

Minutes
City of Monona
Plan Commission
Monday January 23, 2023

The meeting of the City of Monona Plan Commission was called to order (6:00pm).

Present: Alder Nancy Moore (Chair), Alder Brian Holmquist, Mr. Brandon Gries, Mr. Chris Conrad, Ms. Coreen Fallat, Mr. Robert Stein, Ms. Susan Fox, and Mr. Chris Homburg

Excused: None

Also Present: Doug Plowman, Planning Director

Approval of Minutes

A motion by Mr. Conrad, seconded by Ms. Fallat, to approve the minutes of December 12, 2022 carried with no corrections.

Order of Business

Alder Moore proposed to hear agenda items 7E and 7F first, followed by items 7A and 7B (all New Business), before the other items. There were no objections.

Appearances

None.

New Business (partial)

E. Public Hearing on Request by Whitehorse Properties LLC, Represented by Snyder & Associates, Inc., for Approval of a Zoning Permit for a New Private Drive for the Previously Approved CSM 16430 located at approximately 1208 E. Broadway. (Case No. 2-002-2023)

Mr. Brian Arcand of Snyder & Associates presented the application. The proposal is for a private drive to serve four lots of a previously approved CSM. The conditions of approval of that CSM required a private drive be built at the time the first lot was developed. Stormwater management for the private drive will be in a bioretention basin on Lot 1 and combined with that lot's stormwater facilities. Private sanitary and water mains will be provided.

The applicant stated that an attempt was made to collaborate on stormwater with the developer of Lot 4 for stormwater, but that Lot 4's development was in the preliminary concept phase and it was not feasible. Coordination will be needed with the existing gas station due to impacts to the existing parking lot.

There were no other appearances and the public hearing was declared closed.

F. Consideration of Action on Request by Whitehorse Properties LLC, Represented by Snyder & Associates, Inc., for Approval of a Zoning Permit for a New Private Drive for the Previously Approved CSM 16430 located at approximately 1208 E. Broadway. (Case No. 2-002-2023)

Planning Director Plowman shared the staff report. The request is to construct a 50-foot private drive for access to the proposed sites from E. Broadway. The parcels are zoned Community Design District (CDD). The location and design of the private drive was captured during the CSM process, where the drive was delineated as Outlot 1. He suggested the Commission discuss design, landscaping, lighting, and comments received from the Public Works Director on maintenance, utilities, and signage. Public Works prefers that the drive remain private.

Mr. Homburg stated that there was previous discussion about the configuration of the private drive at the gas station parking lot. The Commission did not want angled parking at the gas station backing up against the flow of traffic, except potentially for two employee stalls. He felt there was room to provide separate lanes for right and left turns while keeping traffic separate from the gas station parking. He suggested sidewalks be 5 in. thick.

Mr. Homburg asked if the owners of Lot 1 were aware that they would take the stormwater for the entire private drive and felt it would be reasonable for Lot 4 to take some of the stormwater quality treatment. A representative of the property stated that they were aware and approved of the proposal.

Mr. Homburg felt that further coordination and exploration of traffic flow, stormwater management, and information in the Strand review were needed before an approval. He and Alder Holmquist requested the applicant also consider terrace trees and lighting.

Mr. Josh Straka of Strand Associates asked if the development counted as a redevelopment. Mr. Homburg felt that was appropriate considering the lot is mostly gravel.

Ms. Fallat stated that there was a recommendation to have a turnaround, which should be included in next submission. Mr. Homburg said that a turnaround was not necessarily required because the road is a private drive. The applicant stated that there will be a joint maintenance agreement between all properties for snow removal.

A motion was made by Mr. Homburg, seconded by Alder Holmquist, to table the Consideration of Action for a Zoning Permit for a new private drive for the previously approved CSM 16430 located at approximately 1208 E. Broadway.

The motion carried unanimously.

A. Public Hearing on Request by Empire Nutrition LLC, for Approval of a New Wall Sign at 6007B Monona Drive. (Case No. S-001-2023)

Ms. Brittini Andow of Empire Nutrition presented the application for a new 7 ft. by 3 ft. aluminite wall sign.

There were no other appearances and the public hearing was declared closed.

B. Consideration of Action on Request by Empire Nutrition LLC, for Approval of a New Wall Sign at 6007B Monona Drive. (Case No. S-001-2023)

Planning Director Plowman shared the staff report. The property has 25 ft. of frontage and is zoned Retail Business (RB). It is subject to the Monona Drive Urban Design Guidelines. The proposed sign is a 21 sq. ft. non-illuminated wall sign constructed of alumalite. He suggested the Commission discuss the durability of the material. Staff recommended approval.

Ms. Fox joined at 6:29 PM.

Ms. Fallat asked the applicant about the proposed sign's durability. The applicant said that the material is metal and weatherproof, and that the sign contractor uses it often for outdoor signs. She added that a painted treated wood frame will be added prior to installation. The sign will be spaced away from the wall to prevent the collection of snow.

Mr. Stein asked if edging would be added to improve durability. The applicant felt that the frame would add similar protection and stability in the wind. Mr. Stein asked why the corporate logo was not used for the proposed sign. The applicant stated that the proposed sign will provide greater visibility and legibility from Monona Drive, and that the corporate logo is currently on the door.

Alder Holmquist had concerns about the sign's durability, but overall felt that it was an appropriate entry point considering price of other signs.

Mr. Homburg disapproved of the sign as it is a board sign and all of the other signs on the multi-tenant building have channel letters.

A motion was made by Ms. Fallat, seconded by Alder Holmquist, to approve a sign permit for one new wall sign, as requested by Empire Nutrition to be located at 6007B Monona Drive, as proposed and according to Chapter 480 Article XII of the Zoning Code of the Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances, with the following condition of approval:

1. If the condition or appearance of the sign is deemed to have deteriorated, then the Plan Commission may require the applicant return with updates or a suitable replacement.

The motion carried 7-1 (Mr. Homburg voted nay).

Unfinished Business

A. Public Hearing for the Neutral Project and Compass Properties on Request for Consideration of a Precise Implementation Plan (PIP) for the site located at approximately 4601-4711 Monona Drive (between Springhaven and Dean Avenue), for a Mixed-Use Development. (Case No. 2-016-2021)

Mr. Nate Helbach of the Neutral Project presented the application. He stated that the project team is seeking feedback on new design iterations, landscaping, and lighting.

Ms. Janet Silbernagel of Silvernail Studio presented key elements of the landscaping plan and new elements added in response to prior feedback. A dog run with artificial turf, a garden shed, and a multi-use platform were added in the northwest corner of the property. At least one garden bed will be raised for accessibility. Pear trees are planned for the espalier. Privacy hedges were added for walk-up units along Springhaven Avenue. The bioswales

along Monona Drive are now smaller and set further from the building, with woody shrubs added. More ornamental trees have been added in the plaza. Screening has been added along Gordon Avenue to separate the parking lot from the street.

Mr. Dylan Douglas of JT Engineering presented the lighting plan. Bollard lights, sconces, wall pack lights, and street lights will all be included.

Mr. Helbach and Mr. Doug Harsevoort of Sala Hars shared façade changes to the BMO Harris portion of the development. They shared that BMO Harris wanted to ensure a commercial presence was represented in the façade, and the updated design includes a one-story gray brick bump out. Blue accents are now reduced to the corner and inward-facing surfaces.

Planning Director Plowman shared that he received a public comment via email from Ms. Mary Anne Reed (5602 Winnequah Road). Ms. Reed expressed concern about the amount of parking for the proposed development, especially given existing pressures on on-street parking and parking for the High School. She also expressed concern over parking availability during snow emergencies and stated that residents will likely rely on cars for access to resources and amenities.

There were no other appearances and the public hearing was declared closed.

B. Prehearing Conference for the Neutral Project and Compass Properties on Request for Consideration of a Precise Implementation Plan (PIP) for the site located at approximately 4601-4711 Monona Drive (between Springhaven and Dean Avenue), for a Mixed-Use Development. (Case No. 2-016-2021)

Planning Director Plowman shared the staff report. The project received approval for a General Development Plan (GDP) and a rezoning from Retail Business (RB) to Community Design District (CDD) at the November 14, 2022 Plan Commission meeting, which were later approved by City Council on December 5, 2022. The approved GDP includes two four-story mixed-use buildings with 83 apartment units and 16,000 sq. ft. of ground floor retail and one 10-unit townhome building facing Gordon Avenue. A previous prehearing conference for the Precise Implementation Plan (PIP) was heard by the Commission on November 14, 2022. The Commission expressed concern over the design of the BMO Harris portion of the development, which has been revised in the new submittal. He suggested the Commission discuss the revised façade for BMO Harris, the landscaping plan, and the lighting plan.

The Commission was generally supportive of the revised façade for the BMO Harris space and felt it was more appropriate than the previous design.

Ms. Fallat liked the changes to the landscaping plan but suggested more vertical elements be included. She asked the applicant about changes to the unit mix and number of units in the PIP compared to the GDP. The applicant stated that the changes have not been finalized, but it can be expected there will be two walk-up units along Springhaven Avenue and the total unit count should not change.

Mr. Conrad requested that lighting elements use a warmer tone, around 3000K.

Mr. Stein generally liked the lighting plan, but suggested the applicant consider the safety and security of bollard lights compared to taller fixtures. He suggested that the median bollards be directed into both the drive aisle and the southeast parking lot and that they be included in the landscaping where possible, not the sidewalk. Mr. Stein clarified with the applicant that the post-mounted lights have a 15 ft. pole with a 3 ft. base. He stated that the proposed landscaping mix was great, but that the applicant should consider the impacts of snow removal, particularly in the southwest corner. He asked the applicant to look in to potential vision triangle impacts from the proposed spruce tree in the southeast corner. He pointed out that the proposed seed mixes for the eastern and northern portions of the site may blend together after application, and that the taller species may impact walking paths.

Alder Holmquist appreciated the landscaping plan. He and Mr. Homburg stated that the shed would need to tie into the building façade and requested renderings as part of the PIP. He asked the applicant if the gray brick bump out would partially cover the second story windows. The applicant stated that it would function as a balustrade with a walkout space. He asked for clarification on the depth and material of the blue window returns. The applicant stated that they are painted metal panel, and will be 9-12 inches deep. Alder Holmquist pointed out that the staff report stated the GDP included 93 apartment units, and requested it be revised to 83.

Ms. Fox liked the design of the blue window returns. In response to the public comment about parking, she stated that in previous discussions the Commission felt that some spaces would go unused. Additionally, the Commission approved the GDP with an alternative scenario that would convert the garden to additional parking if the demand warranted it.

Mr. Homburg felt the blue window returns were appropriate to highlight the commercial space. He agreed with Ms. Fox that the Commission strongly feels that the parking is sufficient. He generally liked the lighting and landscaping plans, but expressed the need for the proposal to exceed the minimum landscaping points required, given the importance of this corner and stated that ground-level grasses and perennials are important despite not being awarded points. He asked that terrace trees be included on Gordon Avenue. He stated that light levels were likely too low in some drive aisles and walkways.

A member of the audience asked if the public could get hard copies of the meeting materials. Mr. Homburg, Alder Moore, and Planning Director Plowman stated they could view them at City Hall the Friday before a meeting, that an extra copy is available during Commission meetings for viewing, and that the materials are available online.

C. Public Hearing on Request by Walter Wayne Development, for Consideration of a Zoning Permit for a Residential Building with Ground-Floor Retail at 5105 Monona Drive. (Case No. 2-020-2022)

Dave Diamond of Walter Wayne Development and Troy Jacoby of JLA Architects presented the application. Mr. Jacoby highlighted changes in response to previous Commission feedback, including improved street activation with a raised patio and planters along Monona

Drive. Enhanced landscaping was added to the south façade, and the western setback is now larger with the addition of a dog run and patio space. Visitor parking is proposed for the first floor via a separate security door. The exterior of the building was revised to include red brick and multi-toned gray panels. Corner glass accents were added, and the south façade was improved with a rooftop terrace, corner glass elements, and material changes to distinguish the corner.

There were no other appearances and the public hearing was declared closed.

D. Prehearing Conference on Request by Walter Wayne Development, for Consideration of a Zoning Permit for a Residential Building with Ground-Floor Retail at 5105 Monona Drive. (Case No. 2-020-2022)

Planning Director Plowman shared the staff report. The proposal is for 45 market-rate residential units with 63 stalls of covered parking. The Commission has previously held prehearing conferences for this application in August and November of 2022. The property is currently zoned Retail Business (RB), which does not allow for the proposed development type. The applicant is concurrently seeking a rezoning to Community Design District (CDD). The site exceeds minimum standards for green space at 30.6%. Since the last prehearing, the applicant has modified the design to include a dog run, a patio, and pedestrian access along Gordon Avenue. A landscaping plan was included, but landscaping points were not given. The colors of the building, banding, and mix of materials have been revised since the previous prehearing conference. The property is subject to the Monona Drive Urban Design Guidelines. 15 trees are proposed, four of which are canopy trees. Landscaping guidelines require five canopy trees given the number of parking stalls.

Mr. Conrad recused himself.

Mr. Homburg appreciated the use of planters and elevated patio to activate the Monona Drive frontage. He suggested the applicant consider terrace trees along Gordon Avenue. He stated that visitor parking needs to be more fully worked out, and stressed the importance for a solution that is secure and that doesn't add undue parking stress to existing residents. Mr. Homburg felt that the south elevation was still too plain and suggested more vertical elements. He supported the proposed unit mix.

Ms. Fox suggested additional canopy trees on the south façade to add vertical elements. Mr. Stein agreed and suggested placing evergreens closer to the entrance door. He suggested the applicant also consider the impact of snow removal and salt application on the delicate landscaping species proposed for the north side of the building. He felt there was room for a canopy at the northwest corner, and asked the applicant about the electrical easement through the property. The applicant stated that it will be released.

Mr. Gries liked the changes to the south façade. He felt the design of the balconies did not match the rest of the building design due to the anchoring method. He suggested cantilever anchors instead. He added that the west façade needed revision to be more cohesive with the rest of the building's design.

Alder Holmquist and Alder Moore generally liked the design changes but agreed that the west façade was not consistent with the other elevations. Alder Holmquist also felt that the southeast corner could be distinguished with another vertical element.

Ms. Fallat asked if a sidewalk was included near the southeast corner of the site. The applicant clarified that a walkway will be provided for access to the tenant-only emergency egress. Ms. Fallat suggested additional greenery for rooftop patios and a shade tree for the patio along Gordon Avenue. Mr. Homburg felt the canopy trees should provide enough shade.

New Business (remainder)

C. Public Hearing for a Rezoning Request and Map Amendment from Retail Business District (Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances Sec. 480-28) to Community Design District (Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances Sec. 480-30) at 5105 Monona Drive as Requested by Walter Wayne Development. (Case No. 2-001-2023)

Dave Diamond of Walter Wayne Development and Troy Jacoby of JLA Architects presented the application.

There were no comments and the public hearing was declared closed.

D. Consideration of Action for Approval and Recommendation to the City Council for Approval of a Rezoning Request and Map Amendment from Retail Business District (Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances Sec. 480-28) to Community Design District (Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances Sec. 480-30) at 5105 Monona Drive as Requested by Walter Wayne Development. (Case No. 2-001-2023)

Planning Director Plowman shared the staff report. The parcel is currently zoned Retail Business (RB) but a rezoning to Community Design District (CDD) is requested to allow for residential use and potential future ground floor commercial space. The Commission has previously discussed the rezoning and generally felt that CDD zoning was more appropriate than Multifamily Residence (MF), as originally proposed. CDD zoning offers greater flexibility for dedicated commercial uses at the ground-floor in the future. The parcel is currently vacant, and the 2016 Comprehensive Plan shows the parcel as vacant in the Current Land Use map, and as commercial in the Future Land Use map. Staff recommended the recommendation of the proposed rezoning to City Council.

Mr. Conrad recused himself.

The Commission generally had no comments and felt the rezoning was appropriate.

A motion was made by Mr. Homburg, seconded by Mr. Gries, to recommend to the City Council for Approval of a Rezoning Request and Map Amendment from Retail Business (Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances Sec. 480-28) to Community Design District (Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances Sec. 480-30) at 5105 Monona Drive.

The motion carried 7-0 (Mr. Conrad abstained).

Reports of Staff and Commission Members

A. Staff Report Regarding Status of Development Project Proposals.

1. Economic Development Update

Planning Director Plowman stated that the Community Development Authority (CDA) is holding preliminary discussions for TIF requests for the proposed developments at 5105 Monona Drive and 1208 E. Broadway. The latter is a combined TIF request for the private drive and the multifamily residential project.

2. Potential Upcoming Plan Commission Items

Planning Director Plowman shared that prehearing conferences for the proposed dental clinic at 220 W. Broadway and for a residential Certified Survey Map (CSM) on Shore Acres Road, and formal consideration of two zoning permits for new businesses are expected. A commercial building as part of Phase II of the Chipotle development at the corner of Monona Drive and W. Broadway is also expected.

3. Updates/Discussion on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Efforts.

Alder Moore shared that the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Implementation Committee is meeting for the first time on January 24, 2023.

4. Updates/Discussion on Sustainability Efforts

Alder Moore shared that the Inflation Reduction Act provides new federal tax credits for renewable energy projects. She said that the Commission has been encouraging developers to rough-in for rooftop solar and EV charging, but requested that staff ensure developers are aware of the tax credits.

5. Upcoming Meetings: February 13, 2023 and February 27, 2023

B. Plan Commission Requests for Information from City Staff.

None

Adjournment

A motion by Ms. Fox, seconded by Mr. Stein, to adjourn carried. (8:27pm)

Respectfully submitted by:
Thor Jeppson, Assistant Planner