

Athens City Planning Commission
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Thursday, December 7, 2017, 12:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Athens City Planning Commission was held in City Council Chambers, third floor, at City Hall on December 7, 2017.

Attendees: Clinton Kuenzli, Kelly Sauber, Penny Mullen, T. Michael Corathers, Jim Thomas, Andy Graham, Kaela Ciancibello, Mike Noel, Demetrios Prokos

1. Call to Order

Nancy Bain called the regular meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 12:05 p.m. and administered the oath to all who intended to speak before the commission. Quorum was established.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS:

RJ Sumney, ChairPresent (arrived after Case #17-20)
Christy ZempterPresent
Nancy Bain, Vice Chair.....Present
Steve Patterson, MayorPresent
Paula Horan Moseley, Service-Safety Director.....Present

STAFF:

Paul Logue, City PlannerPresent
Rick Sirois, Code Enforcement Director.....Present

2. Disposition of Minutes

Paula Moseley moved to accept the November 2, 2017 minutes. Christy Zempter seconded. Motion passed 3:0. Steve Patterson abstention.

3. Cases

Case #17-20	Title 41 237 West State Street Building Expansion Zymo Enterprises, LLC
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Rick Sirois/Synopsis

Zymo Enterprises is requesting an exterior alteration with an expansion of 450 square feet on the west end of the current existing building and a future deck area of 1550 square feet located on the east side of the building. This property abuts an R1 zoning district on the north side, requiring Title 41 review. Simple addition for storage. (Mr. Sirois read through the facts of the application.)

Staff Reviews/Comments:

Code: 17 parking spaces plus one handicap space (17 required). Bike rack for 4 bikes. No signs requested. Variances were approved by the BZA in October 2016 and November 2017.

Shade Tree Commission: Approved 11/8/2017.

AFD: Chief Rymer requested egress lights and door swing changes.

Michael Corathers/RVC Architects

Mr. Corathers offered to answer any questions.

Discussion

Paula Moseley: Asked if the October 2016 variance was for the distance to R zones for manufacturing.

Rick Sirois: Yes.

Paula Moseley: Noted that the sewage rate will be deemed industrial.

Steve Patterson moved to approve Case #17-20. Christy Zempter seconded. All present voted aye. Motion passed 4:0.

Case #17-21

Title 41

88 East State Street

New Construction Commercial Building

Prokos Rentals

Rick Sirois/Synopsis

Prokos Rentals is proposing to build a 9,080 square foot, two story office building on the existing site that they had, on which the building recently burned down. (Mr. Sirois read through the facts of the application.)

Staff Review/Comments

Code: 32 available parking spaces, 15 deed restricted spaces. 17 spaces required and available. 2 ADA accessible. Applicant needs to provide a 4 bicycle rack. No sign requests were submitted; will submit at a later date. No variances required. Dumpster location meets the requirements under Title 37 for screening. Trash bins will be used instead of a dumpster allowing for trash removal. Applicant has mentioned the possibility of futures changes from office to apartments. This will need to be addressed at that time and may involve going to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Shade Tree Commission: Approved 10/11/17.

AFD: Chief Rymer requiring FDC located State Street side, and sprinkler be monitored by 3rd party 24/7.

EPW: Andy Stone's development plan review was distributed.

Mike Noel/Architect

The proposed building site is a prominent location on the streetscape for Athens. They are in receipt of Andy Stone's comments which they will address. One comment was a green roof to improve water quality, and he thinks that is a good idea. They will put in several French drains. Currently all the water sheets to East State Street.

Discussion

Paula Moseley: Asked for clarification on the plan for traffic circulation in and out of the parking lots.

Mike Noel: The plan is to control flow by allowing vehicles in and out of the NE parking lot only from the first E. State Street entrance, and allowing vehicles to enter the SW parking lot only from the second East State St. entrance and exit only via Carpenter Street. The parking lots are not connected at the rear of the building so no vehicles can cut through.

Nancy Bain: Asked how wide the entrances were on the east side.

Mike Noel: The first entrance is 20' wide and the second entrance (closest to the intersection) is 19'8" wide.

Nancy Bain: People will sneak out the second entrance and turn onto E. State St.

Mike Noel: Signage will be in place to hopefully minimize that.

Paula Moseley: How many people will go out from the NE lot and try to turn left onto E. State Street?

Demetrios Prokos: Employees and business traffic go through the NE lot and the SW lot is mostly rented spots. The spots in the SW lot have been angled such that it will be difficult for vehicles to exit where they entered. Mike Noel has eliminated the one exit onto Carpenter St. close to the intersection which is the most dangerous, and he is separating the 2 parking lots.

Steve Patterson: There is a right turn only lane closest to the parking lot; 3 lane option there.

Christy Zempter: Regarding the dumpster location, if they opt for apartments instead of offices they may need to go back to the BZA, is that because the requirement will be that they need dumpsters for residential use?

Rick Sirois: With apartments they will be generating more trash and they will have to come up with a solution/another location because it is not addressed by code.

Christy Zempter: Concerned that if the Planning Commission approves this and then they come back with a new proposal for residential, will they be prepared to deal with that if the requirement is for dumpsters?

Mike Noel: The space can't accommodate the dumpsters because there isn't enough clearance for the trash trucks to maneuver.

Christy Zempter: They need to be aware that there may be a complication if they move to residential. This body will not be able to make the decision regarding the trash cans/recycling cans.

Steve Patterson moved to approve Case #17-21. Paula Mosely seconded. All present voted aye. Motion passed 5:0.

4. **Communications**

Title 41/Brenmar Construction, 175 Columbus Road

Rick Sirois: Construction of a new building housing Goodwill Industries.

Clinton Kuenzli/Buckley Group

The project is owned by TAT Realty. 15,700 square foot building and Goodwill will be one of the tenants. This meets all the parking requirements - 61 required parking spaces/65 proposed 4 of which are ADA and van accessible. 40% impervious land area. There are 85 trees required based on the lot size. Some may need to be planted in the right-of-way so they may need a Tree Commission variance. This application is Phase 1 of the Title 41, the building and pavement.

Discussion

Paula Moseley: Asked if Title 41 is appropriate for a project with 3 phases with different builds, to which Rick Sirois and Paul Logue responded affirmative, that it has been done before.

Clinton Kuenzli: His understanding is that they will have to go through the Title 41 process again for all future building.

Paula Moseley: All future building use will be the existing zoned use, which implies a PUD.

Nancy Bain: Commercial PUD's are not in the Code anymore. She inquired about the setback from the road and how much of it is the right-of-way.

Clinton Kuenzli: It is about 180' from the edge of the pavement, centerline 200'. Property line is the right-of-way as shown on the plan. There are two separate parcels owned by the same individual.

Paula Moseley: The proposed building today is for Goodwill.

Clinton Kuenzli: Yes, and the potential for two additional tenants.

Christy Zempter: Is the whole site in the flood plain?

Paul Logue: The site is in the 100 year flood plain; it has been reviewed and they have raised it up. He will double check the height of the lowest floor of the building prior to them coming before the commission. He has been in communication with Ryan Buckley about earth moving and gave him the base flood elevation. They have put dirt down already following the guidance he provided.

Nancy Bain: Will the parking lot be going downhill or will it be flat?

Clinton Kuenzli: The run off will sheet toward Columbus Road.

RJ Sumney: Was any thought given to putting the parking in the back and the building in the front for aesthetic purposes?

Jim Thomas/BDT Architects: The building placement was because of the flood plain. In that area they have to be careful what displacement they do. They chose the highest point for the building so the parking lot could slope down toward the road.

Paula Moseley: The compensatory storage requirement has proven adverse to actual good development. Maybe the Planning Commissioners should revisit this.

Steve Patterson: Agreed with Paula Moseley. A number of variances have been consistently issued because of this. The variances have been granted by the BZA.

Nancy Bain: Moving the building forward would be ideal, with parking in the rear.

RJ Sumney: Having the parking in the back and the facility in the front is aesthetically more appealing.

Clinton Kuenzli: To achieve this for this project they would have to add much more fill and extending over the right-of-way line.

Jim Thomas: With the existing large right of way and the addition of many trees they will have quite a good buffer.

Paula Moseley: Have they sought a wellhead protection permit?

Clinton Kuenzli: They filed for a permit as part of the flood plain process.

Andy Graham/TAT Realty: Regarding the location of the buildings, they located to the rear to eliminate prohibitive costs for filling the front of the property. Not uncommon for cars to park in front of retail spaces.

RJ Sumney: It is common, but in the future he would like to see businesses have parking in the back for aesthetic reasons.

Andy Graham: Inquired about the timeline because they have committed to Goodwill as far as their move in date (moving 4/1/18). Purchased property in July.

5. Report from City Planner and Director of Code Enforcement

Paul Logue

The Comprehensive Plan online survey closed yesterday, which was longer than he anticipated keeping it open. They received 190 comments. His two interns are helping him go through the comments which they will marry with the visioning workshop comments from last fall. He is hoping to complete this by 12/23/17.

Rick Sirois

No report

6. Opportunity for Citizens to Speak

None

7. Announcements & Other Business

Rick Sirois: At the last Planning Commission meeting, a minor subdivision at University Estates was a communication item. Since the meeting they found that one of the lots was an approved final plat and the other 2 plats will be transfers between owners. They will not be coming back to the Planning Commission.

There will not be a quorum present for the next regularly scheduled meeting (12/21/17) so the next meeting will be January 4, 2018.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

RJ Sumney, Planning Commission

Patricia Witmer, City of Athens