

Docket Item #15

Planning Commission Meeting
October 1, 2013

Consideration of approval of the Planning Commission minutes of the public hearing meeting of September 3, 2013.

*** * * M I N U T E S * * ***

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION

SEPTEMBER 3, 2013

7:00 P.M., Council Chambers

301 King Street, City Hall

Alexandria, Virginia

Members Present:

Stewart Dunn, Vice Chair

Maria Wasowski

Nathan Macek

Mary Lyman

Derek Hyra

John Komoroske, Chair

Eric Wagner

Staff Present:

Faroll Hamer

Patricia Escher

Kendra Jacobs

Dirk Geratz

Colleen Willger

Jessica McVary

Richard Lawrence

Gary Wagner

Amber Wheeler

Nathan Randall

Chris Spera

Department of Planning & Zoning

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City Attorney

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 3, 2013

1. Call to Order.

The Planning Commission public hearing was called to order at 7:00 P.M.

CONSENT CALENDER:

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: The Planning Commission recommended approval of items 2, 3, 5 and 6B and, approved item 6A by unanimous consent. Item #4 was considered under a separate motion.

2. Special Use Permit #2013-0041
2800 Eisenhower Ave. - Private Academic School
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request to operate a private academic school and a request for parking reduction; zoned OCM(100) / Office Commercial Medium. Applicant: Westwood College represented by M. Catharine Puskar, attorney
3. Special Use Permit #2013-0050
5428 Eisenhower Ave. - Commercial School
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request to operate a martial arts school (private commercial school); zoned OCH / Office Commercial High.
Applicant: European Martial Arts, LLC represented by Jennifer Lankford
4. Special Use Permit #2013-0054
1001 S. Washington St. and 714 Church St - Cemetery Memorial
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request for the increase in height of a public art sculpture for the Contrabands and Freedmen's Cemetery Memorial; zoned POS / Public Open Space.
Applicant: City of Alexandria Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

Planner Colleen Willger gave a presentation and answered questions from the Commission.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion made by Mr. Macek, seconded by Mr. Dunn, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2013-0054 to increase the height to an amount not to exceed 40 feet for an ornamental structure. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

5. Development Special Use Permit #2013-0012
923 King Street - King Building at 923
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request for an extension of a previously approved development special use permit and site plan (DSUP2010-0002) to construct an addition for restaurant and apartment units; zoned KR/King St Retail.
Applicant: Shoja-Maddahi Seyed Hossein

6A&B. Development Site Plan #2013-0015

Transportation Management Plan SUP #2013-0058

5001 Eisenhower Ave. - Victory Center

Public Hearing and Consideration of a request for A) an extension of a previously approved development site plan (DSP #2010-0011) for office buildings; and B) new associated Transportation Management Plan (TMP #2005-0057); zoned OCM (100) / Office Commercial Medium.

Applicant: Eisenhower Real Estate Holdings LLC by Kenneth W. Wire, Esq.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND ITEMS PREVIOUSLY DEFERRED:

7. Special Use Permit #2013-0018

1024 Cameron Street - Restaurant

Public Hearing and consideration of a request to operate a restaurant; zoned CD/Commercial Downtown.

Applicant: Peyman Eskandari

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: The Planning Commission noted the deferral of the request without objection.

NEW BUSINESS:

8. Special Use Permit #2013-0037

500 & 510 N. Fayette St. and 1201 Oronoco St. - Auto Repair Shop

Public Hearing and Consideration of a request to amend an existing SUP to allow additional vehicles to be stored at a noncomplying general automobile repair business with the installation of on-site parking lifts; zoned CRMU-M / Commercial Residential Mixed Use Medium.

Applicant: Automotive Service Garage Inc. represented by Dennis Whitestone

Planner Nathan Randall gave a presentation and answered questions from the Commission.

Speakers:

Engin Artemel, representing the applicant, spoke in favor of the request.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Wagner, seconded by Mr. Dunn, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the request, subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances and staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

9. Special Use Permit #2013-0039
111 S. Payne St. - Gelato Shop
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request to operate a gelato shop (restaurant); zoned CD/Commercial Downtown.
Applicant: Benjamin and Perla Umansky

Planner Nathan Randall gave a presentation and answered questions from the Commission.

Speakers:

David Umansky, representing the applicants, spoke in favor of the request. He asked for an amended outdoor closing hour from May 31st – September 30th of 10 p.m. Sunday – Thursday and 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Wagner, seconded by Ms. Lyman, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the request, with an amendment to Condition #2 and subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances and staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 1, with Mr. Dunn voting no.

Reason: The majority of the Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis and with the applicant's updated request for a later closing hour for outdoor dining seats during its peak season.

10. Special Use Permit #2013-0043
2900 Seay Street
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request for a parking reduction in exchange for affordable housing pursuant to Section 7-700 of the Zoning Ordinance; zoned RC / High Density Apartment.
Applicant: AHDC Acquisition I LLC represented by Duncan W. Blair, attorney

Planner Patricia Escher gave a presentation and answered questions from the Commission.

Speakers:

Duncan Blair, Attorney for the Applicant

Carol Jackson, Applicant and representative for AHDC.

Philip Matyas, 219 N. Pitt Street inquired about the status of the organization, whether it was a non-profit and if there could be a competitive RFP process to ensure an economical bidding process for the renovations.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Macek, seconded by Commissioner Lyman, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the request, subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances, staff recommendations and one additional condition. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

The Planning Commission added the following condition:

8. CONDITION ADDED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION: The applicant shall routinely communicate to new and existing residents that they should maximize the use of on-site parking. (PC)

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

11. Special Use Permit #2013-0044
831 & 833 Bashford Lane - Arbelo Apartments
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request for a parking reduction in exchange for affordable housing pursuant to Section 7-700 of the Zoning Ordinance; zoned RB / Townhouse.
Applicant: AHDC Acquisition I LLC by Duncan W. Blair, attorney

Planner Patricia Escher gave a presentation and answered questions from the Commission.

Speakers:

Duncan Blair, Attorney for the Applicant

Carol Jackson, Applicant and representative for AHDC.

Philip Matyas, 219 N. Pitt Street inquired about the status of the organization, whether it was a non-profit and if there could be a competitive RFP process to ensure an economical bidding process for the renovations.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Macek, seconded by Commissioner Lyman, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the request, subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances, staff recommendations and one additional condition. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.
The Planning Commission added the following condition:

8. CONDITION ADDED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION: The applicant shall routinely communicate to new and existing residents that they should maximize the use of on-site parking. (PC)

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

12. Special Use Permit #2013-0045
4 W. Nelson Ave. & 1502 & 1512 Commonwealth Ave.
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request for a parking reduction in exchange for affordable housing pursuant to Section 7-700 of the Zoning Ordinance; zoned RA / Residential Multi-Family.
Applicant: AHDC Acquisition I LLC by Duncan W. Blair, attorney

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 3, 2013

Planner Patricia Escher gave a presentation and answered questions from the Commission.

Speakers:

Duncan Blair, Attorney for the Applicant

Carol Jackson, Applicant and representative for AHDC.

Mary Battey, 101 W, Alexandria Avenue spoke about the Lacy Court Apartments. She requested that the existing dumpster be screened from view and expressed concern about the potential hazard for the children due to the lack of a sidewalk on the apartment's Hancock Avenue frontage.

Philip Matyas, 219 N. Pitt Street inquired about the status of the organization, whether it was a non-profit and if there could be a competitive RFP process to ensure an economical bidding process for the renovations.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Hyra, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the request, subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances, staff recommendations and one additional condition. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0. The Planning Commission added the following two conditions:

9. CONDITION ADDED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION: The applicant shall routinely communicate to new and existing residents that they should maximize the use of on-site parking. (PC)

10. CONDITION ADDED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION: The applicant shall cooperate with the City in the event that the City constructs a sidewalk on their property along the Hancock Avenue frontage. (PC)

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

14. Special Use Permit #2013-0048
4746 Eisenhower Ave. (parking lot at 4740 Eisenhower Ave and 4875 Eisenhower Ave.) - Shared Parking
Public Hearing and Consideration of a request for a shared parking arrangement for an existing church; zoned OCM(100) / Office Commercial Medium.
Applicant: My Father's House Christian Church represented by Louis G. Whiting

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Vice Chair Dunn, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the request, subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances and staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

Oral Reports by Members of the Planning Commission

Oral reports were given after docket item #15.

Planning Commissioners reported on their participation in other groups.

Commissioner Wasowski discussed the activities of the Transportation Commission.

Commissioner Wagner discussed the Potomac Yard Metrorail Work Group and the status of the Environmental Impact Statement and the Alternative B plan.

Vice Chair Dunn reported on the activities of the Waterfront Commission and the status of various projects within the Waterfront area.

Vice Chair Dunn also encouraged the Commissioners to read the Waterfront Art and History report that was published in August.

Commissioner Macek discussed what he learned about strategies for cost effective park design and maintenance on a recent boat tour of the Yards Park and Canal Park.

Commissioner Lyman reported that there hasn't been much activity with the Housing Master Plan Advisory Committee or the Developer Housing Contribution Work Group, but these groups may reconvene in the future.

Chairman Komoroske mentioned that the applicant for 11 E. Reed Avenue has appealed the Planning Commission's denial of a subdivision. He stated that Commissioner Wasowski will represent the Commission at the Council hearing on Sept. 21.

Chairman Komoroske also mentioned that he and Commissioner Macek participated in the interview process for new Planning and Zoning staff. The Chairman mentioned that during the interview process he learned of a software tool used for civic engagement that may be useful in Alexandria.

Planning and Zoning Director Faroll Hamer gave an update on action items requested by the Commission at their retreat in July.

The Commission discussed options for receiving notification of certain meetings.

NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED:

15. Development Site Plan #2013-0010
519 & 521 E Howell Ave. - The Dorn Building

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 3, 2013

Public hearing and consideration of a request to construct a retail/office building; zoned CSL / Commercial Service Low.

Applicant: Howell Properties, LLC represented by Duncan W. Blair, attorney

Planner Jessica McVary gave a presentation and answered questions from the Commission.

Speakers:

Mr. Duncan Blair, attorney representing the applicant, spoke in support of the project.

Mr. John Wannan, 516A East Howell Avenue, expressed concern with the application and requested that all contamination associated with prior uses be remedied. He also requested that residents be invited to participate in future meetings regarding the project. Finally, Mr. Wannan requested that the hours of operation for future retail tenants be limited to between 8:00 and 9:00 p.m. and that restaurants be prohibited due to traffic and refuse concerns.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Dunn, seconded by Commissioner Lyman, the Planning Commission voted to approve DSP#2013-0010 subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances and conditions. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis and recommendations.

OTHER BUSINESS:

16. What's Next Alexandria Briefing

Planning and Zoning Director Faroll Hamer gave a briefing on What's Next Alexandria and answered questions from the Commission.

17. Staff update on the sale of 200 North Royal Street

City Attorney Christopher Spera gave a brief update on the sale of 200 N. Royal Street.

18. Consideration of the Planning Commission minutes of July 2, 2013.

The Planning Commission approved the minutes of July 2, 2013 without objection.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

