

FARMINGTON PLANNING COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS
23600 Liberty Street
Farmington, Michigan
January 8, 2024

Chairperson Majoros called the meeting to order in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan, at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 8, 2024.

ROLL CALL

Present: Crutcher, Gray, Kmetzo, Majoros, Mantey, Perrot, Westendorf
Absent: None
A quorum of the Commission was present.

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT: Director Kevin Christiansen; Recording Secretary Bonnie Murphy; Brian Belesky, Director of Media Specialist, Brian Golden, Media Specialist.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Majoros introduced this item and stated that the Applicant for Item Number 5, Farmington Brewery, had requested to be moved to the February Planning Commission meeting and asked that the agenda be amended to reflect that change.

MOTION by Crutcher, seconded by Westendorf , to approve the amended agenda.
Motion carried, all ayes.

APPROVAL OF ITEMS ON CONSENT AGENDA

A. December 11, 2023 Minutes

MOTION by Westendorf, seconded by Crutcher, to approve the items on Consent Agenda
Motion carried, all ayes.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Majoros introduced this item and stated he has enjoyed his appointment as Chairperson of the Planning Commission but that his work has involved more travel than before and that he would accept nominations for the Chairperson position if any were made.

A. Accept Nominations for Chairperson

Commissioner Kmetzo nominated Geoff Perrot for Chairperson, supported by Majoros. Perrot accepted the nomination.

MOTION by Kmetzo, supported by Majoros, to elect Geoff Perrot as Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

Motion carried, all ayes.

B. Accept Nominations for Vice Chairperson

Commissioner Perrot nominated Miriam Kmetzo for Vice Chairperson, supported by Crutcher.

Kmetzo accepted the nomination.

MOTION by Perrot, supported by Crutcher, to elect Miriam Kmetzo as Vice Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

Motion carried, all ayes.

C. Accept Nominations for Secretary

Commissioner Crutcher nominated Dan Westendorf for Secretary, supported by Perrot. Westendorf accepted the nomination.

MOTION by Crutcher, supported by Perrot, to elect Dan Westendorf as Secretary of the Planning Commission.

Motion carried, all ayes.

Director Christiansen said protocol is to pass gavel to the new Chairperson.

Majoros passed the gavel to Chairperson Perrot who chaired the remainder of the meeting.

SITE PLAN REVIEW – PROPOSED OUTDOOR SEATING, FARMINGTON BREWING COMPANY, 33336 GRAND RIVER

MOTION by Majoros, supported by Crutcher, to table this item until the February 12, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting at the request of the Applicant.

Motion carried, all ayes.

SITE PLAN REVIEW – PROPOSED OUTDDOOR SEATING, MI.MOSA, 23336 FARMINGTON ROAD

Chairperson Perrot introduced this item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen stated the owner of MiMosa Restaurant has submitted a site plan application for proposed outdoor seating for their existing restaurant located in the Central Business District. Outdoor seating in the CBD requires review and approval by the Downtown Development Authority and the Planning Commission. No changes regarding building dimensions or other site improvements are proposed. The Applicant, Jacob Khalil, has submitted a layout of the proposed outdoor seating area, and pictures of the .evening. If I might, Mr. Chair, this is the aerial photograph of Farmington Road and this is one of the units in the small satellite building, part of the Downtown Farmington Center area, on the east side of Farmington Road. You can see that there are properties both to the north and south. There currently is an outdoor seating area on Farmington Road, underneath the overhang and that's been there for many years, in fact it was there with the prior restaurants and now part of MiMosa. When they came into Farmington and was established here, the rear of the building has an existing outdoor area that was approved as outdoor seating but then you may recall you as a Commission working with the Applicant and approved a canopy covering and enclosure a period of time ago to enclose that area. That was all during the Covid period, etc., so that became a secondary area with outdoor seating, it had a covering over it, it had the ability with the enclosure material to be opened up as well and that's in place. During Covid the additional area to the east still on the property was used as outdoor seating and that was a temporary approval and that material with that area is in your packet this evening. There was also an allowance I the parking area adjacent to the east which is actually private parking owned by the owners of MiMosa but that was to be used for a temporary period of time and during the Covid period which has now come full circle so that area no longer can be used unless there is formal approvals, not only for that area but this evening it's being requested the area on the property that was used but doesn't have the site plan approval that is required and that's the purpose this evening. So really what we're looking at is an expansion of what was the outdoor seating area, eventually got covered and used as an enclosed area and now is looking to be used as an open outdoor seating area, it just has to move through the process with formal approval. My understanding from talking with the owner, Mr. Khalil, who is here this evening, that he's looking to do the same thing as he did before during that Covid period in that area and he has the intent of outfitting it with furniture, equipment, tables, chairs, similar to the outdoor seating area that he had previously and the equipment that he had out there right now. So, if we keep going, this is the application, and this is the drawing that has been prepared by S3 Architects and this represents what the interest of Mr. Khalil is for MiMosa. You can see it's an enlarged proposed site plan down at the bottom left, that's the area that had been used and now it's looking to be permanently used as an outdoor seating area and you can see the umbrellas, you can see the tables and chairs that are shown here, again, similar to what was there before, an expansion of the existing area and kind of re-establish that area but going through the process for a permanent outdoor seating area. I will also go down one more page, this is a picture of some of the tables and chairs, this is during the Covid period, I believe.

Here is the photograph provided by the Petitioner, these tables, these chairs, these umbrella tables, these heaters and if I'm correct I think the heaters are owned by MiMosa or they might be part of the DDA but they're not dissimilar to what exists throughout the downtown area. So, this is the area, and this is what he's looking to establish on a permanent basis, again, this is a photograph provided by the Applicant. With that, I'll turn it back to you, Mr. Chair.

Chairperson Perrot invited the Applicant to the podium.

Griffin Angeliu, S3 Architects, came to the podium and stated they are putting in permanent planters with decorative block that surrounds the seating area, the existing outdoor area that's shown up there is 750 square feet. It currently houses 28 existing seats and eight tables, we're proposing 34 seats with nine tables, so very similar to what they currently have. The ground surface condition will be new concrete pavers delineating a 5-foot walkway in the center to the existing restaurant. I'll be happy to answer any questions

Perrot thanked Angeliu and asked if the Petitioner has reached out to any of the surrounding businesses to see what their thoughts are on this because obviously any kind of changes to the footprint of any kind of space impacts everybody in the surrounding area.

Jacob Khalil, Petitioner, came to the podium and stated to the left of the restaurant there is a vacant space right now and to the right facing the building to the east is the Apothecary over there and it's my understanding they're looking to expand as well and to the right is a vacancy and then the flower shop has always been supportive of me, we do a lot of business together, and then from my understanding the salad/soup place just went out of business a few days ago, so as of right now there's not much to ask around.

Perrot stated it's the Planning Commission's responsibility to reach out to residents, but business residents are different and it's always good to get along with neighbors. He thanked the Petitioner and opened the floor for questions from the Commission.

Majoros stated it seems relatively consistent with what's been there before, there's no fundamental footprint change, density change, it seems that we're operating in what we've approved before.

Crutcher asked if the space to the north, gifts of home décor, The Apothecary, they have a wall up there and is your wall next to or stop after their wall ends and the Angeliu replied there is just one wall out there.

Chairperson Perrot opened the floor for a motion from the Commissioners.

MOTION by Crutcher supported by Kmetzo to approve the site plan for outdoor seating for MiMosa Restaurant, 23336 Farmington Road, as presented, conditioned upon review and approval by the DDA Design Committee.

Motion carried, all ayes.

Perrot thanked the Petitioner.

DISCUSSION OF 2024 PLANNING COMMISSION WORK ITEMS/PROGRAM

Chairperson Perrot introduced this item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen stated this item is an annual item of the Planning Commission , typically in January, an annual report that is prepared of the previous year's activities of the Planning Commission, an account of the activities, agenda items over the past year, and this is presented to you this evening and the action requested is after consideration to formally recognize and approve the annual report for the record.

Perrot opens floor for questions and/or comments from the Commission.

Majoros stated on the agenda it said review of 2024 Planning Commission work and asked if that is correct and Christiansen replied that is the way it appears as an agenda item. He said the Master Plan is due for its 5-year update and we're looking to provide funding for that in our budget and that we're in the middle of the Capital Improvement Program and Mr. Majoros is on the CIP Steering Committee and that is included in the work plan along with the development projects we've got going on but if there are any questions or comments this would be an appropriate time to ask them.

Majoros said just a quick update on the Capital Improvement Program, as noted there's a meeting tomorrow, I'm privileged to be the representative there, historically we've given consistent feedback and I'd be happy to provide an update of the status of how that's progressing. Some of the fundamental tenants that I think we've represented before, I would plan to represent again. We do things like is there shared funding, is there core infrastructure related, etc., so I bring a lot of those things consistently forward. We trust that the experts within the City are discipline specific, folks know what the priorities are, etc., but I'll be happy to report back on that in the February meeting timeframe.

Chairperson Perrot opened the floor for a motion from the Commissioners.

MOTION by Majoros, supported by Crutcher, to approve the 2023 Planning Commission Annual Report as presented and any comments that were made regarding 2024 work items.

Motion carried, all ayes.

UPDATE – CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Chairperson Perrot introduced this item and turned it over to staff.

Director Christiansen stated that this agenda item affords the commission an opportunity to ask any questions they might have about development or for an update of existing projects that are moving forward. He stated we've had a little holiday time and hopes everybody had a merry Christmas and happy new year and we're back at it, hit the ground running which really didn't stop because there's such a vibrancy going on in the City right now with so many different things. There was a little bit of a break there but I did indicate a number of projects that were at finality, the Maxfield Training Center project, has just some agreements before the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and City Council coordinated with the Downtown Development Authority and once those agreements are finalized, approved and in place, then we're looking at completing the purchase of the Maxfield Training Center site by Robertson Brothers Homes, the developer/investor for Hillside Townes and then they're moving forward with the project, so we're right there at that point right now and that's very exciting for all the work that's been done, everybody's interest, all of the City's plans, so that's right on the horizon. Also, the American Legion Hall project which has been through the PUD process and you recently approved the final PUD site plan, that's at the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, in fact, there's a Grand River Corridor Improvement Authority meeting this week for their Brownfield plan, that will then go to the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and to the City Council, a similar type item for that site that Robertson Brothers had with the Maxfield site.

With the Farmington Road streetscape being completed, there's a lot of interest. Castle Dental has new owners and we're looking to move forward with redevelopment plans and move through the process. The Village Shoe property is moving forward as well as the work at the Shell Gas Station with demolition going on and there may be some changes to Freedom Plaza next door to facilitate some of the things that both property owners are looking to achieve together with mutual interests, independent and yet collective so there might be some adjustments which might necessitate coming back to you.

Other than that, there's so much activity downtown with the repurposing of vacant space, new businesses coming online, we have Blueberry Café, Apricot Lane, My Salon Suites,

a number of other interests looking to move forward, so filling up the space in the downtown. There have been some transitional uses to new uses, so all of that is keeping us very busy right now and the Planning Commission will play a key role in those projects.

Perrot thanked Christiansen for his update.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None heard.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENT

Chairperson Perrot introduced this item and opened it up for comments.

Director Christiansen offered thanks and appreciation to the officers that have served this past year and in their capacities for quite a period of time, particularly Chairperson Majoros, thank you for your leadership and all of your efforts in stewarding on the Commission over the past number of years, certainly you've laid the groundwork and set the tone for transition with everything the Commission is doing and is looking to continue to do now and into the future, so thank you for your service in that capacity and look forward to you serving as a Planning Commissioner and now you can make motions and other things. He then congratulated the newly elected officers, Chairperson Perrot, Vice Chairperson Kmetzo, and Secretary Westendorf.

Perrot echoed the comments and sentiment of Christiansen and stated he appreciates the time and efforts of former Chairperson Majoros and his continuing to serve on the Planning Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Crutcher, supported by Kmetzo, to adjourn the meeting.
Motion carried, all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary