

**CITY OF BIG RAPIDS  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
May 18, 2022**

Chair Jane called the May 18, 2022 regular meeting of the Planning Commission, to order at 6:30 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**PRESENT** Chris Jane, Megan Eppley, Jacob Buse, Kate McLeod, Kasey Thompson, Rory Ruddick, and Sarah Montgomery

**EXCUSED** None

**ABSENT** None

**ALSO PRESENT** Paula Priebe, Community Development Director

There were 9 audience members.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion was made by Montgomery, seconded by Ruddick, to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2022 meeting of the Planning Commission as presented, with no changes.**

**Motion was passed with all in favor.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA** None heard

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**Site Plan Review for a Facility Expansion at 602 S Bronson Ave**

The Public Hearing was opened at 6:34 PM.

**Staff Report**

Priebe summarized the Staff Report stating that City staff received an application for an addition onto the facility at 602 S Bronson Ave, which is the bus garage for the Mecosta Osceola Intermediate School District. Site plans were reviewed by Fire Marshal Hull, Engineering Technician Ruelle, and Zoning Administrator Priebe and found to satisfactorily meet City ordinances and codes by all parties. Staff recommend approval of the Site Plan.

Mr. Pete Lorenz from Lorenz Surveying and Civil Engineering and Mr. Hunter Nivision from JBS Contracting were both present on behalf of the Applicant, along with Mr. Mark Klumpp the Assistant Superintendent of the MOISD. They spoke about the site, how the plans show that they will abandon the current well and connect to City water service and sanitary sewer service. More gravel will be added to increase the driving and parking areas. The stormwater retention basin in the rear of the parking area will be expanded; soil tests show good infiltration. The building will be pole type construction with 2,500 sq ft of service area, 800 sq ft of wash bay, as well as two offices and a break area.

Those Who Spoke in Favor of the Request: None heard

Those Who Spoke in Opposition of the Request: None heard

Telephonic or Written Correspondence Received by Staff: None received

Chair Jane closed the Public Hearing at 6:40 PM and the Commission entered into Fact Finding.

- Commissioners asked if Staff received any comments from Building Official Holsworth before the meeting. No, he did not provide any comments.
- The Applicants were asked about site lighting. They stated that wall mounted lights were shown in the plans, they will shine down on the various facility doors. The existing fence which buffers bus lights from a neighboring house will remain.

### Motion

**Motion was made by Buse, seconded by Thompson to move that the Site Plan Review for a facility expansion at 602 S Bronson Avenue (Parcel #17-14-200-019) be approved, because it meets all of the Criteria for Review set in Section 9.6 of the Zoning Ordinance.**

**Motion passed with all in favor.**

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## **Special Land Use Permit Application for a New Drive-Through Restaurant at 1250/1254 Perry Avenue**

The Public Hearing was opened at 6:44 PM.

### Staff Report

Priebe summarized the Staff Report, stating that all drive-through restaurants in the C-1 Commercial District must receive a Special Land Use Permit and meet the standards of Section 11.1:20. Special Land Uses are reviewed by the Planning Commission who makes a recommendation to the City Commission who makes the final determination.

This project is for a new drive-through Scooter's Coffee restaurant on a currently vacant outlot site in front of the Ferris Commons strip mall. Staff review of the project shows that it meets the Standards for Special Land Uses in Section 10.3:8 and the specific standards for C-1 drive-through restaurants in Section 11.1:20 and thus recommend approval.

Ms. Krisandra Lippert of Scooter's Coffee and Mr. Matt Carey of Pinnacle Engineering Group were present to represent the Applicant. They spoke about Scooter's Coffee as a brand that is actively expanding into Michigan with their drive-through only restaurants. There will be no public access to the building and thus have parking only for staff.

Those Who Spoke in Favor of the Request: None heard

Those Who Spoke in Opposition of the Request: None heard

Telephonic or Written Correspondence Received by Staff: None heard

Chair Jane closed the Public Hearing at 6:50 PM and the Planning Commission entered into Fact Finding.

- Commissioners asked Ms. Lippert about the type of foods sold at a Scooter's Coffee. They sell coffee drinks, smoothies and tea, as well as breakfast food items and lunch sandwiches.

### **Motion**

**Motion was made by Montgomery, seconded by Eppley, that the Special Land Use Permit Application for a new drive-through restaurant at 1250/1254 Perry Avenue (PIN 17-15-300-034) be recommended to the City Commission for approval, because it meets the Standards set in Section 10.3:8 and Section 11.1:20 of the Zoning Ordinance.**

**Motion passed with all in favor.**

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### **Site Plan Review for a New Drive-Through Restaurant at 1250/1254 Perry Avenue**

The Public Hearing was opened at 6:53 PM.

### **Staff Report**

Priebe summarized the Staff Report stating that City staff received an application for a new drive-through restaurant at 1250/1254 Perry Avenue on a currently vacant outlot site in front of the Ferris Commons strip mall. Site plans were reviewed by Fire Marshal Hull, Engineering Technician Ruelle, and Zoning Administrator Priebe and found to satisfactorily meet City ordinances and codes by all parties. Mr. Ruelle's report noted a comment that the site is very flat

and may possibly experience some water pooling during heavy rain events. Staff recommend approval of the Site Plan.

Ms. Krisandra Lippert of Scooter's Coffee and Mr. Matt Carey of Pinnacle Engineering Group were present to represent the Applicant. Mr. Carey spoke to Mr. Ruelle's comment about the flat site and noted that they are happy to work with City Staff to address that if the concern rises to that level.

Those Who Spoke in Favor of the Request: None heard

Those Who Spoke in Opposition of the Request: None heard

Telephonic or Written Correspondence Received by Staff: None received

Chair Jane closed the Public Hearing at 6:56 PM and the Commission entered into Fact Finding.

- Commissioners asked for more information about stormwater retention on the site. Staff explained that the entire strip mall site was planned to drain into one retention pond on the far northwest corner of the site and that this pond was recently expanded to meet demand for the full site when Arby's was built a few years ago. Mr. Carey noted that the Scooter's site drains into to catch basins, half of the site to the east and half to the west, and the basins then drain the water into the aforementioned retention pond.

### **Motion**

**Motion was made by Eppley, seconded by McLeod, to move that the Site Plan Review for a new drive-through restaurant at 1250/1254 Perry Avenue (Parcel #17-15-300-034) be approved, because it meets all of the Criteria for Review set in Section 9.6 of the Zoning Ordinance.**

**Motion passed with all in favor.**

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### **Site Plan Review for a Facility Expansion at 730 Water Tower Road**

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:01 PM.

### **Staff Report**

Priebe summarized the Staff Report stating that City staff received an application for a facility expansion at 730 Water Tower Road from Applicant Baldwin Family Health Care. Site plans were reviewed by Fire Marshal Hull, Engineering Technician Ruelle, and Zoning Administrator Priebe and found to NOT satisfactorily meet City ordinances and codes in several areas. Mr. Ruelle's report noted issues with the stormwater detention, the proposed detention pond, the berm around the pond, and one of the drainage structures. Ms. Priebe's report outlined

deficiencies with the Site Plan in an excessive number of vehicular parking spaces, a lack of bicycle parking spaces, too few green belt trees along Water Tower Road, and a total lack of principal structure landscaping along the building. Due to these areas where the Plans do not meet City codes and ordinances, Staff recommend denial of the Site Plan.

Ms. Kaye Ingles of MidMichigan Engineering was present to speak on behalf of the Applicant. She stated that they did not receive the stormwater calculations back from the City, but when they get them, they can work to adjust the plans to meet the requirements. Reducing the parking spaces and adding bicycle parking is also an easy adjustment. Regarding landscaping, they favored preserving existing trees in the greenbelt over adding new, but the calculations were different from staff and they will adjust. The lack of shrubbery around the building was an oversight and will be resolved.

Those Who Spoke in Favor of the Request:

Ms. Julie Tatko, the CEO of Baldwin Family Health Care, spoke in favor of the Plan. She said that the additional space will expand their capacity in the medical, dental, and behavioral health care areas, as well as provide an on-site pharmacy for use mainly by patients. She stated that there is great need for affordable health care in Big Rapids and that these additions are necessary to help BFHC do more to meet that need. It will almost double their current local capacity, allow them to hire additional providers, add a group room for behavioral health care, a room for medication consulting along with the pharmacy, and needed staff offices.

Those Who Spoke in Opposition of the Request: None heard

Telephonic or Written Correspondence Received by Staff: None received

Chair Jane closed the Public Hearing at 7:11 PM and the Commission entered into Fact Finding.

- Commissioners asked about previously approved plans for a second drive access onto Fuller Ave. Staff stated that those plans were not enacted by the Ordinance deadlines and thus are not obsolete. Ms. Tatko said that BFHC chose to go in a different direction and will no longer be pursuing the second drive.
- Commissioners discussed their support to the additional capacity for affordable health care, but noted that these plans have some issues that do not meet City ordinances. They discussed options on how to move forward, whether to approve with conditions and let Staff do a final review, or to require the Plans to come back to the Planning Commission.

### **Motion**

**Motion was made by Thompson, seconded by Buse, to table the final decision on the Site Plan Review for a facility expansion at 730 Water Tower Road (Parcel #17-15-300-003) until a future meeting, based on the seven conditions that need further review. Revised plans are to be brought to a future meeting for review by the full Planning Commission at which time the issue will be taken off the table and a decision will be made.**

**Motion passed with all in favor.**

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### **Request to Vacate an Easement in Rust Avenue for Road Extension**

The Public Hearing was opened at 7:19 PM.

#### **Staff Report**

Priebe summarized the Staff Report, stating that the City is requesting to vacate part of an easement to allow space for road extension and new residential development on Rust Avenue. Vacations are reviewed by the Planning Commission who makes a recommendation to the City Commission who makes the final determination.

The process and review procedure for vacating roads and easements was examined. Also staff reports from Engineering Technician Wyman and Zoning Administrator Priebe were covered. Staff supports recommending approval of the partial easement vacation.

Those Who Spoke in Favor of the Request: None heard

Those Who Spoke in Opposition of the Request: None heard

Telephonic or Written Correspondence Received by Staff: None heard

Chair Jane closed the Public Hearing at 7:24 PM and the Planning Commission entered into Fact Finding.

- Commissioners asked for clarification of which portion of the easement would be vacated. Staff explained that a slice of the easement, on the north side of the eastern half of the easement would be vacated to ensure the new residential parcel had adequate road frontage. The south side of the eastern half would be retained, as would all of the western half of the easement to allow for access to the utilities that run through it. The graphics provided by Fleis & Vandenbrink show this clearly.
- Commissioners inquired about the develop-ability of the remaining 3.85 acres behind the three new residential lots. Staff explained that the remaining 3.85 acres are part of Clay Cliffs Nature Area and will never be developed. The City has access to that remaining land from adjoining parcels by the Community Pool.

**Motion**

**Motion was made by Buse, seconded by Thompson, that the portion of the easement identified by the Fleis and Vandenbrink Memo dated 4/14/2022 be recommended to the City Commission for vacation, because it meets the considerations for approval and retains adequate easement for the utilities.**

**Motion passed with all in favor.**

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**UNSCHEDULED BUSINESS**

None

**There being no further business, Chair Jane adjourned the meeting at 7:30 PM with all in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

Paula Priebe

Community Development Director and Acting Planning Commission Secretary