

CITY OF HUDSONVILLE
Planning Commission Minutes

November 17, 2021

Approved December 15, 2021

5234 36th Avenue – White Flame – Special Use Permit and Site Plan Amendment
3434 & 3440 Chicago Drive – Midwest Construction Group – Informal Special Use Permit & Preliminary PUD

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

Present: Altman, Bendert, Brandsen, Northrup, Schmuker, Staal, VanDenBerg, Waterman

Absent: None

Staff Present: Steffens, Strikwerda

PUBLIC COMMENTS (Non agenda items) – None

1. A motion was made by Northrup, with support by Bendert, to approve the minutes of the October 20th, 2021 Planning Commission meeting.

Yeas 8, Nays 0

2. 5234 36th Avenue – White Flame – Special Use Permit and Site Plan Amendment

Chairman VanDenBerg opened the public hearing.

Public Comment was as follows:

- None

Bill White of White Flame presented the request.

The staff report was presented.

White Flame has submitted a request for an Outdoor Restaurant Seating Area. The seating area is 16' x 28' and will be constructed along the south side of the building. It will replace a landscape island and one parking space. Otherwise, there are no other site plan changes. An Outdoor Restaurant Seating Area is permitted-by-right along the front of the building. 36th Avenue is their front.

Being in a form-based district, buildings are intended to be up to the street, making this a nonconforming building. Expansions are allowed to occur on nonconforming buildings, especially when it is this minor.

The following discussion took place with Planning Commissioners:

- **Parking.**
 - Eliminating the east parallel spot on the site is to help with traffic getting out of the parking lot. It will be a loss of one parking spot on the site once the deck is complete.
 - Why would some of the spots need to be angled? The spots are angled based on the way the one-way flow of traffic. The Allen Street entrance is to allow customers to pull into the straight spaces. Also, the delivery trucks for the building use that entrance.
 - Customers walking across to and from Talsma Furniture may not be visible in the darkness of the evening. There are dub downs for a crossing at Allen Street. The sidewalk on the west side of Allen dead ends. This could be something the safety committee would look into with striping.
 - Looking into possibility of a spot facing north-south where the west parallel spot is. Then a parallel spot still towards the east.
- **ADA Ramp.**
 - The gap from the ADA ramp to the building is already there for landscaping and there are angled metal awnings on the building that protrude into that space as well.
 - There is an accessible parking space next to the ramp at the entrance of the building.
- Would there be music on the deck? No.
- The deck would not be a four-season type of space just for good weather.
- Clear vision area. Double check that this proposed project does not interfere with the clear vision area.

Chairman VanDenBerg closed the public hearing.

A motion was made by Northrup, with support by Altman, to approve an Outdoor Restaurant Seating Area in the side yard for 5234 36th Avenue. This approval is based on the finding that the standards for a Special Use Permit in accordance with Section 17.06 and Site Plan Amendment in accordance with Section 18.11 of the City of Hudsonville Downtown Zoning Ordinance have been affirmatively met with the following condition:

1. Remove the east parallel parking space.
2. Review for an additional parking space.

Yeas 8, Nays 0

3. 3434 & 3440 Chicago Drive – Midwest Construction Group – Informal Special Use Permit & Preliminary PUD

Jack Barr of Nederveld Inc presented the request. Scott Geerlings of Midwest Construction was also present.

The staff report was presented.

This request is to create a PUD next to the Hudson Center by the same group that constructed the Hudson Center. It is proposed as a mixed-use multi-story building with commercial on the ground level and residential for the upper stories. This site has great significance in that it will be the first redevelopment project adjacent to the future Village Green. It will also continue to frame Harvey Street between the Village Green and the Hudson Center.

The next step after this meeting is to have a public hearing for a Special Use Permit and the Preliminary PUD. The purpose of the Special Use Permit application is to determine if this development should be done as a PUD.

The following discussion took place with Planning Commissioners:

- Plaza Avenue.
 - This building is important for the design of Plaza Avenue around the future Village Green.
 - Putting an access door on the Plaza Avenue side of the building will engage that side of the building since it will be located on the future Village Green.
 - Hydronic piping would be installed along Plaza Avenue for snow melt during the construction of this project.
 - The fact that the building doesn't run along Plaza Avenue could be somewhat of a disadvantage with the Village Green being across from Plaza Avenue.
 - Getting a shop entrance on Plaza Avenue would be critical to activation of the street and engage cars off of Chicago Drive.
 - Plaza Avenue isn't as pedestrian focused as the Harvey Street Woonerf so the main street for this building is Harvey Street.
- Parking.
 - Get parking everywhere this site will allow. Adjusting curbing along the Service Drive will allow for 4 more angled spaces.
 - Working with the lot lines at the south would be great to push the building forward.
 - The fence line on the parking lot. It was requested to do a three-foot opening in the northern fence line to have a pedestrian crossing so there is access to the building from the service drive. It was also recommended to add it along the Plaza Avenue parking area.
 - The fence is a decorative element to screen bumpers and hubcaps. It gives a buffer from the parking lot and would work along with landscaping.
 - Concerned with the safety of the first few spots along the Service Drive, and with cars coming off of Chicago Drive? When Village Green is constructed Plaza Avenue, will be a one-way exit only onto Chicago Drive so this will not be an issue in the future.
 - Is there an issue with the lane for the Hudson Center drive-thru to the east queuing and then that area being the only access into the parking lot behind the building? The drive-thru does not queue that far so it should not be a factor.

- 45-degree parking on Plaza Avenue. Did we explore that type of parking? Robert Gibbs felt that parallel parking was a more welcoming concept than angled. This would help narrow up the road and make it more appealing for pedestrians crossing the street.
- Architecture/Design.
 - The building is leaning more toward the look for the downtown that we have been working toward. Robert Gibbs said to choose one building style for the downtown to make it all look cohesive. The mid-century look is what the city is leaning toward, like Terra Square.
 - Balconies would be a great addition to the architecture of the building. They can encroach into the ROW of Harvey. Strategically locating the balconies would be great to change up the elevation of the building as a whole. Even if it is on one section.
 - The issue with balconies is that they can start to become storage. If you do balconies, it would be more useable to do one large community balcony on one front of the different architectural faces.
 - Juliette balconies could be a good compromise between none at all or larger individual ones.
 - The fourth floor. That would be nice for creating differing roof lines but also to hold more apartments. It would be great to see the report of Robert Gibbs for parking.
 - Between the concrete pads of Harvey Street and the doors of the building what is going in there? It would be more concrete to create flow between Harvey Street and the building.
 - Is the length of this building the same as the Hudson Center? The s.f. of 10,080 is slightly larger than the Hudson Center.
 - The buildings are facing Harvey Street to shield the pedestrians from Chicago Drive and make Harvey Street and more of the main street/downtown core rather than Chicago Drive. Liner buildings were discussed with Robert Gibbs but there were cost concerns so this layout seemed to be the best.
- Approval Process.
 - The approval of the PUD is one process. The purchasing of the property is being worked on with the City, DDA and the MEDC. There may be a TIF process, grants, etc. This (PUD) is one part of the process.
 - S & S auto's property is under a conditional purchase agreement.
 - Working with the MEDC is what will take time for this project to be completed. The community revitalization grant is through them.
 - The DDA had a letter of understanding with the developer. This is an intent to enter a purchasing agreement for that property. It would be good to get that updated and re-iterate the process.
- Bus Stop.
 - It is not planned around Village Green. Locations would be at Terra Square going eastbound and by School Ave going westbound.

- Lighting.
 - That element would be discussed more in future meetings.
- Utilities.
 - Fire hydrants will be a detail in the future drawings.
 - Utilities for the building were discussed, the plan shows them recessed into the wall to keep pedestrian access open.
 - Trash services would be used in combination with the Hudson Center.
 - Snow removal has not been discussed in length yet.
- Landscape elements.
 - Greenery was a suggestion from Robert Gibbs. Flower boxes would be a good addition, planters higher up on the buildings that could even have silk plants maintenance wise. There are the DDA planter boxes that could be located in front of the building and the hanging baskets off of street lights.
 - Would be better to put the trees at the connection points of the buildings different facades so they won't block windows or signage.
 - The bump out on Service Drive. Could that have landscaping within it? That would be consistent with the median between the Service Drive and Chicago Drive.
- Charge points (EV charging stations).
 - There has been discussion about it but then those spots are only good for charging those cars. Parking is such a scarcity that it makes more sense to put them where there is an influx of spaces in public areas or city parking lots. There are two different types of charging stations right now. Even if they just had electrical access.

A motion was made by Schmuker, with support by Bendert, to approve the Statement of Findings and Recommendations for 3434 & 3440 Chicago Drive which promotes density done well. Allowing this development will enable a mixed-use multi-story, pedestrian friendly development along the Harvey Street woonerf, adjacent to the future Village Green. No additional studies are needed. A public hearing will be scheduled to take place on December 15, 2021. This is for 3434 & 3440 Chicago Drive.

This plan meets the regulations as set forth with proposed deviations as presented along with the following recommended conditions:

1. Straighten the Service Drive landscape island as much as possible while retaining the additional angle parking spaces.
2. Shift parking lot fence to the private side of the lot line and wrap it around the Plaza Avenue side of the parking lot.
3. Adjust landscape plan. Trees will be provided in tree grates. Concrete will replace the landscape beds around the building.
4. Provide 5' along the north side of the building for pedestrian access.
5. Provide a 3' wide pedestrian connection through the middle of the parking lot from the Service Drive to the building.

6. Shift the parking spaces 3' east to provide more turnaround area between the handicap spaces.

Yeas 8, Nays 0

4. Discussion

- There is interest in development of a vacant parcel between New Holland Street and Barry Street along future Highland Drive. It is a costly property to develop.

5. Adjournment

A motion was made by Northrup, with support by Altman, to adjourn at 8:23 pm.

Yeas 8, Nays 0

Respectfully Submitted,
Sarah Steffens
Planning / Zoning Assistant