

CITY OF NORTHVILLE
Planning Commission
February 6, 2018
Northville City Hall – Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Wendt called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Carol Maise
Christopher Miller
Dave Mielock
Mark Russell
Ann Smith
Donna Tinberg
Jay Wendt

Absent: Steve Kirk (excused)
Jeff Snyder (excused)

Also present: Pat Sullivan, City Manager
Ken Roth, Mayor
Sally Elmiger, Planning Consultant
Lori Ward, Director, Downtown Development Authority

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION by Mielock, support by Russell, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: January 16, 2018

Motion by Mielock, support by Smith, to approve the January 16, 2018 minutes as published.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. AUDIENCE COMMENTS: None.

6. REPORTS:

A. CITY ADMINISTRATION: None.

B. CITY COUNCIL: None.

C. PLANNING COMMISSION: None.

D. OTHER COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENTAL LIAISONS: None.

7. DRAFT ORDINANCES:

SENIOR FACILITY

Planning Consultant Elmiger gave the background to this agenda item, referencing the following documents:

- Senior Living – Draft Ordinance Amendments, January 25, 2018
- Memorandum: Senior Living Facilities – Draft Ordinance Language, January 25, 2018
- PowerPoint handout dated November 30, 2017 (used at the December 5, 2017 meeting)

Planning Consultant Elmiger explained that in December she had presented an analysis of senior facilities and where they would be appropriate in Northville. The zoning changes provided this evening reflected that analysis and the Planning Commission's discussion.

The ordinance defined senior housing as:

- *Independent senior living* – just like any other apartment or condominium dwelling unit.
- *Assisted senior living* – divided into *large* (21 or more residents) and *small* (20 residents or fewer) facilities.
- *Nursing homes* – included skilled nursing care to distinguish it from assisted living facilities.
- *Continuing care retirement community* – a facility that included more than one type of senior living facility.

The proposed ordinance permitted:

- Small assisted living facilities in R-3 and R-4 Districts.
- Large assisted living facilities as a special land use in R-3 and R-4 Districts.
- Continuing care retirement communities as a special land use in R-4 Districts.

Assisted living was no longer permitted in the Central Business Overlay District.

Other changes included:

- The Professional Business Office (PBO) District allowed multiple-family residential uses, and since *Independent Senior Living* was just like any other multiple-family use, that type of facility could also be located in the PBO District.
- Standards for small assisted living facilities in R-3 and R-4 Districts were included, with a density requirement of *maximum* 20 dwelling units per acre.
- In the Central Business District, language was added to clarify that upper story units must be dwelling units with a kitchen. This requirement was for everyone and was not age specific.
- The term *housing for the elderly*, which had never been defined, was replaced with *assisted living* and *nursing/memory care*.
- Special Land Use standards were added for large assisted living facilities and continued care retirement community uses, including minimum lot size, density, height, and buffer requirements.
- Parking requirements were updated to more closely match the need.

There was a short sidebar discussion regarding the apartment/residential hotel use as a special land use in R-4 Districts. This use had been added to the table of permitted uses in the various zoning districts to make the table consistent with the existing ordinance language. If Allen Terrace wanted to convert to a hotel, it could do that.

In response to a question from Commissioner Maise, Planning Consultant Elmiger said that adult day care homes were not part of tonight's discussion.

Downtown Development Director Ward asked why single and multiple family uses were permitted in the CBD Overlay but 2-family homes such as duplexes and townhomes were not permitted. Planning Consultant Elmiger said this could be a discussion for a future meeting.

In response to a question from Commissioner Mielock, Planning Consultant Elmiger explained that small Assisted Senior units in a congregate type building could not exceed 20 residents per acre, and convalescent and/or nursing homes the density could not exceed 20 residents per care, because the rooms involved, lacking a kitchen, would not be considered dwelling units.

Commissioner Wendt asked for further explanation regarding the parking requirements for senior housing. Planning Consultant Elmiger explained that she had used the Institute of Transportation Engineers Parking Generation standards for different types of senior facilities: independent senior housing – 1.5 spaces/unit, assisted senior living – 0.5 spaces/unit, and for nursing homes – 0.4 spaces/unit.

Chair Wendt indicated he was ready to entertain a motion:

MOTION by Maise, support by Russell, that the Planning Commission schedule a public hearing at the next available meeting for the proposed amendments regarding Senior Facility Housing.

Maise	yes
Smith	yes
Mielock	yes
Russell	yes
Miller	yes
Tinberg	yes
Wendt	yes

Motion carried unanimously.

CADY STREET OVERLAY

Planning Consultant Elmiger gave the background to this agenda item, referencing the following documents:

- Cady Street Overlay District Revisions Related to Master Plan Amendments, February 1, 2018
- Memorandum: Cady Street Overlay District – Draft Ordinance Language, February 1, 2018

At the January 16 meeting the Planning Commission held a public hearing on proposed changes to the Master Plan. After comments were received, the Commission decided that it wanted to see related ordinance modifications before the Master Plan changes were approved.

Ordinance modifications included a better defined Cady Street area, with a separation into two different neighborhoods: the Cady Street neighborhood between Wing and Griswold, and Cady Town, the industrial-type area east of Griswold to Main Street, where the Performance Regulated Industrial (PR-1) was the underlying zoning.

Regarding Cady Town, a neighborhood description was included that contained:

- Mixed use catering to creative arts and pursuits.
- Some supportive retail and restaurant uses be included.
- Possibly some live/work, lofts and other multiple-family residential that emulated warehouse buildings that had been renovated or repurposed.
- Outdoor public spaces.
- Amenities along Middle Rouge River.
- Acknowledgement that this ~~was~~ is an entryway into the City.

Ordinance changes for the Cady Town area based on the proposed Master Plan language included:

- First floor residential was permitted, but to the extent possible this should be a subordinate use to the development project. The Cady Town area should have as much first floor commercial as possible. Live/work units could include a person's business on the first floor and their unit on the 2nd floor. The vision included uses such as a creative gallery, incubator type spaces along the street, etc., and residential on the upper floors.
- A density bonus was added to the Cady Town area. The permitted residential density was 10-20 dwelling units per acre, but a developer could have 25 units per acre if they provided mixed use building with commercial on the 1st floor and residential above.

Mayor Roth asked what percentage of commercial use on the first floor would need to be commercial in order to get the bonus density. Planning Consultant Elmiger said that had not yet been determined and could be discussed. Mayor Roth was concerned that per the proposed language, any commercial use on the first floor would entitle a developer to the bonus.

Planning Consultant Elmiger continued that there was also a height bonus in the overlay district. Four properties on the south side of Cady Street between South Center and Church/Hutton could get a height bonus meeting one of 6 requirements for the bonus. Another provision said that the Planning Commission could agree to a height bonus on any property within the district if certain architectural elements were provided.

At the previous meeting there had been concern about a development coming in as a project by right, without providing any public open space in the area. A proposed modification required that any developer include a public plaza or green space of the 5% gross floor area of the project.

City Manager Sullivan thought the City Attorney should review this requirement.

Chair Wendt acknowledged Todd Rankine from Singh Development.

Mr. Rankine spoke to Singh Development's interest in the Foundry Flask property. They had been working on a proposal for 6-8 months, but were waiting to present until the ordinance amendments had been finalized. They were suggesting a completely residential development project. He spoke to some of the concepts of their project, including a walkway along the riverfront, parallel parking along Griswold, etc.

Discussion followed. Was there any way that Singh would considered moving away from a 100% residential project, in order to include some first floor commercial in their development? Mr. Rankine said the bonus being discussed was too small – an extra 5 units – to incentivize an interest in first floor commercial. He pointed out that the Master Plan currently called for 25 units per acre at this location; the

changes discussed this evening dropped the density to 20 units per acre with the extra 5 units being offered as a bonus.

After further discussion regarding using office as part of the first floor commercial use, and the difficulties of parking on the site, Chair Wendt returned the discussion to the Commission.

Commissioner Mille asked what the current Master Plan and Zoning allowed by right for the Foundry Flask property. City Manager Sullivan said currently any first floor residential in the proposed Cady Town area was prohibited. Proposed changes to the Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance would allow first floor residential. Planning Consultant Elmiger added that development was currently limited to 3 stories but the Commission could offer a height bonus to any property in the overlay district, if certain architectural standards were met.

Commissioner Russell said the height bonus could be achieved with a mixed use product. He liked the current language because it allowed for different options.

Commissioner Maise asked if parking options had been discussed, including below-grade parking. Planning Consultant Elmiger said every possible option was available for parking, with the requirement that any development on the site had to be self-parked. Different parking options were not a part of incentives for bonuses; they were simply allowed. Commissioner Maise suggested that if below-grade parking were utilized, with non-residential uses on the first floor, density and height bonuses could be offered.

Commissioner Russell said he had a problem with allowing first floor residential. The prohibition against first floor residential was the result of years of study, involving different groups in the community, such as professionals, Commissioners, City Council, etc. He was opposed to changing the prohibition based on a developer's need to develop the property.

Commissioner Russell continued that if a developer wanted to present a proposal for the area, they should come in with a formal PUD proposal. While Foundry Flask had been vacant for a long time, he was not sure it was because the City had not found the right developer. The price for the property had been high, and the cost to mitigate brownfield issues was over \$2 million. He was opposed to move forward ordinance changes allowing first floor residential as a type of blank slate.

Planning Consultant Elmiger explained that because the Master Plan prohibited any first floor residential, any PUD had to reflect that underlying zoning, thus denying flexibility and options for development.

Commissioner Russell indicated that while he understood the need for flexibility, he was opposed to granting the ability to develop at 100% residential project by right.

City Manager Sullivan noted that the proposed ordinance language required some amount of mixed use, with neither 100% commercial or 100% residential being required.

Planning Consultant Elmiger pointed out that the entire south side of Cady Street could currently have first floor residential.

Mayor Roth explained that City Council was concerned that if the prohibition against any first floor residential in the PR-1 District was not changed, the property might not ever be marketable. The total volume of square feet represented by first floor commercial in the area would exceed the 50,000 square

feet that the City could support for new commercial anywhere. He reminded the Commission that when the Master Plan was last changed the Commission had not recommended the prohibition of first floor residential; this had been added later by the City Council. Now Council wanted to go back to the original framework and offer more flexibility to prospective developers.

Commissioner Russell pointed to other nearby successful downtowns; they did not have first floor residential. The goal of Foundry Flask development was to provide a destination that would bring people to town, such as an arts district. He hoped whatever went in the area was not just another townhouse development.

Mayor Roth said there were parts of the Foundry Flask area that simply would not support first floor residential, such as the area along the river. Perhaps a compromise would be requiring first floor commercial along Cady Street only.

Commissioner Russell agreed that some flexibility was necessary. The things important to him included offering a neighborhood commercial district that would be supported by new residents on the Foundry Flask site as well as – eventually – the Downs area.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said the proposed ordinance language specifically called out multiple-family warehouse type development for the area.

Commissioner Mielock also hoped the City would not see suburban architecture on the site. He agreed that some flexibility could be offered, but also there needed to be some component of commercial first floor within this area. He would like to see a visual to show what 10% vs. 5% commercial development would look like.

It came out in discussion that of 3 developers that had approached the City in the last few years, all had included first floor residential. Perhaps more units than 25 per acre should be offered as an incentive to meet architectural standards and add a commercial component.

Discussion was held regarding process. If the Master Plan language changed significantly than what had previously been sent to surrounding communities, the process would need to start over.

Chair Wendt said the Master Plan should make the site PUD-available, including some first floor residential. Mayor Roth felt that changes could be made that would reflect the Commission's concerns as well as the concerns of City Council, protecting the City's vision while allowing some first floor residential on the site.

In response to a comment from the Director Ward, Planning Consultant Elmiger said the proposed language could eliminate allowing a single-use on the site, thus encouraging a multi-use development.

Regarding allowing a density of greater than 25 units per acre, the consensus of the Commission was that this warranted further study.

Planning Consultant Elmiger summarized the discussion as follows:

- She would research allowing more density, including discovering what other communities were doing with density for taller buildings, and how they were handling parking.
- Show 5% vs. 10% commercial development on the property.
- Prohibit a single-use development.

Commissioner Mielock was interested in what other communities were doing that were developing downtown areas, such as Birmingham, Royal Oak, Lansing, Plymouth, Kalamazoo, Adrian, Tecumseh, etc.

City Manager Sullivan asked if units per acre had to be in the Master Plan. Planning Consultant Elmiger said that density limits were usually included in the Master Plan. However, density could be determined by the Zoning District.

Planning Consultant Elmiger advised that if the density were changed in the Master Plan, the process for approving Master Plan changes would need to start over.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said she could return with new Master Plan language at the next Commission meeting, including possible new language regarding density and parking.

ELECTRONIC SIGNS

Referring to her January 31, 2018 memo: Electronic Changeable Message Signs – Draft Ordinance Language, Planning Consultant Elmiger gave the background to this discussion item. The proposed ordinance language clarified what it meant for lights to flash, rotate or move. She had provided a chart showing how other communities regulated changeable signs by giving a minimum time a message may be displayed before it changed. Times ranged from 6 seconds to 3 hours. She felt 3 hours defeated the purpose of a changeable sign, and recommended allowing a sign to change from static sign to static sign every 15 minutes.

City Manager Sullivan said the 6 seconds probably applied to time/temperature signs.

Planning Consultant Elmiger suggested either defining time/temperature signs or eliminating them entirely.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said that some communities prohibited electronic message signs entirely or only allowed them in very specific districts. Right now Northville allowed them in every district except the Historic District.

Commissioner Miller supported having the requirement be 15 minutes before a sign could be changed. Chair Wendt supported a 3-hour requirement.

Discussion was had regarding prohibiting electronic message signs entirely

Planning Consultant Elmiger said she would research what other communities allowed the signs.

Discussion followed. Should all electronic message signs be eliminated, leaving only channel letters as allowed changeable copy? That was, after all, 40-year-old technology. What about Kroger, Early Bird Restaurant, etc.? Almost every pole sign in town was internally illuminated, for instance. Gasoline price signs changed frequently. Perhaps price signs should be exempt from the ordinance. What about the prices of items sold in gas station stores, such as beer?

Planning Consultant Elmiger summarized the discussion as follows:

- Allow the message to change every 3 hours.

- Discover what cities prohibit changeable electronic signs altogether and what cities only allowed them in certain districts.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MOTION by Russell, support Mielock, that the current slate of officers be re-elected: Jay Wendt chair, Steve Kirk vice-chair.

Maise	yes
Smith	yes
Mielock	yes
Russell	yes
Miller	yes
Tinberg	yes
Wendt	yes

Motion carried unanimously.

9. DISCUSSION: None

10. ADJOURN

Seeing that discussion had ended, Chair Wendt adjourned the meeting at 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl McGuire
Recording Secretary

Approved as amended February 20, 2018