a proposal to remove existing Verizon equipment cabinets from the water tower property on 14 Mile Road and build an equipment shelter in its place. The property is owned by SOCWA (Southeast Oakland County Water Authority).

The shelter will house electronic equipment and a natural gas generator. It was suggested that the project would increase the aesthetics of the site. The structure will match the existing shelters on the property in terms of brick, design and color. Przybylo displayed the site plan and pointed out the locations of the existing equipment cabinets and the proposed shelter that will be located under the water tank.

Przybylo addressed questions from Board members. The overall objective of building the shelter is to upgrade the site to Verizon's 4G technology. In order to do that, Verizon needs the electronics that do not exist in a cabinet format. In addition, they propose a backup emergency power generator at this site. Verizon has a mandate that every cell site in the country have a backup generator power source.

Przybylo stated that the shelter is 12' x 26' and is 10' high with a pitched roof. The generator runs only one hour once a week for routine maintenance. It would only be run after that if commercial power fails. The generator is set on a timer that can be changed. In its agreement with SOCWA, Verizon agreed to comply with the noise ordinances of Beverly Hills and Birmingham.

Planning consultant Brian Borden stated that his review letter dated May 18 on this topic indicated that the proposal was in compliance with Ordinance requirements. The only other comment was whether the Planning Board would require additional landscaping to fill gaps in the 14 Mile Road frontage. Borden added that the area is well landscaped and that there are security concerns on these types of sites.

Przybylo responded that Verizon representatives discussed this with SOCWA officials, who did not want additional landscaping at this time for the reason that it could present a security issue. In response to an inquiry from the Board, Przybylo stated that plantings will be replaced if there is any disruption during construction.

Wilson stated that the property in question is owned by SOCWA, and Beverly Hills is a member of that consortium. Wilson sits on the SOCWA Board. At a recent Board meeting, SOCWA agreed to a lease extension with Verizon at this site that will allow for installation of new equipment on that property pending site plan approval from Beverly Hills.

Motion by Freedman, second by Peddie, to recommend Council approval of the Verizon site plan dated 4/18/2011 for installation of a new equipment shelter on SOCWA property located at 16125 W. 14 Mile Road contingent on structure materials and colors being compatible with existing buildings on the property.

Roll Call Vote:
Motion passed (8 – 0).

DISCUSS THE NEXT STEPS TO BE TAKEN REGARDING THE SOUTHFIELD ROAD CORRIDOR

At last month's meeting, the Board talked about the next steps in the Southfield Road corridor redevelopment process. Westerlund distributed a handout at that time listing stakeholders, resources, and technical aspects of the plan. It was suggested that the Board discuss and define the vision, goal, boundaries and scope of the project this month.

Westerlund related that Stempien suggested that transferring documents related to this project onto a FTP site would be helpful in terms of organizing and recording the Board's output so that it would easily accessible. Borden will look into LSL site availability for Planning Board use.

The stakeholders and tasks were outlined in the handout from the last meeting. It was suggested that the Planning Board be added as one of the stakeholders for the reason that it is a driving force for a redevelopment plan. Another idea in terms of stakeholders was to include adjacent property owners including the Southfield Township shopping center and the City of Southfield.

Westerlund suggested that the Planning Board define its mission statement so that members are in agreement on the direction of the project.

Jensen expressed the view that a mission statement should be developed in an open forum with input from all of the stakeholders. The mission comes from a composite of views from the business and land owners, council members, and residents. The goal should be shared by everyone.

Westerlund questioned whether the Planning Board could spread the word to others before defining its mission. He concurred that an initial vision or mission statement may change after meeting with stakeholders. Ruprich suggested that the Board develop a mission statement in order to obtain feedback from the stakeholders.

There was some conversation about how the City of Birmingham proceeded with its overlay district plan. They brought in a facilitator to preside over open forum meetings with stakeholders, distributed questionnaires, and compiled information to determine what people wanted to see.

Freedman related an instance in Aspen where interesting mom & pop stores were replaced by high end establishments. The Board may want to consider the consequence of increasing land values and whether to make that challenge part of its vision.

Westerlund said that a starting point could be to establish a goal that includes recognizing existing businesses and property owners that make up the Southfield Road area. The intent is to foster more opportunities. As the Village goes through the process, the overlay district will define itself with the help of the stakeholders.

Borden did not believe that it was the intent to push out existing uses. The goal has been to intensify this corridor and allow those uses to remain side-by-side with new uses to create a mixture of uses. He mentioned the vacant surface parking lots on the corridor. Borden viewed the redevelopment plan as an effort to better organize and intensify the development of the business corridor. That is what the Gibbs plan presents.

Borden commented that the Planning Board has been struggling with the timing for public input. He remarked that there is a fine line between having too much done prior to the public meeting and not having enough information to generate discussion and provoke a reaction. A decision should be made on what the Board wants to do and when. He suggested that the Gibbs plan along with the ideas and images that have been presented may be enough to proceed with public input. In answer to an inquiry, Borden said that there were a number of formats for receiving public input. Land owners can be invited to come in and sit down with the Planning Board, or Board members can conduct one-on-one interviews.

Borowski thought that the Village should develop a plan that provides alternatives to the land owners without dictating to them. The Village could provide a framework from which developers would bring their creativity. The broader community needs to be involved in the process as well as the property owners. Borowski did not believe that resistance on the part of property owners should be deterrent to an overlay district. Redevelopment could take 10 or 20 years. It was noted that Medical Village will require redevelopment at some point.

Wilson commented that he is not convinced that the individuals who will eventually develop the property will be in the room when the Planning Board holds a public forum to talk about an overlay zoning district. Land owners are proprietary about their plans and will probably not talk to anyone about their ideas. What the Planning Board is trying to do is remove any encumbrances that zoning might have on future development. It is not known what form that might take.

Ostrowski suggested that current property owners may not have ideas about the potential of the area in terms of the market information that was presented by Robert Gibbs as part of his background information. He questioned how the Board would determine what incentives in a form based code would drive land owners to redevelop their property.

Peddie thought that the main goal was to provide a framework for people to be creative on their own. That is where the investment is going to come.

Westerlund proposed that the Planning Board define the boundaries of the corridor plan at its next meeting in order to identify the property owners and adjacent property owners.

A suggestion was made to invite one group of land owners per meeting to hear what they have to say. The Planning Board could ask a series of open ended questions to that group to determine what their thoughts are on a redevelopment plan. Another view was that the Board should not engage in discussions with landowners until it has more to present in terms of the direction the Board is considering.

Borden thought that the Board was heading in the direction of holding a public forum with a presentation and discussion. He noted that it is often difficult to hold a forum and get people out who have a positive response or who will assist with the project. Borden will outline various ways to obtain public input including focus groups or interviews. The Board should consider its resources and how it wants to proceed as well as what it hopes to gain from public input.

Ostrowski suggested the potential of smaller groups of Board members meeting with property owners on their turf with everyone asking the same questions. Borden said that this was a focus group approach.

Abboud suggested that the Planning Board move forward on the overlay district so that, when there is an option for renovation, a land owner would have the option of building based on the current ordinance or taking advantage of incentives offered with the overlay zoning.

Westerlund will lead further discussion of the Southfield Corridor redevelopment process at the next meeting. Jensen requested that the Village Manager purchase a copy of the Downtown Birmingham 2016 Plan, a document Birmingham created from its charrettes, for the Board's review.

DISCUSSION OF DRAFT ORDINANCE CHANGING THE PLANNING BOARD TO A PLANNING COMMISSION

Planning consultant Brian Borden related that he has been reviewing a draft ordinance from Attorney Ryan that would change the Planning Board to a Planning Commission pursuant to Michigan law. He has been refining the content and anticipates that the ordinance will be in proper form for Board review at its next meeting.

Borden raised a couple of issues with the Board. The draft ordinance prohibits ex-officio members of the Planning Board. The State Act allows an ex-officio member in villages; it would be a council member or member of administration. Borden asked the Board and administration if they want the ordinance to have the flexibility of allowing ex-officio members. He would normally draft an ordinance to include that flexibility. Board members chose to provide the option of an ex-officio member in the ordinance by a 4-3 straw vote. Borowski abstained.

Borden commented that there is language in the ordinance that he thinks should be addressed in bylaws. The State Act requires that a planning commission adopt bylaws. He will provide the Village with sample bylaws.

PLANNING BOARD COMMENTS

Jensen welcomed newly appointed member Lee Peddie.

Westerlund asked everyone to come out for the Annual Beverly Hills Memorial Day Parade on May 30.

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS

Wilson reported on a meeting with officials from the Road Commission of Oakland County regarding the Southfield Road corridor. He spoke with them about the Village's Southfield Road corridor redevelopment plan. Two years ago, the Road Commission was considering a plan to construct a boulevard on Southfield Road from 11 to 13 Mile Roads. Beverly Hills voiced its interest in extending that boulevard from 13 Mile Road to at least Beverly Road. Conversations were ongoing.

Since that time, Lathrup Village informed the Road Commission that it wanted to incorporate a Complete Streets program into the boulevard plan. The Road Commission response was that it would not consider Lathrup Village's insistence on roadside parallel parking on the basis that the designation is not consistent with traffic counts through that area. The Road Commission set the boulevard concept aside; it is not going forward at this time.

Wilson questioned the future of the boulevard project if Lathrup Village insists on the Complete Streets program. He will keep the Planning Board informed on this matter.

Wilson reported that he has received a draft proposal from the City of Royal Oak to provide building department services to Beverly Hills. He reviewed the proposal and made some suggestions. In the interim, Wilson has had preliminary discussions with the Birmingham City Manager about an arrangement to provide building department services. The Birmingham building official will be in contact with Wilson to explore whether there is a potential for cooperation in this area.

Wilson remarked that the Village's current building department operation is not sustainable. The work load has been light due to the poor economy, which may change in the next 18 months. The lack of a building official will not work for Beverly Hills in the long run. The Village will need to make a change and consolidate its building department with one of its neighbors. Planning Board members commented on the proposals.

Wilson informed the Board that a community garden has gone in on the grounds of the Methodist Church at 13 Mile and Evergreen Roads. A fence that does meet code was erected without a permit. Village staff has had some discussion with Matt Roman, director of the community garden program. Roman provided the Village with a drawing of the garden including a fence last fall. He was told that a permit was required before a fence could be erected. The

community garden group may go before the Zoning Board of Appeals to request a variance for the fence.

Wilson stated that another issue may be that the church is located in a residential area under a special use permit. The question is whether the garden is an allowable function under the special use permit. This issue did not come before the Planning Board this year. It could possibly come before the Planning Board if the community garden group chooses to come back with a garden proposal next year. The determination as to whether a community garden is subject to special use approval will be referred to Attorney Tom Ryan and/or Brian Borden.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

Motion by Borowski, second by Abboud, to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m.

Motion passed (8 – 0).

David Jensen, Chair
Planning Board

Ellen E. Marshall
Village Clerk

Susan Bernard
Recording Secretary