

Submitted December 4, 2019
Approved December 11, 2019

**MINUTES OF THE ROCKVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING NO. 25-2019
Wednesday, October 23, 2019**

The City of Rockville Planning Commission convened in regular session in the Mayor and Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday, October 23, 2019

PRESENT

Gail Sherman - Chair

Anne Goodman

Sarah Miller

Don Hadley

Absent: Charles Littlefield
John Tyner II
Rev. Jane Wood

Present: Jim Wasilak, Chief of Zoning and Staff Liaison
Cynthia Walters, Deputy City Attorney
David Levy, Assistant Director
Deane Mellander, Zoning and Development Supervisor
Andrea Gilles, Principal Planner
Cas Chasten, Principal Planner

I. REVIEW AND ACTION

A. Level 2 Site Plan STP2019-00368, for Construction of a 95,280 Square Foot Self-Storage Warehouse, Conversion of a Bank with Drive-Through to a Restaurant with Drive-Through and Additional Site Changes at Gude Plaza, 1300 East Gude Drive; BP Associates LP and Promark Development, Applicants.

Cas Chasten presented the staff report and recommendation, which was for approval with conditions. Commissioner Goodman asked that the landscape plan and summary of area meetings be included in the staff report.

Patricia Harris, with Lerch, Early and Brewer and representing the applicant, presented the application and stated that the applicant agrees with the recommended conditions. She noted that the process was extended due to the text amendment that modified the requirements for self-storage warehouses in the MXE Zone. Rob Eisinger of Promark Development answered questions from the Commission regarding the disposition of existing tenants in the center.

Trina Perez with Allstate and Milton Contreras with El Boqueron II Restaurant, both tenants in Gude Plaza, expressed concerns about the lack of notice and communication with the landlord,

and that the plans do not show their businesses being relocated in the center after the work is completed.

Commissioners expressed concern for the displacement of existing tenants and for the business community in this area, although it was recognized that it is not possible to deny the application on that basis, and discussed the issue with Mr. Eisinger. He noted that they are still looking for a space for Allstate.

Commissioner Hadley moved, seconded by Commissioner Goodman, to approve Level 2 Site Plan STP2019-00368, based on the findings and conditions of approval recommended in the staff report, and subject to the proposed parking reduction as shown on the site plan. The motion passed 3-0-1, with Commissioner Miller abstaining and Commissioners Littlefield, Tyner and Wood absent.

II. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL

A. Park Road and North/South Stonestreet Avenue Comprehensive Master Plan Amendment

Andrea Gilles presented the staff draft of the Master Plan Amendment for the Park Road and North and South Stonestreet Avenue area. This plan amendment resulted from the Stonestreet Corridor Study, and recommends land use changes in this vicinity. The Mayor and Council recently directed that staff move forward on this aspect of the study, which had been identified as a key opportunity area.

The plan amendment area consists of 6 acres near the Rockville Metro station, partially within the East Rockville neighborhood. The plan amendment recommends a mix of office or retail, retail residential mix and residential attached land use for the area. The plan amendment also includes design guidance for new development and recommendations for the public realm that enhance pedestrian travel near the metro station. The plan amendment includes zoning recommendations to implement the land use recommendations that work with the guidelines to reduce residential densities closer to existing residences.

The Commission and staff discussed how small-scale maker spaces can be accommodated here, and it was noted by Ms. Gilles that those types of uses are currently permitted in the existing zoning, but very few have located here. Ms. Gilles suggested that there could be emphasis in the land use descriptions that these types of spaces are encouraged in what has been envisioned as an area focused on Metro users.

Commissioner Goodman asked about the feasibility of burying the utility lines in the Stonestreet corridor, to which Ms. Gilles responded that this likely would be a public/private partnership for undergrounding to occur. Concerns were also expressed about the potential displacement of existing businesses.

Commissioner Hadley suggested that the text under "Design Guidance" should emphasize the street connections mentioned in the plan, such as connecting England Terrace. Ms. Gilles

responded that such a recommendation might fit in another section, as the section is intended to provide design guidance for private developers of adjacent property.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Commissioner Goodman moved, seconded by Commissioner Miller, to approve the staff draft with the changes discussed and to set the public hearing date for January 8, 2020. The motion passed 4-0, with Commissioners Littlefield, Tyner and Wood absent.

David Levy reminded the Commission that there will be opportunities to decide whether to incorporate the items discussed this evening into the plan after the public hearing. Ms. Gilles noted that the zoning changes for this area as well as the MCPS property on North Stonestreet Avenue will occur after the current plan amendment.

III. COMMISSION ITEMS

- A. Staff Liaison Report – Jim Wasilak reported that the next scheduled Commission meeting is November 13. However, no items are scheduled, as the Planning Area draft of the Master Plan will occur at the following meeting on December 11. There are two other items for the agenda: the site plan application for Christ Episcopal School, a parking reduction request at 1251 West Montgomery Avenue. He also pointed out that the Sign Ordinance text amendment was adopted by the Mayor and Council on October 21.
- B. Old Business – David Levy distributed the updated version of the ULI Report on Town Center.
- C. New Business - none.
- D. Minutes – none.
- E. FYI/Correspondence – none.

IV. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, Commissioner Goodman moved, seconded by Commissioner Hadley, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:41 p.m. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Commission Liaison