

MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE OAK PARK PLAN COMMISSION  
VILLAGE HALL- COUNCIL CHAMBER  
February 4, 2016  
7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair David Mann; Commissioners Jeremy Burton, Mark Gartland (arrived at 7:38 p.m.), JoBeth Halpin, Greg Marsey, Kristin Nordman and Monica Sanders

EXCUSED: Commissioners Garret Eakin and Douglas Gilbert

ALSO PRESENT: Craig Failor, Village Planner; Jacob Karaca, Attorney; Bill McKenna, Village Engineer; Floyd Anderson, Architectural Consultant for the Village

Applicants: Joe Segobiano, Lincoln Properties; Demetrios Stavrianos, architect, CallisonRTKL; Javier Millan, traffic engineer, KLOA

**Roll Call**

Chair Mann called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Roll was called. A quorum was present.

**Non-Agenda Public Comment**

None.

**Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Marsey moved to approve the minutes from January 7, 2016. Commissioner Halpin seconded. Chair Mann had a revision page two. A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved unanimously with the correction.

**Public Hearing(s)**

**PC 15-06: Lincoln- OP South Boulevard LLC (325-331 North Harlem Avenue & 100-107 South Maple Avenue)** The Applicant seeks approval of a planned development for a mixed use project consisting of 10,000 square feet of first floor commercial space, 263 rental apartments, and 398 parking spaces. The applicant is requesting an allowance to increase the building height from 45 feet as required in Section 3.8.1 A(2) of the Zoning Ordinance to 135 feet (as measured at the highest point of the flat roof), an allowance to reduce open space from 25% as required in Section 3.8.1 C(2) of the Zoning Ordinance to 12%, an allowance to increase density from the allowed 76 dwelling units as regulated in Section 3.8.1 A(1)b of the Zoning Ordinance to 263 dwelling units, and an allowance for setbacks and landscaping along the south-most property line from a required 15 foot setback to zero feet and along the west property line from a required 5 foot setback to zero feet. The Applicant is also requesting the vacation of a portion of Maple Avenue – an area approximately 115 feet by 66 feet. **THIS HEARING WAS CONTINUED FROM JANUARY 7, 2016**

Chair Mann said there would be follow-up on the traffic study and asked for Village Engineer Bill McKenna to review the staff report.

Mr. McKenna reviewed the staff memo on the revised traffic study by KLOA. He said, in general, they were confident in the results. He said they had concerns with some intersections from a traffic impact standpoint: Harlem and South Boulevard would be degraded especially for westbound movement, meaning the level of service would go down; Marion and North Boulevard would have a minor increase in delays on eastbound traffic; Marion and South Boulevard would have traffic delays during peak hours; Lake and Marion showed no real impact from this development. He said at Marion and Pleasant there was concern that traffic may be redirected from closing Maple and there would be back-ups, which might

resort to drivers becoming aggressive and could lead to accidents. The study, however, took all traffic that was rerouted but in reality, some drivers may reroute entirely to bypass the area.

Mr. McKenna said staff recommended a follow up study after occupancy to see if the traffic conditions come to fruition; especially at Pleasant and Marion there may be a need to install a four-way stop. He said they recommend having the developer pay for the four-way stop if that becomes necessary. He said as for the other intersections, there was no easy fix and that was outside the scope of this development.

Commissioner Marsey asked about the mistakes in the traffic analysis noted in the staff report. Mr. McKenna said they were errors such as not adding pedestrians to the entire area versus just the development site; and bus blockages were underestimated. Mr. McKenna said changing that data would only result in incremental delays and staff didn't feel it warranted another study. Commissioner Marsey asked about changing signal times at South Boulevard and Harlem. Mr. McKenna said they would not make recommendations on signal changes until a larger, more comprehensive downtown traffic study could be done. Commissioner Marsey noted the South Boulevard and Harlem intersection would be rated 'F' and said it seemed like staff was handing off traffic issues to the future and relying on a follow up study when there were errors in the traffic report. Mr. McKenna said staff believed the errors were not egregious enough to warrant another study as the delays would be minor.

Commissioner Sanders noted the current Harlem and South Boulevard westbound traffic was currently rated 'E' and would go to 'F'. Mr. McKenna agreed but said those impacts were not just attributed to this development. Chair Mann said he was concerned that the downtown was on the brink of some traffic issues and what could staff do if it played out worse than anticipated. Mr. McKenna said staff was mainly concerned with Marion and Pleasant, which could have a four-way stop sign installed if necessary; the rest of the intersections were not easy fixes short of expanding lanes, it would be difficult to fix in a congested, downtown area.

Commissioner Marsey noted North and South Boulevards were mostly one-way, except for stretches that were two-way due to complaints from businesses at the time the street direction changed. He asked if there would be reconsideration for one-way traffic entirely in that area. Mr. McKenna agreed and said when they look at area-wide traffic they would look at that. A short discussion ensued regarding traffic with Mr. McKenna clarifying there were two considerations: one was a village-funded, downtown-area traffic study from Harlem to Euclid, Pleasant to Ontario. This was a short-term project. The second traffic study would be the follow-up study from this development after occupancy.

Commissioner Marsey noted there were not a lot of options available to the village to change traffic conditions downtown; he questioned the need to spend money on a study when options were so few. Mr. McKenna said staff believed it would be good to have a holistic study to see what would work and what the implications of changes would be.

Mr. Javier Millan, from KLOA, said one of the flaws in the study was an incorrect speed limit on some streets, which didn't change the study model and the impact may be point one second of delay. Changing pedestrian data would impact times by point one or point two seconds of delay. He said the critical data was taken into account and the changes would be minimal. Commissioner Marsey asked about the error in bus blockages. Mr. Millan said they may be off by one or two buses on Harlem. Commissioner Marsey questioned the logic of tripling the buses but only causing point one or two second delay. Mr. Millan said they only use federal guidelines when completing traffic studies.

Commissioner Marsey asked about improvements to the Harlem viaduct and how the report said it would improve the situation. Mr. Millan said as it was noted in the footnotes, to do a true analysis you'd need to study the entire corridor and IDOT would change the signaling times along Harlem way north to way south, which they believe would improve this area. Commissioner Marsey questioned the software used. Mr. Millan said the software was from the federal government.

Commissioner Burton said the bottom line issues were that there were intersections that would be getting 'E's and it wasn't how many seconds, but how it was viewed by the people who live here. Chair Mann noted it was difficult to determine what was the incremental increase from the development to the entire situation. Commissioner Burton said it was clear there was density going into the downtown area where there was a traffic problem already; it should go into the mix for commissioners' consideration.

Commissioner Burton asked staff if after all the developments there would be an increase in 'E' rated intersections. Mr. McKenna said there would be an increase at Marion and Pleasant in one direction. Commissioner Marsey asked if that was their most concern. Mr. McKenna agreed but said they could install a four-way stop for safety concerns.

Chair Mann moved to the review of design changes.

Mr. Floyd Anderson, architectural design consultant for the village, reviewed his memo regarding the design of the development. He said he has had numerous meetings with the developer and the developer has shown a very good attitude on addressing the village's concerns. He said a prior issue on the façade was too many things going on and they have simplified it to his satisfaction. He said the latest images have shown a direction that was trying to be a good neighbor to the architecture to the east of the property; the massing on the south has been pulled back to allow for window openings. He said they aligned the building massing at the Maple Avenue termination with the center of the street. Overall, he was in support of the project but was waiting to hear more about the coloring and palate.

Commissioner Burton asked about matching the dark brick to the adjacent building. Mr. Anderson said it was a good idea, but the on such a large mass it may be too dark. He suggested something compatible but not matching.

Chair Mann asked for a short break at 7:57 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 8:07 p.m.

Mr. Demetrios Stavrianos, architect for the developer, went over the presentation of the updated designs. He said they've enhanced the streetscape experience by putting glass all along the perimeter at grade. He said there would be a green roof on the top of the building. He reviewed the different elements of the building. He said they've added fenestration on the south facing walls to provide a better expression. He showed samples of the metal material. He said the perforated material has a movement quality during the day. He reviewed photo examples of the pedway and the public art component. He said there would be natural light at both ends and the developer views this as a dynamic opportunity to bring the two ends together. He reviewed the lighting plan and said it would be directed by the art put into the pedway, which was still being designed with input from the Public Art Advisory Commission (PAAC).

Chair Mann asked for more details on materials and samples. Mr. Stavrianos reviewed each material sample. He said they were still working with Mr. Anderson on the color palate.

Commissioner Gartland asked about the spacing between the parking garage and the neighboring apartment building. Mr. Failor clarified there was a private service road in between.

Commissioner Marsey asked about the pedway art element. Chair Mann noted it was a substantial part of architecture of the building; he said the Plan Commission would like to see plans for it. Mr. Segobiano said currently they were working with staff and the PAAC to find local artists to work with them on the project; the developer anticipated it would be a condition of the project- they could come back and present to the Plan Commission after it has been finalized.

Chair Mann said there have been a number of positive changes made but wanted to know more about the Harlem façade and setback. Mr. Stavrianos said there would be a seven foot, six inch sidewalk along Harlem. Chair Mann asked about conversations with PACE regarding the bus stop location. Mr. Stavrianos said they were currently communicating and looking at what would work for both PACE and the developer; they could give an additional two feet in one spot at one location if they make some structural transfers but likely nothing additionally. Chair Mann noted it was a tight situation and the ordinance required a five foot setback. Commissioner Burton noted a three foot indentation on the corner of the building and asked if that could be made further south for the bus stop. Mr. Stavrianos noted the discussions with PACE were still underway. Commissioner Marsey asked if the developer wanted the bus stop relocated elsewhere. Mr. Stavrianos said they would prefer moving it to North Boulevard to combine with the Lake Street stop; but the far south corner of the building would be the only place on the building site they'd want the stop to be located. Commissioner Marsey said he wouldn't want the project to go forward with no resolution on this; buses could park in the front of the building and the retailer on the corner will be agitated or perhaps they couldn't rent the location because of the bus stop. He would prefer to have a resolution in place. Mr. Segobiano said discussions with PACE were positive and they were not at a stalemate they just didn't have a clear decision at this time. Mr. Failor said PACE has the right to put a bus stop along the Harlem corridor; the developer was trying to accommodate them by having an alternative site. PACE could decide to stay in the same spot, but it would not have a bus shelter. Commissioner Halpin asked for clarification on placing the stop on the south end of the property. Mr. Segobiano explained the columns would stay in the last window bay, but the window wall would recess two feet. Chair Mann suggested adding more space along Harlem and recessing the window bay the entire length; he said it would go a long way because it was such a tight space and retailers would appreciate it, also.

Commissioner Gartland asked for a review of traffic egress points. Mr. Stavrianos reviewed the access points and loading area. Commissioner Gartland clarified after the first two floors the building would be built to the property line. Mr. Stavrianos agreed. Commissioner Gartland asked about visibility at the parking entrance. Commissioner Marsey suggested a gate or sirens because there were a lot of pedestrians. Mr. Stavrianos noted the pedway allowed for both the public and residents to reach the train station instead of going through the alley. Commissioner Marsey argued that in reality, people will continue to walk in the alley and adding trucks into the traffic could make it worse for pedestrians. Mr. Segobiano said long trucks would not be servicing the building and they would be working with Public Works to relocate the neighboring business' dumpsters. Commissioner Marsey said his concerns were buses queuing up and then adding additional alley traffic, coupled with pedestrians, it could be unsafe.

Commissioner Sanders asked about changes in on-street parking. Mr. Failor said the parking department was reviewing on-street parking at the development site as part of the larger area. He said the developer indicated they would be providing parking in the garage for the residential neighborhood.

Chair Mann asked about the lighting in the garage with the perforated metal façade. Mr. Stavrianos said they were sensitive to it and would be selective in how they light it. Chair Mann said the color palate was very timid with greys and browns and agreed with Mr. Anderson that the brick was too dark for the height; he suggested something warmer and more contextual to the entire downtown. Chair Mann said he would like to see something more lively. Mr. Stavrianos said they would work on some color alternates.

Chair Mann moved to cross examination.

Mr. Jeffrey Sobeck, on behalf of Barbara Parelli, a resident near the development, asked if there was precedent in Oak Park for a development of this size and mass. Mr. Segobiano said he was not familiar with all the buildings. Mr. Sobeck asked about the changes on the south façade. Mr. Stavrianos said it was setback and there were now windows along the south façade. Mr. Sobeck asked about moving the center line as noted by Mr. Anderson. Mr. Stavrianos said that it was recommended the residential element be lined up with the center of Maple Avenue, which they did. Mr. Sobeck asked about light on the parking

level both shimmering during the day and at night; would they do anything to lesson a spotlight effect. Mr. Stavrianos clarified the metal panel would not be on the south wall, only solid brick along the south due to code requirements.

Chair Mann moved to public testimony.

Mr. David Enderle said they all know that traffic will get worse and at end of day this development was taking a public street. He said it wouldn't make sense. He said no matter what artwork the pedway was still a tunnel and he was concerned about safety. He said the only option for pedestrians was a tunnel or an alley. He said from a traffic standpoint, we would be losing a street and adding stop signs at Pleasant and Marion, where there was Poor Phil's and outdoor seating and that would be making it more dangerous. He urged commissioners to relook at closing off Maple Avenue.

Mr. Paul Beckwith, 1033 South Boulevard, and also a member of the Pleasant Business District and 35 year resident of Oak Park said he appreciated the information the developer has given. He said he was a big believer of development in Oak Park. He said the development would be a welcome addition to the business district and community. He said this location will be a great attraction to millennials who don't want to have a car, it will help his business and others to have people who want to walk.

Mr. Mike Bolton, Deputy Director of Strategic Service for PACE, said they were working with the developer and architect to see if they could arrive at an arrangement that would benefit the more than 1200 people who use the bus stop every day. He said moving the bus stop north would not work as it was one of the heaviest used bus stops in the area. He said the notch at the north corner of the development would give people a place to collect and human nature would follow that if it was a restaurant or a CVS, for example, people will go inside. He said an overhang at the south could provide cover and alleviate the need for a traditional bus shelter. He said they would like to find a way to accommodate customers and they understand what the development means to the community, but people have been using this stop for 40 years and he hoped they could find a solution.

Commissioner Halpin said she was concerned that the bus stop issue was not resolved and should commissioners leave that open-ended. Chair Mann said he was encouraged by the PACE comments that the situation was still being discussed; the facts were there will be not be a bus shelter but the building could be designed to offer covered areas. Commissioner Burton said he didn't think it was sufficiently wide enough at the Harlem sidewalk and suggested moving the glass wall entirely. Chair Mann agreed as it would relieve pressure along Harlem.

Chair Mann closed public testimony and moved to deliberations.

Commissioner Marsey said he shared the concern that the setback and bus issue was not resolved and would prefer a solution before voting on it; he asked if the developer could commit to changes tonight. Mr. Segobiano said they could agree to setback the south bay, but they were not in a position to agree to the whole side. Chair Mann argued that in asking for the setback allowance this would be a small gesture. A short discussion ensued with a consensus by commissioners that the entire glass wall along the Harlem side should be setback by two and a half feet.

Commissioner Marsey said there was no resolution on the pedway design, which needs to feel safe. He said he was not convinced by the traffic study and would prefer the Village and developer come up with solutions rather than just wait and see if it works. He said it was not entirely the developer's fault, but with these issues unresolved he was uncomfortable coming to a vote tonight.

Commissioner Halpin said the design had moved a great deal, but she still had reservations about Harlem Avenue and would like to see some resolution on that before voting. Commissioner Nordman agreed. Commissioner Gartland said he would be ready to vote but was open to waiting. He said he appreciated

that the developer listened to just about everything they asked for previously and the building looked much better.

Chair Mann said traffic issues were beyond just this development and were a village issue; there was nothing the applicant could do. Commissioner Marsey argued the village could be more proactive and change the flow of traffic to one-way. Commissioner Marsey said forestalling the vote would provide pressure to get the problem solved. Chair Mann argued there was not much that could be done in one month and discussions were underway with the PAAC on the art component.

Commissioner Marsey said it was the village's responsibility to take the data that exists and do something about the traffic issues because citizens who live in the neighborhood would have to deal with it. Mr. Failor said the Village Board has given direction to do a larger traffic study. Commissioner Marsey disagreed that it couldn't be done sooner. Commissioner Gartland said there were too many stakeholders who would want to be a part of that larger discussion; he agreed that they needed to change the traffic flow down there but would also like to see development happen on that corner as it would invigorate that area.

Mr. Failor said at the February 8, 2016 board meeting there would be a discussion about traffic issues in the downtown area. Commissioner Sanders suggested not allowing the setback or open space variances as it would solve the bus and neighbor issues; however it would probably not be viable to the developer. Commissioner Burton said he would like to see the building go up and couldn't put total blame on the developer for traffic, but it was impactful because of massing and height. Chair Mann said it was density issue. Commissioner Burton agreed.

Chair Mann said the developer would not reduce the density so he proposed voting on the application with a condition of the two and half foot setback along Harlem. Commissioner Burton said the setback would resolve a lot of the issues he had with the development. Commissioner Burton asked about standard and special conditions. Mr. Failor provided commissioners with the list of standard conditions provided with most planned developments. Commissioners reviewed each one individually.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the planned development application with the condition that the first floor on the west side of the building be set back two and half feet the entire length as well as the following standard conditions:

- Developed with plans submitted with the application as revised
- The development would meet LEED certification points from a third party verifier
- Work with PAAC to develop and install public art with approval of the Village Board
- A traffic study done six months post-full occupancy of the building; based on the findings, the developer will be required to install any traffic devices necessary to address negative impacts which can be readily resolved; a bond, letter of credit or other security acceptable to the Village for the study is required.
- Two years after the development's completion, the village will monitor parking and traffic generated and take steps to alleviate if possible
- A bond for landscape materials and installation to ensure landscaping installed and maintained
- Unified window treatments for apartment units
- Post construction development would be prohibited from using semi-trailer trucks
- During construction, a sign must be posted showing how to contact the construction manager
- A communications plan must be filed with the village
- Construction debris must be removed on a regular basis
- When apartment rental begins, two car sharing spaces will be available to the public
- Development must meet the time requirements of Redevelopment Agreement
- Developer must provide a list of building materials for approval
- The developer will communicate with a staff liaison/owner's representative during development

- If the applicant fails to comply, after notice from the Village, the planned development can be revoked

Also:

- The developers will study the color palate and work with the architectural consultant and staff
- The developer will provide safety devices for ingress and egress of parking entrance for pedestrians
- Garage lighting shall be shielded at night
- A parking utilization survey six months from occupancy from residents for staff to evaluate TOD development

Commissioner Halpin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken:

Burton- yes

Halpin – yes

Nordman – yes

Gartland – yes

Sanders – no

Marsey – no (He clarified this was a protest vote and wished the developers well.)

Mann – yes

The motion passed 5-2. The next Plan Commission meeting will be March 3, 2016 to discuss the Findings of Fact and the Maple Avenue vacation.

#### **Other Business**

Mr. Failor said commissioners would have a hearing on Madison Street Zoning changes at the April Plan Commission meeting.

#### **Adjournment**

Commissioner Halpin moved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:52 p.m.

Angela Schell,  
Recording Secretary