
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING – *Approved 1/12/23*
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Thursday, August 23, 2022, 6:30 P.M.
600 W. Maple Street, Lansing, MI 48915

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Marcie Alling at 6:30 p.m. Roll call was taken.

Present: M. Alling, J. Hovey, K. Berryman, E. Jefferson, M. Rice, J. Leaming, C. Iannuzzi, & B. Fryling

Absent: M. Solak

Staff: S. Stachowiak

A quorum of at least five members was present, allowing voting action to be taken at the meeting.

II APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Mr. Leaming, seconded by Ms. Jefferson to approve the agenda with the addition of “Excused Absence” under New Business. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (8-0).

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

IV. PUBLIC HEARING/ACTION

A. BZA-4077.22, 1506 N. Grand River Avenue, Variance to the building height limitation and allowable number of stories

Ms. Stachowiak stated that this is a request to permit a 10 story, 135-foot-high building at 1506 N. Grand River Avenue. Section 1243.05.02 of the City of Lansing Zoning Ordinance restricts the height of buildings in the “MX-C” Mixed-Use Corridor district, which is the zoning designation of the subject property, to 5 stories and 60 feet in height. Variances of 5 to the allowable number of stories and 75 feet to building height limitation are therefore, being requested. Ms. Stachowiak stated that staff is recommending approval on a finding that the requested variances comply with the variance evaluation criteria listed in Sections 1274.06 (c) & (e) of the Zoning Ordinance.

Ms. Stachowiak said that the applicant’s proposal involves the construction of a mixed-use, 10-story, 135-foot-high building on the 2.639-acre site located on the east side of N. Grand River, just north of the river. She stated that according to the applicant, if the variances are not granted and the building is limited to 5 stories and 60 feet in height,

the project will not move forward as it would no longer be financially feasible. Ms. Stachowiak stated that the basis for the variance is that there is inadequate room on the site to develop horizontally enough to compensate for the vertical building area that would be lost if the variances are denied. She further stated that the variances will allow for development of the subject property in a manner consistent with the intent and purpose of the City's Master Plan, will not set a negative precedent for future requests of a similar nature and the resulting development will not negatively impact existing land uses or transportation systems in the area.

Ms. Alling opened the public hearing.

Nick Maloof, Associated Environmental Services, LLC, representing the applicant, Turner-Dodge Development, LLC, spoke in support of the request. Mr. Maloof displayed and gave an overview of the proposed plans for the development.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Ms. Alling closed the public hearing.

Mr. Hovey offered his support for the variances to accommodate the development as it fills a need for more housing in the City and will result in increased use of the river trail which is very positive for the City as well.

Ms. Jefferson asked about the impact of the development on the river trail.

Kurt Krahulik, DC Engineering, stated that the river trail is on City property and will likely be enhanced by the developer in partnership with the City to allow for better access from the site. He also said that the Fire Department uses the boat launch adjacent to the site so it will be retained and upgraded.

Ms. Jefferson asked if there will be sufficient parking to comply with the ordinance requirement so that no additional variances will be necessary.

Ms. Stachowiak said that the site plan demonstrates compliance with the parking requirements. She said that there will be a surface lot and a parking deck on the property and the developer has an agreement with the City for use and expansion of the parking lot on the City property on the west side of Grand River Avenue.

Mr. Maloof stated that the agreement with the City is that the developer will be responsible for maintaining the City parking lot. He also said that the lot will still be available for public use.

Mr. Rice expressed support for the variances, citing the small size and irregular shape of the lot as practical difficulties resulting in the need to build vertically in order to make the project feasible.

Mr. Hovey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Leaming to approve BZA 4077.22, for variances of 5 to the allowable number of building stories and 75 feet to the building height limitation to permit a 10 story, 135-foot-high building at 1506 N.

Grand River Avenue, on a finding that the variances are in compliance with the evaluation criteria set forth in Sections 1274.06 (c)(1-4) and (e)(1-4) of the Zoning Ordinance. On a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously (8-0).

Mr. Berryman expressed concerns about the zoning ordinance conflicting with the master plan, resulting in the need for variances.

V. OLD BUSINESS

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Excused Absences

Mr. Leaming made a motion, seconded by Ms. Jefferson to approve an excused absence for Mr. Solak. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (8-0).

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting, June 9, 2022

Mr. Iannuzzi made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rice to approve the June 9, 2022, meeting minutes, as presented. On a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously (8-0).

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

IX. ADJOURNMENT AT 7:04 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Stachowiak, Zoning Administrator