

CITY OF ITHACA
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, May 14, 2019
7:00 PM

In the absence of the Chair, City Manager Yonker was asked to chair the meeting. The regular meeting of the Ithaca Planning Commission was called to order by Manager Yonker at 7:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Present: Commissioners Richard Teal, Jerry Timmons, Alison Jerome and Mayor Alice Schafer

Absent: Chair John Wilson, Commissioner Dale Sherman

Staff Present: City Manager Chris Yonker and Deputy Clerk Cathy Cameron

Audience Present: Ryan Smith, Rod Merchant and Jim Wheeler

Motion by Teal, second by Timmons to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held March 12, 2019; motion carried.

Public Comments

Manager Yonker asked for any public comments; none were given.

Site Plan Review/Special Use Permit (SUP)

Mr. Yonker presented a site plan review/SUP for renovations at 146 & 158 East Center Street for developing apartment units submitted by Ryan Smith of Gemini Capital Management VIII, LLC. The proposed renovations would create a total of 10 apartment units over both property addresses. The apartments will be on the second and third floors of these buildings with another unit on the ground level if allowed by special use permit. Mr. Yonker stated that the ground floor apartments would only be allowed in the rear of the buildings, leaving the room for store fronts on Center Street. The proposed amendments to the Zoning Code state that the renovations could not exceed 60% for residential space vs. commercial space.

Commissioner Teal inquired if the units would be ADA compliant. Mr. Smith stated that he will make every attempt to make the ground floor units barrier free. The building will have an elevator installed as code requires one for any residential structure higher than two stories. In addition, fire suppression sprinkler system will be installed in the buildings. Mr. Wheeler stated that from an economic development perspective, this is a very well received development in other communities, such as Alma has created within its downtown district. New businesses look for growing communities with housing availability for employees. Mr. Smith stated that the apartments do vary in square footage to offer optimal use with financial options for everyone. The commercial space will offer a combined 1700 square foot of street frontage when completed.

Motion by Schafer, second by Jerome to authorize a conditional site plan approval pending approval of the Special Use Permit and Zoning Amendments following a public hearing with the Planning Commission set for June 11, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the agenda allows; motion carried.

New Business

Mr. Yonker presented a draft of the text amendments to the C-1 Central Business District Zone. He stated that this was necessary to allow for site plans to be reviewed on an individual basis for development and construction of ground-floor apartment units within the C-1 district under a special use permit process. The draft ordinance *2019-03: Zoning Amendments permitting Ground Floor Residential as a Special Use in the C-1 Zoning District* was reviewed.

Motion by Teal, second by Schafer to set a public hearing for the Zoning Amendments to the C-1 Central Business District with the Planning Commission on June 11, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the agenda allows; motion carried.

Site Plan Review

Mr. Yonker presented a site plan review for an accessory building at 161 East Center Street for construction of a covered pavilion submitted by Rod Merchant, owner of the property. The proposed pavilion would be located in the front of the restaurant with access from inside the building. The size is 18' x 12' with a covered roof and wrought-iron fencing around the perimeter. Two variances are required for placement being in the front yard and for being within 6' of the primary structure (code is 10'). Mr. Merchant informed the Commissioners that the pavilion will be used for dining and is conditional upon securing a liquor license from the State of Michigan.

Motion by Schafer, second by Jerome to authorize a conditional site plan approval, pending variance approvals at a public hearing with the Zoning Board of Appeals set for June 27, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the agenda allows; motion carried.

New Business

Manager Yonker reviewed a draft of the 2019-2025 Capital Improvement Plan that had previously been submitted to the Commission at the previous canceled meeting.

Old Business

Manager Yonker reported that the Bylaws for the PC are a work in progress.

Transmittals

Manager Yonker highlighted the City Manager Activity Reports for April 12 & May 3, 2019 as well as the approved minutes from the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting held February 28, 2019.

Public Comments

Mr. Yonker asked for any additional public comments; none were given.

Motion by Timmons, second by Teal to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m.; motion carried.

Dale Sherman, Commission Secretary

Cathy Cameron, Recording Secretary