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Community Development Department

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Village of Westmont Planning and Zoning Commission September 14, 2016 - Minutes

The Village of Westmont Planning and Zoning Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, September 14, 2016 at 7:00pm, at the Westmont Village Hall, 31 W. Quincy Street, Westmont, Illinois 60559.

Chair Ed Richard led in the following:

(1) Call to Order

(2) Roll Call

In attendance: Acting Chair Gregg Pill, Commissioners Craig Thomas, Janis Bartel, Thomas Sharp, Doug Carmichael, Secretary Wallace Van Buren, Planner Joe Hennerfeind, Community Development Director Jill Ziegler

Absent: Chairman Ed Richard.

(3) Pledge of Allegiance.

(4) Swearing in of testifying attendees and reminder to sign in.

(5) Reminder to silence all electronic devices.

(6) Approval of Minutes of the August 3, 10 and 17, 2016 meetings.

MOTION to approve the August 3, 10 and 17, 2016 minutes.

Motion by: Van Buren

Second by: Thomas

VOTING A

Van Buren--Yes

Thomas--Yes

Bartel--Yes

Sharp--Yes

Pill--Yes

Motion passed.

(7) Open Hearing

New Business

PZ 16-020 Dr. Jessica Torok, DVM regarding the property located at 35 North Cass Avenue, Westmont, IL 60559 for the following:

- (A) Special Use permit request to operate a veterinarian office in the B-1 Limited Business District.
- (B) Zoning Code Variance request for a veterinarian office to be located within 100 feet of a residence district.

PRESENTATION: Dr. Jessica Torok presented her background and education, including her participation in the Navy as a surgeon, externship in Africa with animal wildlife, post graduate experience internship with small animals and small animal practice in Indiana. She stated that she recently started her own business while looking for a location to start her own practice. She would like to establish lasting bonds with her pets and their owners. The proposed site is at 35 N Cass Avenue. She showed slides showing updates to the front of building, signage, awnings and numbering. There would be a reception area in the front of office and exam rooms in the back. The exam rooms with transom windows for natural light, aquarium wall for cat area, treatment areas, surgical suite and surgical prep area. She stated her goal is to be AAHA accredited which sets standards for veterinary excellence. Initially there will be one doctor, 2 certified technicians, and 1 receptionist, with a second doctor coming on board within a couple of years and the staff to support them. She projected an annual revenue of \$400-600,000, and \$600-800,000 with two doctors. There will be some retail sales such as pet supplies, food, treats, harnesses, etc. The floor plan of existing unit is completely bare, she presented a proposed layout for the reception area, rooms and mentioned soundproofing for the rooms and workspaces. She stated that some holding areas will have an indoor potty facility so it eliminates the need to walk pets outside. She explained the flow through the hospital, greeted by reception, weight and escort to room by technicians and then visit in exam room by doctor. This is followed by treatment and leaving for check out, or options to leave pet for more extensive treatment, most visits are 20-30 minutes. Employees would obtain Metra parking passes, plus there are 3 spaces behind the location and additional parking on Cass and Irving. She is requesting a residential variance because there are homes nearby. She stated that they are requesting a Special Use permit and that veterinary practice is not a risk to public health, design will remediate interior noise and not disturb other businesses, improvement of building will encourage other development, no curb cuts added so minimal change to traffic flow. She addressed the issue of pet waste and staff will make sure that area is cleaned multiple times a day and most pet owners are very good. They are also installing indoor turf in an indoor dog run to reduce any potential pet waste issues. They will be using soundproofing to prevent sound between rooms and other businesses. Vet hospitals are clean and technologically advanced, patrons are middle to upper class and people that care about their pets, average business growth 5 percent per year, vets made Forbes top ten respected professionals list. This business will contribute to the community, eliminates a long standing vacancy, it will have business to business services, and the property owner gets the benefits of the improvements. Dr. Torok is an experienced owner with having a business as her lifelong goal.

STAFF COMMENT: Hennerfeind stated applicants request has a special use and zoning code variance. He gave some background on property, that it has been vacant for at least 4-6 years. The properties surrounding are all similar zoning except across the alley where it is residential. Part of the improvement staff is requesting is better delineation of the parking area behind the facility. Staff did state that it was their request to have employees have metra passes to park in those lots to have the 3 spaces at facility for patrons. He did mention that applicant attended an Economic Development meeting and received approval. The special use is because this is a service business not retail.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Barbara Delassis, 515 N Cass resident, stated that the proposed clinic does not fit the strategic plan. She mentioned that this business does not meet the entertainment, restaurant or

uniqueness that is mentioned in the plan. She stated that most pet owners will not be leaving their pets at the facility so that does not allow them to shop downtown. All services the doctor mentioned are already less than 1 mile away and feels that the area in downtown would be much better served by a cafe, theater, comedy club or bookstore providing revenue and entertainment.

Dr. Darthi Samanthi stated that she is a veterinarian with experience in working in many dense areas but none in an area such as this. Pets get nervous when going to vet and they do have to go to the bathroom, but there is also a concern with the traffic in that area. She also mentioned that she has a concern about the indoor bathroom facility as it confuses the animals since they are usually trained to go outside. She is currently employed in the area at West Suburban and frequents Westmont often for other businesses.

Dr. Jeffed, employed at West Suburban Vet Associates and is a resident of Westmont, stated that he is concerned about pedestrian and vehicle congestion in the downtown area and how the animals will react. They could have issues with spooked animals knocking down other pedestrians or running into traffic, children that may come up to the pets and the train noise potentially scaring the animals.

Michael Akim, Sgt. with Broadview Police Department mentioned in his 15 years of service he has not taken any calls for animal bites in the area though they have a vet clinic at a busy area in Broadview at 17th and Roosevelt in downtown. He took a walk through the area today and does not see a concern, but does see that the Doctor is willing to invest a lot into this building.

Rebuttal: Dr. Torok stated that she does hear the concerns of the public. She stated that a precedence has already been set by West Suburban which only has a 20ft setback to residential area an animal hospital can operate without problems near a residential area. Though it was mentioned that this would be a pass through/service business it will still have visitors that see the other businesses in town each time they come through which will influence other business. She feels that there is room enough and area is growing enough to support another doctor in the community and everyone has their preferences in who they chose. She mentioned that in 10 years of experience of working at other practices she has had no person get bitten by a client's dog entering the facilities and she wonders on the statistics on that. She also mentioned that aggressive animals can be accommodated through a separate entrance. She does not feel that one visit to vet to use indoor bathroom area would affect house training. And she stated that there is a grooming facility that people are already walking pets through downtown area to visit.

COMMISSIONER COMMENT:

Carmichael: mentioned his uncle was a large animal vet. He stated location is not ideal but the building does not lend itself to retail due to its narrow build and he spoke with surrounding businesses and asked them to attend meeting. He inquired about the metra spaces and asked if there are some available. Staff confirmed that passes are available.

VanBuren: asked if there was a back entrance for the cars parked. Reply: there is an option to come through back but that would not be preferred.

Thomas: building has been vacant and it is not a good look, enjoyed the presentation on what is being planned. He asked about keeping clients overnight. Reply: though she is experienced enough to perform surgeries she would not keep pets overnight that needed 24 hour care, it would need to be pre-determined for the client to transport their pet to a 24 hour care facility.

Sharp: asked staff about kennels and vets and the special use being separate. Staff said code doesn't go into detail about the specifics but kennels and vets are grouped together. Sharp stated her presentation was impressive and he is excited for her to open and feels that this is a good step to mixed use

downtown and improvements to the storefronts.

Bartel: stated that the presentation was excellent and the benefits outweigh the issues and the plan is very well thought out.

Pill: asked about the hours. Reply: Mon-Fri 8am to 6pm and Sat 9am-1pm. Pill mentioned that the busiest sidewalk times are in evenings for restaurants. He inquired about medical waste. Reply: the medical waste would be kept inside the building in a designated area, inside designated boxes until it is picked up by the appropriate disposal service. Pill asked about the back of the building. Reply: she would like to paint the back and add some signage for marketing and needs to figure out with staff how to designate the spaces. Pill mentioned signage might want to be saved for the front, weeds cleaned up and fresh gravel and lighting that doesn't both the neighbors and asked staff to make sure there is some attention to the back to make it look better. He mentioned that he sat on the committee for the comprehensive plan and the number one question asked by residents is what are we doing about vacant buildings so he is in favor of the proposal.

Attorney: when you consider the variance and special use almost any business in the central business district butts up to a residential area so whether this location and this business or another business it will most likely require a variance. He also mentioned that there is a vet clinic in downtown Downers Grove and Elmhurst.

Barbara Delassis wanted to mention to board that the public comments were made by residents, not by competitors of the animal hospital and hope that the commission did not take the comments as concerns about competition to the businesses they work for.

FINDING OF FACTS A

- (1) YES=6 NO=0
- (2) YES=6 NO=0
- (3) YES=6 NO=0
- (4) YES=6 NO=0
- (5) YES=6 NO=0
- (6) YES=6 NO=0
- (7) YES=6 NO=0

MOTION A

Motion to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees to approve to a Special Use permit request to operate a veterinarian office in the B-1 Limited Business District.

Motion by: Thomas

Second by: Sharp

VOTING A

Van Buren--Yes

Sharp--Yes

Bartel--Yes

Thomas--Yes

Carmichael--Yes

Pill--Yes

Motion passed.

FINDING OF FACTS B

- (1) YES=6 NO=0
- (2) YES=6 NO=0
- (3) YES=6 NO=0

MOTION B

Motion to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees to approve to a Zoning Code Variance request for a veterinarian office to be located within 100 feet of a residence district.

Motion by: Bartel

Second by: Thomas

VOTING B

Van Buren--Yes

Sharp--Yes

Bartel--Yes

Thomas--Yes

Carmichael--Yes

Pill--Yes

Motion passed.

PZ 16-021 Napleton Westmont Porsche regarding the properties located at 201 and 209 East Ogden Avenue, Westmont, IL 60559 for the following:

- (A) Special Use Permit request to operate an automotive dealership in the B-2 General Business District.
- (B) Zoning Code Variance request to increase the number of allowable signs.
- (C) Preliminary Plat of Subdivision to consolidate the properties into one lot.
- (D) Site and Landscaping Plan approval.

PRESENTATION: Katie Napleton stated that they have been working on this property for three years. It took them a long time to acquire the properties. They are proposed to take their current dealership and combine it with the new property. They would be creating one large dealership with new car sales at 209 E Ogden, existing store would be service department connected by a service drive with valet service at the front. They have been in Westmont for 15 years and they are here today for the requests as they business is growing from 10-20% per year. With the increase in growth, they put more cars out in the area and then increases the need for service. They will increase service bays from 10 to 19, add parking on second floor which will help with any parking concerns in surrounding streets. They would like to increase signage, so they have directional signs to service and other areas plus the front signage. She walked through the site plan. She did indicate that Porsche has an intensive process for design that they have to meet, pointed out entrance and customer parking.

STAFF COMMENT: Hennerfeind stated that the applicant has two properties that they are trying to consolidate. They are also required to have a special use permit. Part of the special use is a requirement for landscaping. They have also addressed to make sure traffic flows through and does not back up onto Ogden. They do have signage requests and proposed improvements along Ogden Avenue and they will

be making improvements along Wilmette Avenue as well. There is a detention area that will be covered by parking lot, they only need to accommodate adding stormwater detention only for the improvements. There is some more cleanup for landscaping plan and the Fire Department had some initial concerns regarding access and getting around the building. The Village forester has some suggestions on tree selection and they will continue to work with applicant.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Bill Alowinski, 512 N Wilmette, has been working with Napleton and they have resolved some of the issues. He inquired about the improvements on Wilmette. Staff replied that street, trees and lighting plus curb improvements from their property lot to Ogden. He also asked why one of the parking driveways taken out. He would like it to be taken into consideration to remove access on the Wilmette side. He questioned where the inventory and employee cars are going to be parked during construction as their street has experienced other businesses parking on their street. He showed pictures of trailers double parking to unload and has concerns about the traffic issues because of this. There is asphalt damage from the cars and trucks parking.

Rebuttal: Katie Napleton mentioned that the new flow of the lot will allow the trailer to come through the lot to unload and exit back out to Ogden. She clarified that the truck in pictures was a parts delivery truck. Pill asked if new cars also get delivered on Wilmette, Katie replied that she was not sure. Pill mentioned there is a very designated area for dealerships near Ty Warner Park.

Attorney: mentioned that as the dealerships have expanded they have had numerous traffic issues to address and make notation that loading and unloading on their property and avoid parking in middle of Ogden Avenue.

Van Buren asked if their plan would allow for them to unload on their property. Robert Bowman stated that theoretically since they have been able to accommodate the parts truck, they should also be able to unload a car carrier truck as they have also changed radius for the truck to make the turn. Pill mentioned having staff look into unloading in same designated area as the other dealerships. Katie replied they are willing to work with Village on that even though they do not have as many deliveries.

Katie stated they will operate out of current building until construction on Lamborghini building is complete. There will be a small disruption when adding the underground storage tanks that may displace some parking spots. They have an additional parking lot that they could use during construction.

Bill A. mentioned that a lot of the delivery trucks are independent trucking companies that are not familiar with the unloading zone and they come at various hours when someone is not there to direct them to other unloading area. He mentioned that there was a truck that got stuck on Wilmette and closed the street for about 3 hours. If the entrance is eliminated then the trucks won't have the option to come down Wilmette and there are still test drivers that speed down the street. Pill replied that if the exit was blocked they may not be able to get a truck be able to exit and might impose a hardship on the business. Bill replied that they could pull in and back out.

COMMISSIONER COMMENT:

Bartel: supports the project, well thought out and does not have a problem with the signs or combining the properties, she is concerned about the water detention and asked staff if it was sufficient. Staff replied that yes engineer feels that the underground detention improves the location and will be sufficient and the fire department concerns have been addressed. Bartel would support eliminating the exit on Wilmette and clarified that Porsche would be paying for the improvements on Wilmette.

Sharp: agrees that eliminating the Wilmette exit would impose a hardship, he would like to see that the parts trucks fit on site rather than just theory and design the site appropriately. Sharp asked if the building was air conditioned. Reply: they have air flow ventilation and not air conditioned because the

doors constantly open and close. Sharp mentioned in the summer the doors would be open all the time if not cooled and would be able to see into the service area. Reply: they have designed the bays to meet capacity, the doors are made to only be open and closed for access and the ventilation should not require them to leave doors open, they would agree to a stipulation that doors would not remain open on Ogden Avenue only for access. Sharp mentioned if they will have a passenger elevator. Reply: they have a car elevator which will double as a passenger elevator. Sharp asked about the herringbone pattern for car display, staff confirmed that that was previously granted.

Thomas: ask for clarification on whether trucks can pull into the lot and unload. Reply: they did do calculations on the parts truck have to confirm calculations for the carriers due to the ramps. Thomas stated they need better coordination with the drivers for the delivers for the neighbors. Katie wants to work with neighborhood and will work with options to appease the residents.

Van Buren: asked if they can put signage on Wilmette that all deliveries have to be made through Ogden so that the drivers will see that. Attorney stated that would need to be proposed to police and public works. Van Buren stated that anything to minimize the effect to the neighbors and the drivers on Wilmette should be done.

Carmichael: has same issues with Wilmette entrance but does agree that it would be a hardship on the business and thinks unloading at designated area would be a good idea. He asked about competition and Katie mentioned surrounding dealerships that they do need to focus on to make sure they keep their sales.

Pill: asked if they combine properties if it becomes one address and the reply from staff was yes. He stated he lives in the test drive zone and feels they need to stay on top of that. He is happy to see that there is an accommodation for the parts truck and if carrier cannot unload onsite then the off site unloading would be an option. Pill mentioned seeing another dealer employee parking off site and hopefully their project will be done soon to alleviate that problem. Supports the project.

Public rebuttal: Bill asked if they could make Wilmette entrance a true pork chop to prevent the traffic coming down the street. He also asked about why are they eliminating one of the Ogden entrances. Attorney: mentioned that IDOT requires them to consolidate one property, one entrance. Bill mentioned the bay doors on the back also being required to be closed to eliminate the noise.

Katie replied that they would agree to a similar condition of keeping doors closed but with 17 bays servicing the door will be opening and closing quite a bit.

FINDING OF FACTS A

- (1) YES=6 NO=0
- (2) YES=6 NO=0
- (3) YES=6 NO=0
- (4) YES=6 NO=0
- (5) YES=6 NO=0
- (6) YES=6 NO=0
- (7) YES=6 NO=0

MOTION A

Motion to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees to approve to a Special Use Permit request to operate an automotive dealership in the B-2 General Business District.

Motion by: Van Buren

Second by: Carmichael

Question: Sharp asked if they need to make notes on what was discussed. Attorney and Staff takes notes that will be sufficient.

VOTING A

Van Buren--Yes
Sharp--Yes
Bartel--Yes
Thomas--Yes
Carmichael--Yes
Pill--Yes
Motion passed.

FINDING OF FACTS B

- (1) YES=6 NO=0
- (2) YES=6 NO=0
- (3) YES=6 NO=0

MOTION B

Motion to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees to approve to a Zoning Code Variance request to increase the number of allowable signs.

Motion by: Bartel

Second by: Sharp

VOTING B

Van Buren--Yes
Sharp--Yes
Bartel--Yes
Thomas--Yes
Carmichael--Yes
Pill--Yes
Motion passed.

MOTION C

Motion to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees to approve to a Preliminary Plat of Subdivision to consolidate the properties into one lot.

Motion by: Carmichael

Second by: Thomas

VOTING C

Van Buren--Yes
Sharp--Yes
Bartel--Yes
Thomas--Yes
Carmichael--Yes
Pill--Yes

Motion passed.

MOTION D

Motion to recommend to the Village Board of Trustees to approve to a Site and Landscaping Plan approval.

Motion by: Van Buren

Second by: Thomas

VOTING D

Van Buren--Yes

Sharp--Yes

Bartel--Yes

Thomas--Yes

Carmichael--Yes

Pill--Yes

Motion passed.

(8) Motion to adjourn.

Motion by: Thomas

Second by: Bartel

Meeting adjourned 9:00 pm.