

The Regular Meeting of the Troy City Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Beltramini at 7:34 P.M. on Tuesday October 10, 2000 in the Council Chambers of the Troy City Hall.

1. ROLL CALL

Present:

Beltramini
Chamberlain
Kramer
Littman
Reece
Starr
Storrs
Waller
Wright (7:36 p.m.)

Absent:

None

Also Present:

Laurence G. Keisling, Planning Director
Lori Bluhm, Assistant City Attorney
Mark Miller, Principal Planner
Doug Smith, Real Estate and Development Director
Jordan Keoleian, Student Representative

2. MINUTES – Special/Study Meeting of September 26, 2000

Moved by Starr
Seconded by Littman

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Special/Study Meeting of September 26, 2000, be approved as printed.

Yeas: Starr, Littman, Beltramini, Storrs, Reece, Waller, Kramer
Absent: Wright
Abstain: Chamberlain

MOTION CARRIED

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one wished to be heard.

TABLED ITEMS

4. PROPOSED REZONING – South Side of Long Lake, West of Rochester – Section 15 – R-1C to R-1T (Z-668)

5.

Mr. Keisling explained that action was tabled on this matter, following a Public Hearing at the July 11 Regular Meeting, in order to provide an opportunity for the City's Environmental Consultant to review the property, and for the petitioners to consider potential development directions in conjunction with the property immediately to the east, which was the subject of an R-1C to B-2 rezoning request. Following further discussion at the August 8 meeting, action was tabled once again to this meeting, in order to provide time for the Planning Commission to receive a clearer delineation of the wetlands and natural features in this area, and for the petitioners to consider potential development directions in conjunction with the property owner immediately to the east. At their Regular Meeting of September 25, 2000, the City Council took action to deny the R-1C to B-2 rezoning request involving the property abutting to the east. At this time, the Planning Department was not aware of a proposal for the joint development of that property with the parcel that is the subject of this rezoning request.

Chairman Beltramini noted the letter from the petitioner, Choice Properties, requesting tabling until the February 2001 Regular Meeting.

Moved by Chamberlain
Seconded by Reece

RESOLVED, that action on the request for rezoning of a 4.5 acre parcel having 330 feet of frontage on the south side of Long Lake Road west of Rochester Road, from R-1C to R-1T (One Family Attached Residential) be tabled to the February 13, 2001 Regular Meeting, at the request of the petitioner,

Yeas: All Present (9)
Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

SITE PLANS

A representative of the petitioners in Item 5 (Site Plan Review – Proposed Engineering Building – West Side of Bellingham, South of Big Beaver) asked that their item be placed later in the agenda so that another of the petitioner's representatives could be present.

6. (Taken Out of Order) SITE PLAN REVIEW – Proposed Hospital Expansion – West Side of Dequindre, South of South Boulevard – Section 1 (SP-305)

Mr. Keisling explained that a site plan has been submitted for expansion of the main hospital complex on the 46 acre developed portion of the C-F zoned Wm. Beaumont-Troy Hospital site on the west side of Dequindre south of South Boulevard. The proposed building expansion extends west from the existing hospital, in the area south of the powerhouse. The building expansion involves five levels totaling approximately 247,000 square feet. The plans submitted indicate that this expansion will provide additional area for surgery, endoscopy, obstetrics, and short-stay functions, with one of the levels devoted primarily to mechanical support systems. The proposed building expansion will displace a portion of the present surface parking area, so the proposed site plan also involves reorganization and modification of the remaining adjacent parking area. In the course of staff review of this proposal, the staff made some suggestions to Beaumont representatives relative to ways that the remaining parking area might be made more efficient. The staff also noted that the various specified parking areas on the site with their restricted access, along with the overall site access restriction related to the hospital's parking fee program, brings about a situation where there is no overall site perimeter drive available for those visiting the site. They, therefore, asked that the hospital consider parking area modifications which would enable the provision of such a perimeter drive in conjunction with this very substantial hospital expansion. Hospital representatives have indicated that they did not feel that the provision of such a drive would be feasible until an additional parking structure is constructed in the area northwest of the hospital building. They indicated, however, that they would further investigate the ramifications of this matter by the time of this meeting.

Jeff Larson and Chet Schroeder of Beaumont Services Company were present representing Beaumont Hospital, along with Kendall Ruhberg of HarleyEllis, their architect. Mr. Larson noted that the two Beaumont Hospitals combined are the largest in the country, in terms of admissions. Their overall parking layout is intended to provide “zones”, where the staff parking is in the zone or area to the north, while visitors are in the area to the south, primarily within the parking structure which will soon be expanded. They do ultimately propose an overall site loop road, which will extend south along the boundary of the site, west of the lake/detention basin. At this point in time, however, they do want to retain the present restricted perimeter drive situation, in order to maximize available surface parking. Mr. Larson noted that there are presently gates which enable Fire Department access through the total site, while restricting visitor access. (Later in the meeting, in a response to a question from Mr. Waller, Mr. Keisling commented that the Police Department preferred a layout which did not involve a total site perimeter drive.)

Mr. Chamberlain expressed concern about the hospital action to request and receive a modification from the City Council which will eliminate the requirement for a brick façade on the west side of the expanded parking structure. He felt that the intent of the Zoning Ordinance was that parking structures would look essentially the same as the buildings which they serve. Mr. Larson noted that the additional brick exterior would have cost approximately \$180,000, and the hospital preferred to use the money for health care purposes. They will, however, be using aggregate material stained to match the color of the main building. Chairman Beltramini and Mr. Wright expressed concern about the inadequacy of the system for quick pick-up of patients, which did not eliminate the parking fee. Mr. Larson stated that they were investigating a parking ticket validation system. In response to Chairman Beltramini’s question, Mr. Larson stated that over 100 parking spaces would be lost if the present perimeter of the parking area was converted to a loop drive. They also investigated expanding the northerly parking area to the west through enclosing the drain and noted that the cost for such an improvement would be approximately \$250,000. Mr. Kramer suggested that the hospital consider staggering shifts in order to reduce the impact of the parking load at the time of shift changes. In response to other questions from the Commission, Mr. Larson noted that there is presently free parking, which is served by a shuttle, on the Sterling Heights portion of the hospital complex on the east side of Dequindre. He also noted that the driveway width along the west edge of the visitor parking area west of the building complex is adequate to enable u-turns so that visitors can return from this location to the parking structure if they wish.

Moved by Waller
Seconded by Starr

RESOLVED, that Preliminary Site Plan Approval as requested for the construction of a five-level 247,350 square foot expansion of the Wm. Beaumont-Troy Hospital facilities, on the west side of Dequindre south of South Boulevard, be granted.

Yeas: All Present (9)
Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

5. (Taken Out of Order) SITE PLAN REVIEW – Proposed Engineering Building – West Side of Bellingham, South of Big Beaver – Section 26 (SP-825B)

Mr. Keisling explained that a site plan has been submitted for the construction of a 133,320 square foot building for Altair Engineering, on an irregularly-shaped 9.5 acre M-1 zoned parcel on the west side of Bellingham Drive south of Big Beaver Road in the Big Beaver Airport Business Park. The site has over 580 feet of frontage on Bellingham and extends over 1,000 feet west at its deepest point. The proposed Altair Engineering building involves a three-story office element of 114,200 square feet, a single-story shop area of 15,200 square feet, and a 4,000 square foot galleria or connecting area. Setbacks, landscape area, and parking all exceed Ordinance requirements. Two drives are proposed to serve the site from Bellingham, substantially offset from the drives which will be placed as a part of the construction now underway on the east side of Bellingham. Approval of this site plan was recommended by the Planning Department.

In response to Mr. Storrs’ question, Mr. Keisling confirmed that this site is served by a common detention basin in the southeast portion of the Big Beaver Airport Business Park site. In response to Mr. Waller’s question, he stated that no lighting plan had been submitted thus far. Mr. Waller noted that the staff and the Commission are not consistent in asking for lighting plans in conjunction with every site plan. Chairman Beltramini noted that the Commission’s concern regarding site lighting was not as significant in a site such as this which is not adjacent to residential development. Mr. Kramer was concerned that the parking on the site might be insufficient due to his experience with engineering/software design operations.

Brad Klintworth was present on behalf of Liberty Property Trust, the developers, and Altair Engineering. He stated that the building would accommodate 480 people and each “cubicle” would be approximately 6’ x 8’ in size. They have provided 50 extra parking spaces on the site and feel that this number will be sufficient. In response to Mr. Wright’s question, Mr. Klintworth and Mr. Keisling stated that the small strip of land extending north to Big Beaver from the northwest corner of the site was a part of the previous airport ownership, and that it may be sold to one of the abutting owners.

Moved by Chamberlain
Seconded by Kramer

RESOLVED, that Preliminary Site Plan Approval as requested for the construction of a 133,320 square foot engineering building on a 9.5 acre M-1 zoned parcel on the west side of Bellingham south of Big Beaver Road is hereby granted.

Yeas: All Present (9)
Absent: None

MOTION CARRIED

OTHER BUSINESS

7. DISCUSSION OF THE TERMINOLOGY RELATED TO THE GRAPHIC REPRESENTATIONS ON THE MASTER LAND USE PLAN

Mr. Keisling explained that in response to a request from Mr. Littman, the Chairman has asked that the Commission spend a brief time discussing the adequacy of the current terminology on the face of the Master Land Use Plan, which presently reads as follows:

“THIS PLAN IS INTENDED TO SHOW GENERALIZED LAND USE AREAS AND IS NOT INTENDED TO INDICATE PRECISE SIZE, SHAPE, OR DIMENSION. THESE PROPOSALS REFLECT FUTURE LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DO NOT NECESSARILY IMPLY SHORT RANGE REZONING PROPOSALS.”

In response to a question from Chairman Beltramini, Ms. Bluhm stated that she saw no problem from a legal standpoint with the current language. Mr. Storrs suggested that the phrase IS NOT INTENDED TO INDICATE be replaced with the phrase DOES NOT INDICATE. He further commented that other “tune-ups” are necessary in relation to the Master Land Use Plan. Mr. Keisling noted that the staff wants to develop a Master Plan Brochure, which would include an updated map and explanatory text. Paula Bratto will soon be completing the zoning and land use inventory. Chairman Beltramini felt that the Master Plan update process should become a standard item on future study session agendas. Mr. Kramer suggested that the phrase “Generalized Land Use Areas or Transitions” could be used as a part of the statement under discussion. Mr. Smith noted that the statement under discussion on the Master Land Use Plan map is very important, as many people feel that the Master Plan designation for property is the same as the zoning classification. This belief or position then gives many people a distorted perception of the value of their property.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurence G. Keisling
Planning Director

/eh