

The Special/Study Meeting of the Troy City Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Waller at 7:30 P.M. on Tuesday March 25, 1997 in the Lower Level Conference Room of the Troy City Hall.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Waller
Storrs
Kramer

Thompson
Starr

Absent: Wright
Chamberlain
Reece
Lepp

Moved by Thompson

Seconded by Starr

RESOLVED, that Commissioners Wright, Chamberlain, Lepp and Reece be excused from attendance at this meeting.

Yeas: All Present (5)

Absent: Wright, Chamberlain, Reece, Lepp

MOTION CARRIED

TABLED ITEMS

2. PRELIMINARY PLAT - TENTATIVE APPROVAL -West Oak Subdivision - North of Big Beaver, at East End of Boyd Street - Section 23

Mr. Keisling explained that, following extensive discussion at the February 11 Regular Meeting, action was tabled on the Tentative Preliminary Plat for the proposed West Oak Subdivision, in order to provide an opportunity for the Commission to consider present and potential alternative street patterns in the surrounding area. The subdivision, as originally proposed, consisted of 12 lots and a detention basin site within a 4.22 acre parcel lying north of Big Beaver, between Rochester and John R, at the present east end of Boyd Street and at the present south end of Harmony Drive. This subdivision is in an area where the staff has been encouraging residential development, and discouraging additional non-residential zoning and development, for many years. This site, with its connection to the abutting interior streets, is the "key parcel" in relation to enabling the further extension of residential development in this area. At the February 25 Study Meeting, the Commission further discussed this proposed subdivision, in the context of potential ultimate street patterns in the total surrounding area extending south to Big Beaver and west to Rochester Road. The alternative street patterns discussed for the subdivision itself included the closing of either Boyd Street or Harmony Drive at their present termini. From a planning and ultimate street pattern perspective, Mr. Keisling felt that these alternatives are unacceptable, and should not be recommended. After the February 25 discussion, action was tabled once again to this meeting, in order to provide an opportunity for the staff and the developers to consider alternative street patterns both for the proposed subdivision and for the adjacent area.

Mr. Keisling noted that, in response to the direction set at the February 25 meeting, Mr. Reece prepared a sketch plan indicating how a plan for this subdivision could be developed which would be based on an ultimate indirect street pattern. That plan would require the establishment and use of a temporary interior road for an indefinite period. The Planning Department also prepared a series of alternative proposals, emphasizing the potential use of a "street diverter" type of design. Although street diverters are typically used on a "retrofit" basis to "quiet traffic" in established gridiron street pattern areas, he felt that such a design could be used in a location such as this in order to try to minimize the impact of a problem created by a street pattern established many years ago. Mr. Keisling then reviewed the five alternative layouts, including the original subdivision proposal. He recommended that, if the original proposal is not acceptable, even considering potential street modifications which can occur in the adjacent area, then the plan designated as "Alternate 2" should be recommended. That Alternate involves a street diverter pattern, and is apparently most feasible from a utility service perspective, as it does not involve an easterly street extension in the southerly portion of the proposed subdivision property. The Commission then discussed various aspects of the alternative street layouts.

Colleen Bean, President of the Raintree Homeowners Association (810 homes), expressed concern about potential traffic moving to and from the Baker Middle School. She noted the present traffic problems on Crimson Drive, and felt that this subdivision would primarily be accessed from Raintree by way of Crimson and Lakewood. She felt that Harmony Drive should remain closed. A representative of the Elks Club expressed concern about the proposed street patterns involving their property.

In response to a question from Mr. Kramer, another Baker Middle School parent from the Raintree Subdivision stated that she would love to have driving access directly to Baker, but that she was more concerned about potential traffic and safety problems resulting from providing the connection between Harmony Drive and Boyd Street.

Joe Paluzzi and Gary Abitheria, the subdivision developers, were present along with Mike Mayotte of Professional Engineering Associates, their consulting engineer. Mr. Mayotte commented that the developers did not care for the "street diverter" proposals. They would prefer a layout involving the closing of Boyd Street, if the original proposal is not acceptable.

In the course of the Commission's further discussion, Mr. Kramer indicated his preference for the closing of Harmony Drive. Mr. Thompson concurred. Mr. Storrs indicated his preference for closing Boyd Street. Mr. Starr was still concerned about taking an action which would not improve access to the Baker School.

Moved by Kramer

Seconded by Thompson

RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission hereby recommends to the City Council that Tentative Approval be granted to the Preliminary Plat of the West Oak Subdivision, in the area north of Big Beaver, adjacent to the ends of Boyd Street and Harmony Drive, in accordance with the street pattern as originally presented, subject to the condition that a barrier be placed at the present end of Harmony Drive, which would allow only emergency vehicle and pedestrian access.

Yeas: Kramer, Thompson, Waller

Nays: Starr, Storrs

Absent: Wright, Chamberlain, Reece, Lepp

MOTION CARRIED

Mr. Starr indicated that his negative vote was due to his opinion that, under the proposed layout including the closing of Harmony Drive, an excessive amount of traffic would be added to Boyd Street in the future. Mr. Storrs felt that the inter-connection of Boyd Street and Harmony Drive would be preferable to the proposed barrier.

3. SPECIAL USE REQUEST AND SITE PLAN REVIEW - Proposed Elementary School - West Side of Livernois, Between Square Lake and South Boulevard - Section 4 (SU-288)

Mr. Keisling explained that action was tabled for further study on this matter, following a Public Hearing and extensive discussion at the March 11 Regular Meeting. The proposal is for the construction of an elementary school for the Avondale School District on an 11.2 acre net area assembly of properties having approximately 657 feet of frontage on the west side of Livernois between Square Lake Road and South Boulevard. The primary matter of concern to the Commission members was the effect which the establishment of this proposed school site would have on the abutting properties, particularly to the south and to the north.

Mr. Keisling stated that, since the time of the March 11 meeting, he had met with Avondale School District representatives, and had discussed the Commission's concerns. They have indicated a willingness to accommodate these concerns, but have also indicated that there is presently no budget authorization for additional property purchase. They have now submitted three alternative site plans, involving moving the south boundary of the proposed parking area somewhat to the north, to various extents, in order to "make a portion of their site available" to any party who would be acquiring it for development in conjunction with the acreage parcels to the south and west. If a street could be constructed within a 40 foot easement along the south edge of Mr. Lane's property, immediately south of the school site, the absolute minimum additional property width necessary from the school district site would be 8 feet, in order to bring the north-south dimension of the area available to 175 feet. Mr. Keisling felt that the provision of additional area would be preferable, and therefore recommended the alternative plan which included the largest parking area offset, a minimum of 28 feet. That dimension would enable a total dimension of 195 feet, and would thus accommodate a 60 foot street right-of-way and 135 foot lot depths.

Dr. James Bird, Avondale School Superintendent, was present along with Paul A. Corneliussen, their Architect and Jim Giachino, their contractor. Mr. Corneliussen commented that the proposed elementary school site is relatively small, and that they could functionally use more parking, even though they meet Ordinance requirements. They would, therefore, prefer the plan with the parking area offset just 8 feet from the south property line, in order to minimize the potential reduction in site area. Mr. Lane, owner of the property immediately to the south of the school

site commented on the difficulty of redeveloping his property due to its limited north-south dimension. He suggested that the school district should consider moving the house in the southeast corner of their proposed site to another location, so that they could then use that area for their site development. One of the residents from the area immediately north of the proposed school site raised questions as to the visual screening of school facilities such as dumpsters and transformers from their area. Mr. Corneliussen noted the equipment and service area proposed adjacent to the northwesterly portion of the building.

Moved by Storrs

Seconded by Kramer

RESOLVED, that Special Use Approval, as requested for the establishment of an elementary school serving the Avondale School District on an 11.2 net area R-1B zoned site having approximately 657 feet of frontage on the west side of Livernois between Square Lake Road and South Boulevard is hereby granted, in accordance with Section 10.30.02 of the Zoning Ordinance, in accordance with the plan which indicates a minimum parking area offset of 28 feet from the south property line.

Yeas: All Present (5)

Absent: Wright, Chamberlain, Reece, Lepp

MOTION CARRIED

Some of the Commission members noted the importance of properly screening trash receptacle facilities, and providing parking area lighting which would not negatively impact adjacent residents.

Moved by Storrs

Seconded by Thompson

RESOLVED, that Preliminary Site Plan Approval, as requested for the construction of an elementary school to serve the Avondale School District on an 11.2 net area R-1B zoned site having approximately 657 feet of frontage on the west side of Livernois between Square Lake Road and South Boulevard is hereby granted, with the understanding that the petitioners and their architects will consider ways of effectively screening the proposed service/trash receptacle/transformer area from the view of residents to the north.

Yeas: All Present (5)

Absent: Wright, Chamberlain, Reece, Lepp

MOTION CARRIED

STUDY ITEMS

4. BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS REPORT

Mr. Kramer indicated that there were no issues of consequence discussed at the recent Board of Zoning Appeals meeting.

5. CURRENT DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Mr. Keisling stated that he had no report, unless the Planning Commission members had questions about specific matters.

6. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY REPORT

Mr. Letzmann commented that the DDA had discussed the potential expansion of the District area, at various locations, but that no action was taken.

7. MASTER LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENTS - Northfield Office and Research Area

Mr. Keisling explained that a Public Hearing has been set for the April 1, 1997 Regular Meeting, in order to consider a proposed series of amendments to the Master Land Use Plan in the "Northfield Office and Research Area". As discussed at previous meetings, these amendments basically consist of revisions to the extent and configuration of the various office and research land use designations, in order to reflect various zoning and development directions which

have occurred in the years since the Plan in this area was last addressed. These proposals also reflect the concept of locating a small service/commercial complex in this area, which would serve and be primarily supported by this major office and research development area. At this point, this direction would be represented by the establishment of a new land use category known as "Office/Service Area", and the indication of same in the southwest quadrant of the Crooks Road/Corporate Drive/I-75 ramp intersection area.

The Commission and Mr. Keisling discussed alternative approaches to providing for the proposed Service/Commercial complex. Mr. Keisling noted the plan as now presented by the prospective property owners in this area, which includes the construction of an office building under O-M zoning, with support and service uses having their own outside entrances, along with a small service and commercial complex within a B-2 zoned area to the south.

8. RECONSIDERATION OF LOCAL AREA PLAN - Rochester/South Boulevard Area

Mr. Keisling explained that, pursuant to a series of discussions, most recently at the February 25, 1997 Study Meeting, a Public Hearing has been set for the April 1, 1997 Regular Meeting in order to further consider alternative Local Area Plan directions, emphasizing residential land uses, in the Rochester/South Boulevard area. Mr. Keisling and the Commission reviewed the three potential alternative Local Area Plans which will be available for consideration, including the present Local Area Plan as adopted by the Commission in August of 1996. The two alternative plans involve greenbelt buffer areas within the Rochester Road frontage, along with Residential/Cluster, or Medium-Density Residential Use in the areas to the rear of the frontages.

9. LAND USE AND ZONING STUDY - Heide/Lowry/I-75 Area

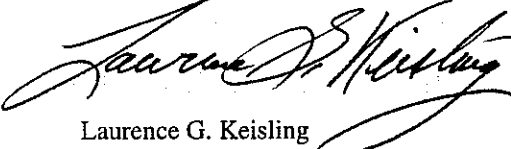
Mr. Keisling noted that a Public Hearing was held at the March 11, 1997 Regular Meeting in order to consider the proposed R-1C to C-F rezoning of the proposed communications antenna site at the present east end of Lowry Street, adjacent to I-75, between Livernois and Heide Street. At that time Ronald Sloan and Tom Christenson reminded the Commission once again of their interest in bringing about development of an irregularly-shaped series of parcels extending from the east end of Lowry Street to the Top of Troy detention basin. Many of these properties are presently zoned in the O-S-C classification, consistent with the direction of the Master Land Use Plan. It was Mr. Keisling's understanding that the Planning Commission basically offered to informally discuss, with Mr. Sloan and Mr. Christenson, any specific development proposals which they might have for this area.

Tom Christenson and Ronald Sloan were present. Mr. Christenson discussed their proposal to construct a large scale movie theater complex at this location, with some additional service uses, such as a restaurant and a book store. It was his understanding that uses such as this could be permitted on their property through a Use Variance, or Special Use Approval process. Mr. Keisling advised the Commission that uses such as that proposed would require rezoning to a commercial classification.

The Commission raised questions about matters such as access, traffic generation, proper zoning, and the actual extent of the site controlled by Mr. Sloan and Mr. Christenson. Mr. Thompson commented that he did not object to the concept of an "Entertainment Center", per se. If rezoning or a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment is necessary, the proponents should formally request same. Mr. Starr noted that, before any commercial zoning could be considered for application in this area, any related Master Plan Amendments should first be considered. Mr. Sloan suggested that a "Special Use Approval" approach would be preferable, so that rezoning would not be necessary.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,


Laurence G. Keisling
Planning Director