



PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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**WESTLAKE PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 2, 2015**

Present: Chairman Daniel Meehan, Scott Fatzinger, Phil DiCarlo, Mark Getsay, Brad Lamb

Also Present: Planning Director Jim Bedell, Assistant Planning Director Will Krause, Law Director John Wheeler, Clerk of Commissions Nicolette Sackman

Discussion of agenda items and fact finding was conducted at 7:00 p.m. The regular meeting was called to order at 7:44 p.m. by Chairman Dan Meehan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Fatzinger moved, seconded by Mr. Lamb to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 12, 2015.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Fatzinger, Meehan, Getsay, DiCarlo

Abstain: Lamb

Nays: None, motion passed

COUNCIL REPORT

Councilman Getsay reported on council items.

SELECTED CORRESPONDENCE

None

OLD BUSINESS

Crocker Park Phase III Landscape and Hardscape Plan, within Crocker Park, rep. Bialosky and Partners, Ward 5, tabled 1/12/15

Mr. Brian Meng explained the proposal is for two items – one, site improvements for an at-grade temporary parking lot in the locations of the future FS building, and two, a revision to the previously approved retention wall at Vine Street. He reviewed the proposal as presented at the last meeting. Changes to the parking lot include the planting of four additional trees and reviewed renderings showing the proposal. At Vine Street the previous 2' to 3' retention wall will be replaced with a 4' wood fence that is horizontal in design, double lapped, with posts spaced at 8' and there will be no light trespass through the fence. The previously proposed ornamental grasses along the south side of the garage have been replaced with Viburnum. Mr. Meng reviewed the planting plans noting additional plants and trees have been added. A landscape bed with plants, trees and a 42' long 6' tall wall have been added at the terminus of American Avenue at Vine St.

Mr. Bedell reviewed his staff memo explaining the fence is made of 1" x 6" boards that are double lapped so they are actually 2" x 6" at a height of 4'. The replacement of the ornamental grasses with the Viburnum will provide better screening as the Viburnum do not need to be cut back to the ground like ornamental grasses do. The additional landscape bed at American Ave. and Vine St. is a nice focal point. Mr. Krause reviewed his tree preservation memo noting he did an on-site analysis and when the K Block plans come in it is anticipated that a final tree preservation plan will be submitted.

The following residents were present: Mr. Angelo Mango, 2367 Georgia Dr.; Mr. Robert Boas, 2341 Georgia Dr.; and Mr. Jeff Wang, 2359 Georgia Dr. Concerns and comments expressed were: this is a very big project that has impacted the residents of Savannah Estates; the buildings are very large and close; drop in property values; the desire for more screening; dissatisfaction that the masonry wall is being replaced with a fence; previously Vine St. was 3' below grade; concerns the proposed fence will not be maintained; could a 6' tall fence be installed rather than a 4' tall fence; a masonry wall costs more than a fence so they should be able to make the fence taller; safety concerns; and lack of screening as the construction is very visible.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Bialosky was not in favor of a 6' tall fence and noted that the 4' proposed fence is taller than the previous 2' to 3' retaining wall. The retaining wall would not have been very visible to the residents of Savannah Estates as it was a retaining wall that would hold earth so only a small portion would be visible above the grade. The proposed fence will offer more screening as it will be 4' tall above grade and offer 4' of screening. He explained this is part of the public infrastructure funds and they are being cautious with the money spent as it will need council approval. Further he explained that Vine St. will be more of a service drive and not heavily used by vehicles. He did offer to make the fence 5' tall but felt 6' was not a good idea as there are other safety concerns. It was noted that the original approved retaining wall was only going to be 2' to 3' tall so what is being proposed is taller. Discussion ensued if the fence could be 6' tall or 5' with final determination that a 5' tall fence be approved.

The planning commission made the following findings of fact:

1. The proposal amends the Phase III Landscape and Hardscape plans regarding replacing the masonry retaining wall with a wood fence and adding a temporary parking lot.
2. While the Sea Green Junipers provide a degree of screening for the temporary parking lot, the south façade of the F Garage is likely to remain visible from Crocker Road and American Avenue until the "FS" Building is constructed. Views to it will improve over time as the trees along Crocker Road and American Avenue mature.
3. Condition #22 of the approved revised Preliminary Development plan requires that "...the roads and drives immediately adjacent to off-site residential uses be screened to reduce visibility, noise and light intrusion with "superior buffering and landscaping", mounding, walls, fences or other methods within the buffer area."
4. The approved masonry wall was to be a retaining wall cut into the grade along Vine Street. It blocked headlights from the road and parking garages but did not block views to the parking garages from the adjacent residential area. The proposed fence will do both.

5. Superior buffering in accordance with the revised Preliminary Development Plan or, in lieu of a masonry wall, is provided by the additional landscaping adjacent to the wood fence that increases opacity and may offer a slight reduction to sound to neighboring residential properties, as well as the design of the fence that does not include gaps in the wood. Also, the applicant is providing a masonry wall at the terminus of American Avenue and Vine Street to provide a more complete terminus to this view as recommended.

Motion: Mr. Fatzinger moved and Mr. Lamb second to recommend approval of the Crocker Park Phase III Landscape and Hardscape Plan with the following conditions:

1. Conditions in Part III of the staff report are addressed.
2. An updated landscape plan that reflects the changes shown on page 2 of the staff report, including details of the proposed masonry wall and substitution of Heavy Metal Switch Grass to Chicago Lustre Viburnum shall be provided for administrative approval.
3. Condition to add four 4" caliper American Hop Hornbeams trees between the sidewalk and the temporary parking lot at American Avenue and Crocker Road.
4. Condition that the spacing for the fence posts is 8' on center or less.
5. Condition that the horizontal treated popular wood fence be 5' in height and be well maintained and in good repair at all times, both the existing fence and the proposed fence.
6. Condition that multi-stem River Birch be planted in the landscape bed in front of the masonry wall.
7. The approval is subject to approval of the final plans by the Building and Engineering Departments in compliance with the code and the ordinances of the City of Westlake; and, in the development process, should there be any changes necessitated by engineering requirements that visually alter the appearance of the development approved by the Planning Commission, the plan shall be re-submitted to the Planning Commission.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:


Yeas: Fatzinger, Meehan, Getsay, DiCarlo; Lamb

Nays: None, motion passed

NEW BUSINESS

Westlake Plastic Surgery and Medical Spa Revised Sign Program & Sign Criteria Waiver, 226 Crocker Rd., PP# 211-25-004, rep. R. Levitz, WARD 5

Mr. Richard Levitz explained this is a revision to a previously approved plan. The applicant would like to not install an approved flag and instead install a blade sign on the first floor near the building entrance so his clients can find his office. This would require a modification from the sign criteria.

 Mr. Krause reviewed is staff memo explaining this location makes sense but in the future it would not be desirable to see these types of signs for every tenant at every entrance and they should be reviewed on a case by case basis.

The planning commission made the following findings of fact:

1. This tenant is a minor office tenant.

2. The proposal complies with the sign criteria in terms of sign area and reduces the amount of sign area requested by 20.03 sq. ft. in comparison to the previously approved sign plan.
3. Note #7 on Section 11.4 requires secondary signage to be placed on the actual frontage of an individual minor office tenant unless otherwise approved by Planning Commission.
4. Section 11.5 allows projecting blade signs for major office tenants.
5. The applicant is requesting to place a projecting blade sign in the vicinity of an alley entrance on the first floor of the building directly below their tenant windows.

Motion: Mr. Fatzinger moved and Mr. Lamb second to approve the Westlake Plastic Surgery and Medical Spa Revised Sign Program with:

1. A waiver from the sign criteria to allow one projecting blade sign for this minor office tenant and to place it on a wall which is not immediately adjacent to their tenant space.
2. That these type of signs are looked at on a case by case basis.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Fatzinger, Meehan, Getsay, DiCarlo; Lamb

Nays: None, motion passed

**The Walking Company, Storefront and Sign Plan, 252
Crocker Park Blvd., PP# 211-25-004, rep., R. Levitz,
WARD 5**

Mr. Richard Levitz reviewed the sign plan and storefront explaining the design is a simple yet traditional and modern style. As proposed it complies with the sign criteria and design guidelines. Mr. Krause reviewed his staff memo.

Storefront

The planning commission made the following findings of fact:

1. The proposal complies with the design guidelines.

Motion: Mr. Fatzinger moved and Mr. Lamb second to recommend approval of the Walking Company storefront.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Fatzinger, Meehan, Getsay, DiCarlo; Lamb

Nays: None, motion passed

Sign Plan

The planning commission made the following findings of fact:

1. The proposal complies with the sign criteria.
2. The criteria states that raceways connecting letters are permitted with Planning Commission approval as long as they are skillfully designed.

Motion: Mr. Fatzinger moved and Mr. Lamb second to recommend approval of the Walking Company sign plan with the condition that the letters are a matte finish.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Fatzinger, Meehan, Getsay, DiCarlo; Lamb

Nays: None, motion passed

**AT&T Equipment Cabinet Development Plan, 1800
Crocker Rd. PP#211-19-013, rep. J. Janis, WARD 5**

Motion: Mr. Fatzinger moved and Mr. Lamb second to table the AT&T Equipment Cabinet Development Plan (*applicant or agent not present at meeting*)

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Fatzinger, Meehan, Getsay, DiCarlo; Lamb

Nays: None, motion passed

**Ordinance 2015-3, Conditional Use Permit, 28045 Ranney
Parkway, health education and body conditioning, WARD
3 - ref. by council 1/6/15**

Mr. Jeff Makowski Jr., sworn in by Mr. Wheeler, explained he has a nutrition and fitness business that he would like to locate in the city. He reviewed the functions of his business which revolve around nutrition and fitness coaching. Most of the classes will be offered in the evening after 5:00 pm when other tenants are not there and there may be some Saturday morning classes. During the day, coaches will use the facility and it is anticipated they will use about three to eight parking spaces. In the evening they will use fewer than 18 parking spaces. They outgrew their current space in Independence and wish to relocate to Westlake and have signed a three year lease. Mr. Bedell reviewed his staff memo.

The planning commission made the following findings of fact:

1. The applicant has outgrown their existing facility and requires space to provide personal coaching and a variety of fitness classes for their clients.
2. A modification is required to reduce the total number of required parking spaces.
3. The Performance Standards in 1220.06 are met.
4. The standards for evaluating conditional use permits in 1227.03 are met with a condition regarding the maximum number of parking spaces that is available for this space.

Motion: Mr. Fatzinger moved and Mr. Lamb second to recommend approval Ordinance 2015-3 with the following conditions:

1. A modification is granted to reduce the total number of required parking spaces by 6.
2. Not more than 18 parking spaces shall be utilized during regular business hours.
3. The approval is subject to approval of the final plans by the Building and Engineering Departments in compliance with the code and the ordinances of the City of Westlake; and, in the development process, should there be any changes necessitated by engineering requirements that visually alter the appearance of the development approved by the Planning Commission, the plan shall be re-submitted to the Planning Commission.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Fatzinger, Meehan, Getsay, DiCarlo; Lamb

Nays: None, motion passed

**Westhampton revisions to Phase II A & B, within Crocker
Park, PP#211-25-001, rep. B. Kuck, WARD 5**

Mr. Brian Kuck explained that Mr. Peter Rubin was agreeable to the amendments suggested in the staff memo other than the faux chimney for unit 35. He explained the chimneys are not functioning chimneys and they would like to do away with them as they can be a maintenance issue. He reviewed the site for the revisions and noted that last year over 23 units were sold and they anticipate as many this year. So far 85 of the units have been built.

Mr. Bedell reviewed his staff memo and reviewed the site plans and revisions. Revisions included removal of the faux chimneys; increase the number of units by two to 129; change the side elevation façade for the Wickford Ct. Soho Lofts; remove the iron railings on the front stoop entrances and replace them with wall features; increasing the depth of the Soho Lofts by 2' by shortening the driveways from 23' to 21'; revised the landscape plans; remove sidewalks and green space to add guest parking and concrete pads for trash receptacles.

Discussion ensued if a dormer can be added to unit 35 to break up the roof line since the chimney is being removed. Mr. Kuck advised that can be done and they will design something for administrative approval. The commission reviewed the changes to the sidewalks and landscape lawn. Regarding the reduction of the driveways for the Soho Lofts from 23' to 21' it was discussed if there would be room to park in the driveway and walk around the front of the vehicle to access the unit without the vehicle sticking out into the street. Mr. Kuck explained the face of the garage is setback 2' to 3' into the unit to accommodate vehicles and room to walk around them. He also noted that at-grade patios will be used rather than walk out basements.

The planning commission made the following findings of fact:

1. The proposal amends the approved Landscape and Development Plan for Phase II A & B of Westhampton.
2. The faux masonry chimneys were constructed on the existing Manor Home buildings and break up the expansive roof and add to the high-end, custom look of the buildings.
3. The use of masonry walls to replace the iron rails is appropriate for the entrances and will eliminate an issue the applicant has had with salt related corrosion.
4. No changes are proposed to the exterior materials that were previously approved, except where noted.
5. While some caliper inches are less than 3", the average total is greater than 3".
6. The reduction of the size of the lawn areas is necessary to provide additional guest parking. Sidewalks and landscaping have been provided there to create a park-like design. A bump-out at the northern parking area would be beneficial to the development as outlined in the staff report.

Motion: Mr. Fatzinger moved and Mr. Lamb second to recommend approval of the Westhampton revisions to Phase II A & B with the following conditions:

1. Add a dormer for unit 35 with the exact location and design to be administratively approved.
2. A faux masonry chimney will be removed from unit 35 and 39.
3. The concrete pads will only be used by residents on trash pick-up days.
4. The average total caliper inches for trees are not less than 3".
5. Sidewalks adjacent to parking spaces are to maintain a minimum 5' in width and shall be adjusted to allow for the overhang of vehicles.

6. A bump-out shall be provided to divide the northernmost parking area into two parts.
7. Signage shall be provided to indicate that the parking areas are for guest parking and not for a long-term basis.
8. Condition that at-grade patios are to be done in lieu of walk out basements.
9. Conditions in Part III of the staff report are addressed.
10. The approval is subject to approval of the final plans by the Building and Engineering Departments in compliance with the code and the ordinances of the City of Westlake; and, in the development process, should there be any changes necessitated by engineering requirements that visually alter the appearance of the development approved by the Planning Commission, the plan shall be re-submitted to the Planning Commission.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Fatzinger, Meehan, Getsay, DiCarlo; Lamb

Nays: None, motion passed

Crocker Park KSE-II revisions to approved development plans for phasing, Union St., rep. B. Meng, WARD 5

Mr. Meng explained previously the KSE II building was approved with three tenants and 1,890 sq. ft. of retail flex space. The proposal is to allow the construction of the tenant space that is at the northeast corner of the building (other two spaces are Yard House and Texas de Brazil) to be done as a future phase of construction in the future once a tenant has been signed so they can better determine the interior layout. There will be a temporary EFIS façade that will be scored and colored along the vacant walls to make it aesthetically pleasing. The area of the vacant tenant space will be either lawn area or there will be a fence with a graphic on it to help create the presence of the pedestrian alley.

Mr. Bedell reviewed his staff memo noting there will be a building pad in the location of the future tenant space which will be seeded on a temporary basis until the space is constructed. The scored and colored EFIS walls are an improvement over what was previously submitted (plans received at the meeting showing revisions). Mr. Bedell liked the idea of a temporary patio or lawn in this area until it is developed. He noted if a fence with a graphic were to be installed that it would need to be approved by the planning commission as the graphic could be art or signage pending what is proposed. Chairman Meehan noted that the large format advertising sign criteria for this area needs to be updated with the current configuration of approved building footprints for review and approval by the planning commission.

The planning commission made the following findings of fact:

1. The approval permits the KSE-II building to be constructed in two phases.
2. The first phase includes the Yard House and Texas de Brazil to be constructed in accordance with the approved design with EIFS cladding material at the temporary exterior walls that will abut the future retail/restaurant space.
3. The second phase of construction includes the future retail/restaurant space that will be submitted for approval at a future meeting.
4. Planning Commission approval is required, if scrim is used to temporarily outline the building pad, create an edge to the pedestrian alley and screen views to the EIFS.

5. Treatment of the building pad is unknown but ideally should be seeded and maintained as lawn until the future retail/restaurant is developed and not used for outdoor storage.
6. Large format advertising (LFA) sign criteria for this area needs to be updated to better reflect the current configuration of approved building footprints and to include additional architectural screening of the back of LFAs where they are visible from adjacent roads. This will be submitted at a future meeting.

Motion: Mr. Fatzinger moved and Mr. Lamb second to recommend approval of the phasing for the KSE-II building as presented with the scoring with the condition:

1. That any graphics are to be approved at a future meeting.
2. That the large format advertising sign criteria for this area be updated with the current configuration of approved building footprints for review and approval by the planning commission.

ROLL CALL ON APPROVAL:

Yeas: Fatzinger, Meehan, Getsay, DiCarlo; Lamb

Nays: None, motion passed

MISCELLANEOUS

Draft code amendment suggestions to various sections of the Westlake Zoning Code

This was not discussed

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 2, 2015 in the Westlake City Hall Council Chambers.

Chairman Dan Meehan

Nicolette Sackman, MMC

Nicolette Sackman, MMC
Clerk of Commissions

Approved: March 2, 2015