

**CITY OF HUDSONVILLE**  
**Planning Commission Minutes**

November 18, 2020

Approved December 16, 2020

**3101 Elmwood Park Drive – 3101 Elmwood – Informal Preliminary PUD Amendment**

Chairman VanDenBerg called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

All commissioners are attending the meeting remotely from the City of Hudsonville, Ottawa County, Michigan.

Present: Altman, Bendert, Northrup, Nyitray, Raterink, Schmuker, Staal, Strikwerda, Steffens, VanDenBerg, Waterman

Absent: none

**PUBLIC COMMENTS (Non agenda items) - none**

1. A motion was made by Raterink, with support by Altman, to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

Yeas 9, Nays 0

**2. 3101 Elmwood Park Drive – 3101 Elmwood – Informal Preliminary PUD Amendment**

A motion was made by Waterman, with support by Altman, for Mayor Northrup to abstain from discussion on the agenda item 3101 Elmwood Park Drive.

Yeas 8, Nays 0, Abstain 1 (Northrup)

Chad Koster with Paramount, Mike Bosgraaf with Bosgraaf Construction, and Mike Corby and Scott Fredricks from Integrated Architecture were present. Jon Male with Exxel Engineering was also present.

The staff report was presented.

This request is for a 156-unit residential project that includes 24 townhouse units along the southwest edge with the rest of the units being primarily in 12-unit, 3-story apartment buildings. The apartment breakdown is 14 studio, 23 1-bedroom, 82 2-bedroom, and 9 3-bedroom units. Phase 1 is estimated to take a year to complete. Phase 2 is estimated to take a year and will start when phase 1 is completed. Additional comments not in report include: Some of the property is zoned PF due to an earlier proposal for athletic fields. The proposed townhomes are located here, where duplexes were previously approved. Hudsonville has an above average owner-occupancy rate. The parking lot design has a softer impact as compared to the parking lot approved for the

retirement building. There appears to be less impervious surface as compared to the previously approved plan. There is a much lower level of building intensity but more landscape buffering as compared to the previously approved plan.

Public comment is as follows:

- Brad Fowler from Mika Meyers the attorney for Elmwood Condominiums. In accordance with the letter provided, the project does not follow the underlying zoning or follow the master plan designation. The density including the lake does not hold up with the definition of lot in the zoning ordinance. The use of apartments is specified in the HDR-B zoning, not within HDR-A which is what this property is master planned. The residents of the current condominiums next to this proposed develop bought into the community with the understanding that they would share common elements with a senior facility not rental units.
- Bill Aukeman, Aukeman Development Company. The developer of Elmwood Condominiums and the proposed senior facility. The frontage on Balsam Drive from the original PUD included where the existing condos are with three access points instead of just one as proposed. Treating this property as a separate parcel comes to advantage of the developer instead of treating it as a single parcel with the condominium complex. Treating the lake as part of the density would be rare as only one other project he has researched has been approved to include a detention pond in their density. Elmwood Lake allows Rush Creek to flow into it and can fluctuate 5 ft making it a detention pond. There has been interest from other developers to create a congregate living facility on this property so it could be developed according to the existing PUD. The number of units from the original PUD is much less for traffic compared to the 156 market rate bedrooms when counting bedrooms instead of units. There were going to be 2 entrances into original PUD and the Planning Commission required that secondary entrance for traffic. But the Commission is allowing only one entrance on 156 units. The HDR-A future land use designation does not talk about apartments, HDR-B is where apartments are called for. To take a high density apartment complex and place it within an existing condominium complex does not make sense. Placing it across the street surrounded by industrial complex and railroad tracks makes most sense. The density calculations currently being used are not correct as they are based off the entire parcel being zoned R-4, some is zoned PF not R-4 so the calculations should reflect that. Plans for condominiums on the current proposed project property were submitted in 2019 for 44 units, there was discussion at that time for a secondary entrance for a smaller amount of units than the proposed units now.
- Mark Gipson 5741 Elm Ave the pathway is used by them daily. The concern is that the trail way is used often and connecting to it can cause concern about residents in the proposed development being on the sex offender registry and being so close to the pathway could cause concern about keeping children using the pathway safe.
- Julie Postmus 5725 Elm Ave states that wide open space is a draw for a community and this project would take that away. Hudsonville Schools are bursting at the seams, what would they do with the greater influx of children? Has there been contact with the schools to be prepared for the sudden influx of the children? She wants to make sure that saying that these are market rate there is no discriminatory actions taking place on who can live in the development.
- Raterink, the original plan of a senior facility on this property is what was hoped for in Hudsonville. It was going to be a nice transition from the condominiums to the facility, it is not the cities fault that the developer is no longer interested. Challenging Bill Aukeman and the other interested buyers, why hasn't this property been developed since the original plan hasn't

gone through? The Commission has a responsibility to make sure the currently proposed project would make sense for this area.

- Steve Butryn 5977 Elmwood Court, the apartment buildings and townhouse buildings footprint will be much larger than the original senior facility footprint. The number of units was proposed at 152 in September and is now up to 156 with 4 more townhomes in one building. Now with 310 parking spaces, all the 2 & 3 bedroom units will have 300 cars alone doing the math with one car per bedroom, not including the studio and 1 bedroom units. He feels that there are not enough parking spaces, and the traffic from the units would also create around 1200 trips a day. 1000 trips a day requires that the development should have public streets not private. Any buffering along Elmwood Condominiums in the proposed complex should extend all the way down to the lake along the boardwalk. Building A is far too close to Elmwood Condominiums to the east. The traffic of the proposed development would be too excessive.
- Virgil Leatherman 6029 Elmwood Lake Drive, what is the specific reference from the ordinance that allows lake property be part of the density of the apartments? There isn't anything in ordinance excluding lakes from the calculation. This is being consistent with how other projects have been calculated.

The following discussion took place with Planning Commissioners:

- What is the difference between workforce and market rate rental units? The difference is the rental rate per month. Workforce is \$625-\$1250 a month. Market Rate is \$1250 or more per month.
- Based on the Ottawa County Housing Need Assessment via Housing Next. What is the number of trips for people to come into Hudsonville to work versus those who live and work within the city? The information is within the study. It breaks out Hudsonville/Jenison as one area, it has the workforce numbers and the breakdown within each industry they work in, which shows a strong demand. It also shows the rental housing within the area is at 99.5% occupancy. Those workforce employees are looking for housing like this proposed development. The employers within the city would support later on with letters showing they want their workers to move to the city.
- Public transportation within the city should be available for people in higher density areas like this development.
- Property value impact from similar developments, Studies have shown that when a development like this has been done right that property values of surrounding single family homes were actually shown to go up. The Ottawa County assessor that the city contracts out to said in an email that in his experience it is rare to see a notable decrease in value as long as the new development is not an extreme use, like a foundry.
- Developing on the land across the street, could that be discussed with the applicant? It is zoned similarly and there is curiosity on what could be developed on that land. That is not being looked at right now. The current proposed property is development ready, the property across the street has 100% poor soils versus the soil foundations of the buildings on the proposed land being complete already, which creates a large draw. At one point there was a development with apartments and condos approved on the property across the street but it never went forward.
- The walking path system and easement extension will be a benefit to those in the city that use the path as well as making the connection for the development better along with the natural setting.

- How does the use along the lake effect the water quality? Will need to look into this.
- When can we expect the final traffic study findings, with the left turn lane? It is done, they are waiting to meet with the city engineer. So it will be available at the next meeting.
- With management details, recommend participating in the crime management program, which puts an addendum on the lease to where if there are legal issues in any matter then that would result in eviction. This has worked to alleviate issues in other complexes like this according to the Ottawa County Sheriff, Jeff Steigenga.
- Thoughts on the northern access along Elmwood Drive. The fire department would like to keep that open but if it is closed other access would need to be provided. The developer has no preference so open to city, fire, and existing condominium complex's thoughts.
- Why would the dog park be kept private? Applicant would consider making it public but what about parking, maintenance, and liability?
- Would the pickleball courts be policed to be kept resident only or would they be allowed for other city residents. Developer happy to have conversation to open these to condominium owners.
- Would like to see sidewalk along the townhouse buildings. The sidewalks within the property have been boosted, concern with it along townhouses is the amount of driveways.
- The drive connection from the CBD-2 lot along Balsam Drive why does that need to be kept? No preference, applicant is happy to remove it if needed.
- Density calculation issue even if the lake is excluded the applicant still has 19 acres, 10 units are allowed per acre and with the units in the plan they are at 8.2 per acre even without the lake.
- Difference between current zoning and master plan zoning, R-4 and HDR-A? Taking into account the current zoning versus the master plan designation for analyzing the proposed plan. The part of the property that is zoned PF now has an HDR-A master plan future land use designation. When the master plan was done the senior facility development was still on the table so the language in the master plan was somewhat tailored to the original PUD. Because this land is currently R-4 the city legally has to look at plans that are allowed in that zone, which includes this proposed project. The master plan is intended as a guide for what to allow that is different from the current zoning.
- The main office being moved toward the middle makes more sense to keep traffic away from the condos. The sidewalks in front of the townhomes would be nice to see.
- Traffic on Balsam Drive, as new developments come in the land across the street may look more desirable. How much traffic can Balsam Drive handle? Specifically at Oak and Balsam. The traffic study shows volumes at around 12,000, there is a higher volume southbound in the mornings at 500 vehicles. In the evenings you have 600 cars going north. How much traffic will this development generate, how many left turns into the complex would take place?
- Balsam Drive has been talked about to enact a road diet, taking it from 4 lanes to 2 with a left turn lane.

A motion was made by Waterman, with support by Bendert, to recommend the following Statement of Findings and Recommendations:

This development is an amendment to an existing PUD that is unable to be developed in its approved form due to other retirement facilities taking care of the need in the Hudsonville area.

Most of the proposed development meets zoning requirements and the portion that does not meet zoning is consistent with the underlying Imagine Hudsonville 2030 Master Plan future land use designation of High Density Residential A as is consistent with the previously approved PUD for this property. The amendment of adding townhomes, 1, 2, 3 bedroom apartments and studio apartments supports an action of the city's strategic plan for housing diversity. This project also has the benefit of eliminating the 5 deviations from the original PUD, helping to bring this overall project more in line with the underlying Master Plan.

Supplementary information to the traffic study was requested to review any potential traffic circulation needs to be provided before any final review. Housing Next completed a study that shows a high priority need for affordable workforce rental housing and a moderate priority need for market-rate housing which are both provided in this development. No other studies are recommended.

The deviation for 126.6' of frontage on a public road is recommended due to this being an amendment to an existing PUD. It would be an inefficient and costly use of land to either require public roads in the development which will take up a lot more land, or to purchase a part of the adjacent commercial property along Balsam Drive to meet the frontage requirements. Neither option has any significant benefit. Either option would go against the purpose of a PUD, which is "to promote the efficient use of land to facilitate a more economic arrangement of buildings, circulation systems, land use and utilities."

The Planning Commission recommends the following conditions:

1. The second parcel where the townhomes are located will need to be combined so there is one parcel for this development. The master deed for the original retirement building will need to be dissolved to combine the two lots that make up the development property.
2. An easement will be required for the public pathway between Balsam Drive and the existing Elmwood Trail.
3. Provide more detail on utility design for phase 1.
4. Utility easements will be required to enable access to the water infrastructure.
5. Limit the driveway connection to Elmwood Lake Drive except for emergency access as a protection for the Elmwood Condominium development.

If the applicant agrees, a public hearing will be scheduled for the Preliminary PUD Amendment on December 16, 2020.

Yeas 8, Nays 0, Abstain 1 (Northrup)

### **3. 2020 Planning Conference discussion**

- Bob Gibbs spoke with Patrick and Dan about our downtown. Said to watch the mix of uses downtown such as the potential of too many restaurants. Parking design should be considered.
- Promoting winter cities and enhancements. Do not be afraid of winter, promote people going outside.

- The DDA has purchased two igloos and the city is working on a fireplace for Harvey Street as well.
- Outdoor activity list to give residents ideas.
- Grant applied for a wind wall at the splash pad, the two igloos, and a fireplace.
- May make the triangle property on Prospect Street into a snow park.

#### 4. **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Waterman, with support by Altman, to adjourn at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sarah Steffens  
Planning / Zoning Assistant