

MINUTES OF MEETING  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
OCTOBER 15, 2024

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Members Present: Coyne, Allen, DeMarco, Bishop

Presence Noted: Ray Reich, Building Commissioner

Kathryn Kerber, Director of Planning and Community Development

Council Members Present: Michael O'Boyle, Ward 2

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Chairman Bishop called to order the October 15, 2024 meeting of the Rocky River Planning Commission at 6:00 P.M. in City Council Chambers of Rocky River City Hall.

Mr. Bishop asked if anyone has comments regarding the September 11, 2024 Planning Commission meeting minutes. There being no comments, Mr. Bishop moved to approve the September 11, 2024 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Mr. DeMarco seconded.

4 Ayes – 0 Nays  
Passed

**1. SOOTHE WELLNESS – 20015 Detroit Rd. – Pre-Preliminary Review.** Mike Sanchez, owner of Soothe Wellness, and Steve Jennings, Architect, came forward to present the project.

Mr. Jennings said they are proposing a new use for the vacant building on Detroit Rd. The exterior and Parking lot will remain the same, there will only be interior alterations.

Mr. Sanchez explained that they are already in 20033 Detroit and would like to expand their massage and wellness business into this building.

Mr. Bishop explained that the project will need to comply with the new code rather than the old code because the building hasn't been used for a year and this is a new use. The basement is not part of the lease, so if that space is leased it could affect the parking calculation so they will have to keep an eye on that.

Mr. Sanchez explained that there will be 5 service rooms and two relaxation rooms. One service room and one relaxation room will be for couples, the others will be for singles. There will also be a sauna that can be used by 1 or 2 people and a cold plunge that can be used by one person. They stagger appointments so that they don't overlap, and there will be a reception desk with one employee.

Mr. Bishop explained that the biggest issue will be parking since they're required to have 10 spaces for 5 service rooms. Mr. Sanchez said the appointments will be longer because they're an upgraded service. The employees will park at the existing building because there is extra parking there, and they will work in both buildings. Mr. Bishop asked if Mr. Sanchez can get a letter from Kelly Martin, the owner of 20033, that states they're permitted to park in the overflow lots. Mr. Sanchez will ask.

In reviewing the site plan, Mr. Bishop noted that the parallel spots are in the 10-foot setback, and two of them you can't navigate, so they have 7 spaces. If the neighbor doesn't object they may be able to get a variance for three parallel spaces.

Mr. DeMarco asked if the entry and reception will face Detroit or the rear parking area, and Mr. Sanchez replied that they face Detroit. Mr. DeMarco questioned the appropriate use designation for the business and what effect that would have on the parking requirement, and he would like to see a cleaned-up plan for the parking.

Mr. DeMarco said he was disappointed that nothing will be done to the exterior of the building, and Mr. Sanchez explained that he wanted to, but it isn't currently allowed by the building owner. He will change the red exterior to black and add a sign and other touchups. Mr. Bishop noted that they will need to see the proposed signage and color change next time.

Mr. Bishop and Mr. DeMarco agreed that based on square footage and use, the ideal number of parking spaces is between 10 and 15.

Mr. Allen agreed with the comments about the exterior updates and asked if the garage is part of the lease. Mr. Sanchez said the garage is not currently part of the lease. Mr. Allen confirmed that they could not be used toward the parking total, and that the drive aisle should be used as part of the calculation. Mr. Allen, Mr. Bishop, and Mr. DeMarco agreed that if the lower level is leased, they'll have to go through a separate parking evaluation, although rental of the lower level seems unlikely.

Mr. Sanchez said he hopes to purchase the property outright in about 2 years, at which time he may excavate the rear hillside for additional parking.

Mr. Bishop recommended updating the parking plan with dimensions, adding a 5-foot setback to the parallel parking, documenting parking agreements for the other building, and a letter of support from the adjoining property owner for the variance.

**2. KRUEGER GROUP - 22591 Center Ridge – PUBLIC HEARING – Preliminary Review of modification of a previously approved multi-family development to a townhouse development.** Mr. Bobby Krueger and Mr. Jack Doheny with the Krueger Group, Paul Glowacki with Dimit Architects, and Paul Pacifici with Vert Studio Landscape Architecture came forward to present the project.

Mr. Glowacki explained that this is a revised phase 2 plan. It was originally an apartment building with a parking garage and amenities, it is now townhomes. There will be 3 buildings, a 5-unit building on Center Ridge and two buildings with 9 and 11 units internal to the site. There will be a loop drive, reconfigured parking, and green space between the internal townhome buildings. It will be connected to the first phase apartment building by sidewalks and phase 2 residents will have access to phase 1 amenities. They would need one variance the space between the internal townhome buildings is required to be 40 feet and they are at 39 feet. The parking count meets the

zoning code requirement. Mr. Glowacki reviewed the proposed layouts of the townhomes facing Center Ridge and the 2 internal townhome buildings.

Mr. Pacifici describes the proposed landscaping, with a promenade between the two internal buildings and a paved gathering space with a fire table. There will be foliage between Center Ridge and the townhomes facing it for privacy, and evergreen trees separating the development from the single-family homes to the south.

Mr. Glowacki said the fencing and lighting used in phase 1 will continue into phase 2. The Center Ridge-facing townhomes will have a style similar to phase 1. The internal buildings will have sloped roofs to bring the scale down, and will have lighter colors but still use the fiber cement product used in phase 1. They added lower slope sections to the roof to break up the roof massing.

Mr. Bishop said the package looks very complete. They discussed the parking calculation for phase 1. Mr. Bishop said it is code compliant for parking and no variance is needed. Regarding the 39 ft vs 40 ft setback, Mr. Bishop explained that it's only architectural features projecting into the 40 foot space, and they are allowed to do so, and the Planning Commission has the ability to approve that without going through the variance process. He would like to see details about the fence and roll curb in the next plans. Mr. Bishop clarified that the lots are zoned R5, and Mr. Krueger confirmed the lots will be consolidated. Mr. Bishop would like to see landscaping or something aesthetically pleasing along the east fence so it looks nice on the neighbor's side. Mr. Bishop asked about the roof pitch on the interior buildings and suggests they consider adjusting the 4:12 pitch.

Mr. DeMarco expressed appreciation for the completeness of the package. He thinks the fence on the east property line needs another look at the treatment. He wonders if the courtyard space could have smaller planting beds to allow for more lawn. Mr. DeMarco asked if the townhomes facing Center Ridge will have a balcony-type space, and Mr. Glowacki confirmed it is just flat roof. Mr. DeMarco likes the architecture in general, but wonders if the driveway side of the buildings could be made less stark, but he likes the neighborhood look this creates.

Mr. Bishop agreed that the garage side of the interior buildings could use more interest.

Mr. Allen agrees with the discussions of the east fence and the stark look of the backs of the buildings. Mr. Allen and Mr. Glowacki discussed the lighting on the east side above the garages for the driveway space. Mr. Bishop said that lighting should be controlled by the owner rather than the tenant for safety. Mr. Glowacki said the pole lights for phase 2 will be like the pole lights for phase 1 with low lumens to prevent glare.

Mr. Allen asked about traffic calming on the drives. Mr. Glowacki said it's only the residents going to park who will be using those drives, and the entrance to phase 1 parking garage naturally slows people down.

Mr. Bishop asked if there is a mound associated with the south fence, and if there was one on phase 1. Mr. Glowacki said there is no mound proposed and a mound was not included in phase 1.

Mr. Coyne agreed with previous comments, appreciates the creativity of the plan, and would like to see the back elevations broken up.

Mr. Bishop moved to open the public meeting, Mr. Allen seconded.

4 Ayes – 0 Nays  
Passed

Cincy Condol, Treasurer of Carrollton Condos and Nancy Doyle, president of the HOA are concerned about the east fence because it's so close to the Carrollton. The original plans had a pool and outdoor television screen, but Mr. Bishop confirmed those are no longer in the plan. Ms. Condol asked if the units will be rented or sold, since she believes rentals are less desirable. Mr. Krueger confirmed they will be rentals. Mr. Bishop said they are scrutinizing the east fence plan. Mr. DeMarco explained that the new phase 2 plan is further from the property line than the original plan, the buildings are about 12 feet lower, and the roof won't be flat. Ms. Concol is glad the proposed pool and dog park are no longer part of the plan. Mr. Reich suggested Ms. Condol and Ms. Doyle leave their contact information with the Kruegers.

Andrew Tabar, 22604 Sunnyhill Drive, is concerned about light trespass and feels more buffering is needed. He is also concerned about idling cars.

William Brown, 22524 Sunnyhill Drive, is concerned about sound, light, and air pollution, and idling cars, and wonders if different fencing would help.

There being no further comments, Mr. Bishop moved to close the public hearing. Mr. Allen seconded.

4 Ayes – 0 Nays  
Passed

Mr. Glowacki addressed concerns about light and noise, saying that with the arrangement of the buildings it will be directed into the mews area rather than toward the surrounding properties. He suggested removing the sidewalk along the east and south fence and landscape instead. The parking reconfiguration will also reduce light from headlights. Mr. Bishop agrees with removing the sidewalk as it will give them more room for landscape buffering.

Mr. DeMarco suggested reducing the height of light poles to reduce light shining into neighboring parcels. Mr. Glowacki will talk to their photometric consultant and see if that would still meet requirements. Mr. DeMarco also asked about the variety of pine tree to be planted along the fence, and Mr. Pacifici confirmed they can grow very tall and will provide good buffering.

Mr. DeMarco moved to grant preliminary approval to modifications to previously approved for a multifamily development plan at 22591 Center Ridge Road. Mr. Bishop seconded.

4 Ayes – 0 Nays  
Passed

**3. Planning Commission discussion of Westwood Country Club.** Mr. Bishop explained that the current zoning for the Westwood Country Club parcels is not in alignment with its current use, so this is an administrative item to correct the zoning map. Mr. Reich commented that since the last zoning map update is still with City Council, we should put some space between that change and another change. Mr. Bishop acknowledged that this isn't urgent, and the projects currently pending with Westwood would fall under the current zoning anyway. Mr. Bishop suggested revisiting in January and Mr. Reich agreed. Mr. DeMarco would like to keep it on the agenda so they don't lose sight of it.

4. For the November agenda, Mr. Allen would like to discuss DORAs, Designated Outdoor Refreshment Areas, and Law Director O'Shea is working on that. Mr. Bishop said this would be good to keep in mind as we work on the Development Code.

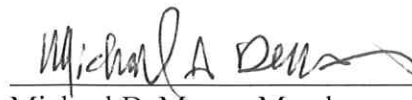
Mr. DeMarco asked about the removal of sections 1165, Central Business District and 1169 Mixed Use Overlay from the Development Code. Director Kerber offered to look into this.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, November 20.

Mr. Bishop moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Allen seconded.

4 Ayes – 0 Nays  
Passed

The meeting adjourned at 7:45.

  
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William Bishop, Chairman  
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Michael DeMarco, Member

Date: 11/20/24