

Minutes
Planning Commission Regular Docket
Tuesday, January 10, 2017 – 5:30 P.M.
City Council Chambers

I. Commission Work Session (Agenda discussion(s))

Beginning: 4:30

Location: City Hall, 2nd Floor, NDS Conference

Members Present: Chairman: Kurt Keesecker, Vice-Chair; Lisa Green, Commissioners Taneaia Dowell, Genevieve Keller, Jody Lahendro, John Santoski; UVA representative: Brian Hogg

Commissioner Keesecker called the meeting to order at 5:03 and noted this is the time to ask questions of staff.

Commissioner Lahendro asked about the timing of the historic conservation district zoning text amendments. Staff informed the commission that the item is just the initiation of the zoning text amendment and it is likely to come for hearing in March 2017.

Commissioner Keesecker asked for clarification on matters to be presented by the public.

Brian Hogg wanted clarification on the door locations for the 1200 Emmet Street project. Staff clarified the orientation of the project and the location of doors and signs. Staff clarified that the “front” of the development would face the parking lot and not Emmet Street.

Commissioner Green wanted to know how close the 1200 Emmet Street project is to the size of the Zinburger and the Zoe’s Kitchen development. Staff informed them that the 1200 Emmet Street project is very similar in size and architecture.

Commissioner Keller wanted to know how much comment the EC can make on ingress/egress for 1200 Emmet Street and CVS. Staff stated that pedestrian circulation can be touch on, but traffic cannot.

Commissioner Green wanted to know if the developer (both 1200 Emmet and CVS) would incorporate the Streets that Work Plan. Staff informed them that the Streets that Work Plan is incorporated into both developments. She also asked if other commissioners had seen the STW improvements at 6th and Monticello. This started a conversation about implementation of Streets that Work and how they are improving the City.

Commissioner Keesecker talked about the Planning Commission’s retreat on Friday January 13th at the UVA Rotunda. The agenda is still being work on, but in general Chris Engel (City’s Economic Development Director) will give a talk about creating jobs. The retreat will provide a good starting point for items that need to be addressed by spring.

II. Commission Regular Meeting

Beginning: 5:30 p.m.

Location: City Hall, 2nd Floor, Council Chambers

Members Present: Chairman: Kurt Keesecker, Vice-Chair; Lisa Green, Commissioners Taneaia Dowell, Genevieve Keller, Jody Lahendro, John Santoski; UVA representative: Brian Hogg

City Council Members: No City Council present.

Staff: Missy Creasy, Mary Joy Scala, Matt Alfele, Lisa Robertson

Call to Order: The meeting is called to order by Keesecker

A. Commissioners' Reports

Commissioner Lahendro: No Report.

Commissioner Keller: No Report.

Commissioner Keesecker requested a moment of silence to be observed for former vice-mayor Holly Edwards.

Commissioner Keller spoke of Mrs. Edwards as the City's poet and how she was a role model for the City.

Commissioner Green: Mrs. Edwards was the reason she wanted to be on the Planning Commission and Mrs. Edwards had a wonderful way of exposing a different side of an issue without shutting you down. She will be missed greatly.

Commissioner Dowell: Attended the Community Development Block Grant meeting and thanked Tierra Howard of NDS for her work.

Commissioner Green: Attended the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee the first Wednesday of the month. The committee will be working on updating the long-range transportation plan (next meeting will be the first Wednesday of February).

Commissioner Santoski: No Report

B. University Report – Brian Hogg: No Report

C. Chair's Report – Kurt Keesecker: No Report

D. Department of NDS – Missy Creasy noted that awards ballots were due this evening. She also noted that Amanda Poncy and Heather Newmyer were attending the Transportation Research Board conference today in DC to present a poster presentation for STW. Ms. Creasy noted the upcoming work sessions and stated that Chip Boyles from the PDC will be presenting information on the Hydraulic/29/Hillsdale area in connection with an announcement VDOT will be making on January 19th to the community.

E. Matters to be presented by the public not on the formal agenda

Tim Heaphy, 2028 Barracks Road: Spoke about concerns the neighborhood has regarding the proposed CVS and the 1200 Emmet Street developments. Traffic and increased congestion at the Barracks Road and the Emmet Street intersection are big concerns. He also wanted to know if the CVS project was just phase I of a larger development that would be coming soon. He thanked staff for answering questions and getting back to him in a timely manner.

Nancy Carpenter, 921 Henry Ave: Wants more community and neighborhood engagement when it comes to site plans. She only became aware of a new development in her neighborhood by looking on the NDS website and would like the neighborhood presidents to be notified when site plans are submitted. She also was concerned with the Planning Commission's retreat and that no neighborhoods were invited.

Commissioner Keesecker: Addressed Mrs. Carpenter's concerns with neighborhood engagement and noted that the Friday PC retreat is open to the public and anyone can attend. The retreat will begin to lay the groundwork for community engagement regarding the update to the City's Comprehensive Plan.

F. Consent Agenda

Commissioner Santoski moved to approve the consent agenda and Commissioner Lahendro seconded the motion. The motion passed.

III. Joint Meeting of Commission / Council: No items.

Commissioner Green moved to gavel out of the Planning Commission meeting until the second Tuesday in February and to gavel into the Entrance Corridor Review Board. Commissioner Keller seconded the motion. The motion passed.

A. 1170 Emmet Street – CVS

Mary Joy Scala – CVS is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the property located at the corner of Barracks and Emmet. Planning Commission voted to defer action on this item at the September 13, 2016 meeting. This is a by-right development that requires site plan approval and a COA from Entrance Corridor. The CVS development is working with the 1200 Emmet Street development site to make the intersection of Barracks Road and Emmet Street safer. They are allowed 3 signs on this property due to the fact it is a corner lot. Main entrance is located at the northeast corner, but a second entrance is at the southeast corner.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends 4 modifications to the design as highlighted in the staff report:

1. Incorporate red brick into the design as the predominant building wall material. Site walls should also be red brick. Eliminate the faux stone fiber cement.
2. Submit glass specifications for a minimum 70 VLT.
3. The wall signage should be lit white at night.
4. Confirm all lighting will meet dark sky requirements.

Ashley Davies (Williams Mullen): Gave a PowerPoint presentation for the CVS project. The presentation covered location of the site and the existing conditions. The updated site plan shows the location of the building and the landscaping. The landscape plan shows a large planting strip between the sidewalk and Emmet Street planted with magnolia trees. This will give the City room to put a right turn lane from Emmet Street to Barracks Road in the future. The new second entrance to the CVS on the northeast corner will shorten the walk for people coming down Barracks Road. They have lowered the building some, but it is still a few feet above Barracks Road at the Emmet Street intersection. One of the slides shows what the building would look like with more brick and less stone per Staff's recommendations. The updated drawing shows how the building will be modern and match the look of the 1200 Emmet Street development.

Commissioner Green: asked the applicant about the grade on the corner of Emmet Street and Barracks Road.

Ryan Perkins (Kimley-Horn and Associates Engineer for the project). Noted 12' of grade change from the intersection and the entrance. The finished floor elevation will be 2' above the intersection.

Commissioner Dowell: How is the site connecting to the pedestrian? The site still does not connect the inside of the building to the outside.

Ashley Davies: We made a solid effort to add more public improvements

Commissioner Green: Wanted clarification on what the materials will be on the finished building. Did they consider using all natural materials?

Ashley Davies: The last building the PC reviewed was all brick and did not receive positive feedback. We looked at the corridor and tried to match what is in the corridor.

Mary Joy Scala noted the materials are acceptable according to the design standards.

Commissioner Keesecker: How much articulation is in the plan? The applicant stated changes in material would create the articulation and not a push/pull to the walls of the building. Are the tower heights the same? Yes. The rear faced has only one opening? Yes, and it is for the drive through.

6:38 Commissioner Corey Clayborne joined the Commission.

Commissioner Green: Is the sign bar intentional to match the existing shopping center? The applicant could not answer that.

Commissioner Dowell: She does not share the applicant's feelings that the Planning Commission did not like the brick from the last submittal. She did not get the feeling that the PC did not like the brick and the two towers do not match the Charlottesville style.

No more questions and the discussion began.

Commissioner Keesecker: The articulation of the corners is a start, but could go further. More thought should be given to staggering the towers so they are not the same height. The wall facing Barracks Road is still not engaging the pedestrian and could use windows and articulation. Overall the plan has come a long way and is getting better.

Commissioner Lahendro: The east facing side is still not engaging the neighborhood.

Brian Hogg: The design tonight has more interest than the all brick one. The sign ban should relate more to the size of the windows. The windows should start 12" to 18" above the ground. A lot of the buildings in the corridor are painted brick so red brick is not everything. Room needs to be given for variety.

Commissioner Keller: Our skyline is turning brown (in the West Main Corridor) and this corridor runs the same risk. Think about any future development on the site that could come in the near future and the influence of this development on that. The CVS should be aware of buildings at the back of the site. And the CVS could reference some of the distinctive features of the former Anderson Brothers such as the iconic "7" and red brick Tavern.

Commissioner Green: Concerned with the experience coming from Barracks (echoing Commissioner Lahendro comment).

Commissioner Santoski: More windows along Barracks that are lower would help articulate and engage the pedestrian. The red brick in the PowerPoint is too dark, but a different red brick could work.

7pm Commissioner Keesecker left the meeting.

Commissioner Green: I do not see this moving forward as is and would like to make a list of changes.

Commissioner Clayborne: The stone rendering looks better, but the brick could work if they had more time. This is just the rendering and the brick could look better if the applicant had more time to create a better rendering.

Commissioner Keller: If we allowed fake stone that would go against the Entrance Corridor guidelines and set a bad precedent. This plan is much improved but it still needs a little more work.

Commissioner Green: Outlined changes they would like to see:

1. Fewer materials with better integration.
2. Smaller sign band and/ or relate to the size of the building and provide balance
3. Architectural town entrance at the corner to create a gateway point.
4. Eastern elevation; improve transparency between the sidewalk and the inside of the building and better articulation.
5. North and west to have more transparency and east and south more articulation and more engaging.

Commissioner Keller: A few commissioners should sit down with the applicant and staff to work out the details.

Commissioner Clayborne: He would be happy to meet with the architect to work through suggestions.

Commissioner Green: Asked for a motion.

Lisa Robertson: We are outside the 60 day timeline and the applicant would need to ask for the deferral.

Ashley Davies: The applicant is willing to defer and meet with 2 commissioners and staff.

Commissioner Green: Accepts the applicant's deferral request and 2 commissioners will meet with staff and the applicant. Commissioner Clayborne and Commissioner Keesecker are appointed to a subcommittee to meet with the applicant and staff.

7:28 the PC takes a break. Commissioner Dowell left the meeting

- B.** 1200 Emmet Street – Emmet Street Retail

Mary Joy Scala – The site is currently vacant, but was once the site of a former Exxon service station. She noted that the development size is similar to that of the Zinburger and Zoe’s Kitchen building at Barracks Road. She also pointed out the landscaping details and the connection to the trail project. The comment she had pertaining to mechanical unit location has been addressed so staff recommends approval with the following modifications:

1. Modify the Emmet Street façade in the location of the two single doors to make it appear that it is facing Emmet Street;
2. The wall signage should be maximum 20 feet high, and lit white at night.
3. Confirm all lighting will meet height and dark sky requirements.

The development meets the EC guidelines and is of good design.

Commissioner Green: Applicant needs to identify elevations by direction and street and not “front” and “back”.

Allen Taylor: The overall view is that this development will help improve the intersection of Emmet Street and Barracks Road. They will be using a lot of solar panels on this development and a few of the parking spaces will include facilities for charging electric cars.

Rob French (architect for this project): This site will have a restaurant and was designed to be a 3 or 4 “fronted” building. The goal was to use a lot of the elements found throughout the City into the site including the red brick, stone block, plaster finish and metal overhangs. Most of the units will have a dual entrance (one in the parking lot and one off of Emmet Street).

Commissioner Keller: Is very concerned with the illumination of the signs on the neighborhood side and wants to know if anything can be done to reduce the visibility of the lighted signs from the Meadowbrook Road side of the development.

Commissioner Green: Could the signs be backlight from the neighborhood side? Staff states that having the signs on the neighborhood side that could be backlight to have a softer look.

Commissioner Santoski: Could the lights be dimmed after a set time on the neighborhood side? Applicant stated they will be turned off after a certain time, but not dimmed.

Commissioner Green: Where is the trash receptacle? Applicant points out the location of the dumpster on site.

Lisa Robertson: The details concerning how trash is handled on site are more appropriate for site plan discussion.

No more questions and the discussion began.

Commissioner Keller: This is a nifty project and is a good transition through the corridor. She is ready to make a motion but the lighting on the Meadowbrook Road side of the development needs to be worked out.

Commissioner Santoski: Mary Joy should work with the applicant and not EC. Commissioner Keller disagrees.

Mary Joy Scala: Lowering the signage would not fix the visibility from the neighborhood.

Commissioner Keller: I move for approval of this project with the modification that staff presented including the Emmet Street modifications that the wall signage be a maximum height of 20 feet with white illumination on three of the four elevations, that all illumination meets night sky requirements, that all mechanical equipment be screened, and illuminated signs on the Meadowbrook side not be visible from the residential area.

Commissioner Green: The motion was not seconded so the motion fails.

Commissioner Clayborne: I move to approve the Entrance Corridor Certificate of Appropriateness application for the new retail building at 1200 Emmet Street, with staff modifications, and that signage use halo lighting.

Commissioner Santoski: Seconded

Commissioner Keller: Requested a friendly amendment to add articulation to the blank kitchen wall facing Emmet Street.

Commissioner Clayborne: Accepts the friendly amendment.

Commissioner Santoski: Seconded

Commissioner Lahendro yes, Keller no, Clayborne yes, Santoski yes, Green yes.

Motion passes.

Commissioner Keller asks that the minutes reflect her only objection to the development is the signage lighting that faces the residential neighborhood on the Meadowbrook side.

The meeting ended at 8pm.