

PLANNING COMMISSION
OCTOBER 29TH, 2007 7:00 PM

PRESENT:

RICK CUTIA, CHAIRMAN
KAREN STEPANOVICH, SECRETARY
GEORGE SMITH
PETE ZAPHYR
JEFF ANZOVINO
JOHN MUNSCH
DEBBIE TYMOCZKO
LARRY MORRIS

ABSENT:

TIM MARCUA, VICE CHAIRMAN

ALSO PRESENT: LOU DEROSE, SOLICITOR AND BARBARA J. CIAMPINI,
PLANNING DIRECTOR

- 1.) SITE PLAN- LAND DEVELOPMENT-13 WESTMINSTER AVE.-BMO
DEVELOPMENT INC.

Rick Cutia: I'd like to acknowledge the presence of Councilman Wayne Johnson. Did everyone have a chance to read the September 24th, 2007 minutes? Are there any additions or corrections?

Karen Stepanovich: Yes, A borer is a bug it's stated in there it's a fungus. It's an emerald ash borer, it's a bug.

Barbara Ciampini: Okay and I assume that is in your commentary?

Karen Stepanovich: Yes.

Rick Cutia: With the corrections being made is there a motion to accept the minutes?

Karen Stepanovich: I make a motion to accept the minutes

John Munsch: I second the motion.

All were in favor.

**ITEM #1 SITE PLAN LAND DEVELOPMENT-13 WESTMINSTER AVE.-
BMO DEVELOPMENT INC.**

Rick Cutia: Our first item on the agenda tonight is for BMO Development Inc. at 13 Westminster Ave.

Robert Braun: I am part owner of BMO Development Inc.

Rick Cutia: Can you give us a description of what your project is going to entail?

Robert Braun: I have a friend who had the lot and me being a contractor I wanted to put an apartment building in with two other guys that are with me and that is Bill McKeever with Senate Engineering and George Orback he is a CPA. I am a contractor and the three of us wanted to go ahead and venture into building apartments.

Rick Cutia: Can you briefly describe what the building is going to be used for.

Robert Braun: We wanted to do apartments but it's going to mainly be student housing that is what we would like to get into. I have three kids in college and everything they've lived in is just run down and terrible and we figured we would like to go ahead and try to provide some nice new housing and if this works out we would like to continue on looking for other properties. I am not into buying old houses and remodeling them I would rather take them down and do new construction myself.

Barbara Ciampini: Robert, for the record how do you spell your last name?

Robert Braun: Braun.

Rick Cutia: Looking at the front rear elevations on the plans that you supplied, do you have any description on what the finish materials are going to be?

Robert Braun: We will have vinyl siding. It's not shown on the plan but on the second floor underneath the windows we want to turn it to a vertical siding to give it a different look and fancy up the porch some. The back will be a split face block instead of just regular concrete block.

Karen Stepanovich: How many people do you plan on living in here?

Robert Braun: Well, we have two units upstairs which are three bedrooms.

Karen Stepanovich: Well, with student housing your not going to have 3 to a bedroom?

Robert Braun: No, it's all based on 8 occupants.

Karen Stepanovich: You only have 7 parking spaces.

Robert Braun: We are going to rent one from the City.

Barbara Ciampini: They can do that, this whole lot to the rear, I just might add to Roberts commentary, Rick lives on Westminster Ave. and there hasn't been new construction there for years so I think it's kind of neat that someone designed this new construction to fit into the way the houses sit on the lots along Westminster. They've tried to touch on the architecture, too and I think that's all kind of cool. The fact that they can add 7 parking spaces in the back is good. There isn't a problem with on street parking. We talked about that when you originally came in. All those things are a positive note for this project.

Robert Braun: We also looked at the house next door which is for sale and like I said our offer is to buy it and take it down but I don't think they would want to accept what we offered because I don't think that house could be fixed up myself.

Barbara Ciampini: That particular block of Westminster as you just mentioned, it needs help. As far as the actual student housing I know we talked about it and we got to the point now were we are really enforcing that so if there is a student home within 500 feet of that you won't be eligible. I don't think there is one on Westminster Ave. It probably will be okay but you might want to get that use registered as soon as possible.

Robert Braun: We didn't know at what point to do that.

Barbara Ciampini: You have to have students ultimately but you can start the registration process.

Robert Braun: It wouldn't limit it to two students would it?

Barbara Ciampini: The number that you can have is actually 5, you can have two people who aren't students or however you want to work it.

Robert Braun: In one apartment you can have five?

Barbara Ciampini: We will read through the ordinance together it reads one unit of one building but since you are zoned C-2, there is an apartment down on Pittsburgh St. that has more than one student and it's zoned commercial. We can play with that. You are providing off street parking and that is a big impact on the neighborhood.

Robert Braun: That was a problem for us because the parking lot is actually bigger than the building. If you go down there right now you can see there are 7 cars parked in the lot right now.

Pete Zaphyr: I have a question in regards to the safety of the residents. The fire escape situation, alarms?

Robert Braun: We would have it to code as far as the smoke detectors and in the hallways and stuff like that. We have no room for an outside fire escape and I don't know if the ordinance calls for one.

Barbara Ciampini: It's only 2 stories so probably not. You will have to have a hard wire system.

Robert Braun: Yes. All the windows are (egress?)

Barbara Ciampini: That is something Pete that he will have to work out with Les Harvey.

Pete Zaphyr: I guess, an architect; you are using your own plans?

Robert Braun: Yes.

Barbara Ciampini: One of the partners is an Engineer.

Pete Zaphyr: I just want to make sure it's going to be safe for the residents.

Rick Cutia: From this architecture rendering it seems to be a hip roof?

Robert Braun: Correct.

Rick Cutia: That is a lot more attractive.

Barbara Ciampini: I believe that they got all of their approvals and as they were coming in we were getting them and everything appears to be in place.

Rick Cutia: Utilities?

Barbara Ciampini: Yes.

Rick Cutia: Does anybody else have any concerns or questions about the site plan or the architectural plan.

Karen Stepanovich: How much planting space is in the front? You have that you are going to put two upright Japanese Yew.

Robert Braun: Well the lot is only 45 feet wide by 109. We do have a planter in the back by the parking lot.

Karen Stepanovich: Well, nobody really sees the back.

Robert Braun: See, the sidewalk is like right there.

Pete Zaphyr: Are you putting in a new sidewalk?

Robert Braun: Yes.

Barbara Ciampini: Are you putting in the curbs also Robert?

Robert Braun: Yes. I know they need fixed right now and we have an extension to do that after we build the building.

Karen Stepanovich: You can only fit one Yew there is that all?

Robert Braun: Whatever room is there.

Karen Stepanovich: I would like to see perennials, when you are doing a street landscape most people put out flowers in the summer. It would be nice if you put some perennials; it would fit in more with the neighborhood a little more color. I think it would look better if you put some grass and other perennials in with it. It would like much nicer than a yew.

Robert Braun: I think he just put that in there to fill in the blank.

Barbara Ciampini: We can make that part of our motion.

Karen Stepanovich: Nobody is going to see the back except the neighbor's.

Barbara Ciampini: There are no neighbors in the back it's a public parking lot.

Karen Stepanovich: The burning bush is nice and it would be attractive for them and a tree in the back would be very nice but in the front is where you want the color and for everyone to see it. I want a little more than just a green shrub stuck in there.

Barbara Ciampini: As far as the setbacks they are trying to keep it in line with what was there and in a C-2 district there are no setbacks. I think they've done a nice job with creating a walk on the northeast side and a little bit of a setback on the southwest side and of course keeping it in line with the other homes.

Robert Braun: We are planning on when you come up to enter the steps to go to the front of the building we are going to put a versa lock wall on the side there and the stairs would go up and then have a rail on the steps.

Barbara Ciampini: You've done a nice job with all of that.

Rick Cutia: I see the lighting on the side where this 5 foot walk is and that is a 150 watts and that should be sufficient.

Pete Zaphyr: Do you have any entrances on the lowest level, first floor. What I can make out here I see one entrance?

Robert Braun: Yes.

Pete Zaphyr: Going directly into a bedroom? Is that correct?

Robert Braun: That's the front there. That's a bedroom on the first floor. You would go to the basement floor is the one with the two bedrooms.

Pete Zaphyr: The rear elevation shows one entrance.

Robert Braun: Yes that goes into the two bedroom apartment.

Rick Cutia: That enters the living area.

Robert Braun: That back utility room will be for storage. I will probably put in a sink if we have to clean anything up.

Pete Zaphyr: What about the furnace?

Robert Braun: They will all be electric and they are in each apartment in the bedroom contained in a closet. Its forced air with air conditioning.

Pete Zaphyr: These are storage utilities?

Robert Braun: Yes.

Pete Zaphyr: You have one entrance going right into the living room?

Robert Braun: Yes.

Pete Zaphyr: So these two will share the living room and the kitchen?

Robert Braun: Yes.

Pete Zaphyr: There is no other exit?

Robert Braun: No.

Pete Zaphyr: They can go downstairs?

Robert Braun: No, that is just upstairs they can't get downstairs from up there. That is why we chose to put two bathrooms up there with three people.

Barbara Ciampini: Pete, with your concern about the egress and ingress that has to go through Les Harvey.

Pete Zaphyr: Am I missing something here?

Robert Braun: That would be from the upstairs.

Pete Zaphyr: This is the second floor? This is a street side first floor?

Barbara Ciampini: They are side by side duplexes with one in the basement.

Pete Zaphyr: I am just concerned about their safety.

Barbara Ciampini: That is something that Les Harvey will check.

Rick Cutia: Any other questions or concerns? If not then we need a motion either for this project or rejection.

Karen Stepanovich: I make a motion recommend to City Council approval of this site plan with the contingency of planting in the front of the building and show it to Barb before the City Council meeting.

Barbara Ciampini: This month our Council meets on November 13th, 2007 which is the day after Veterans' Holiday.

Robert Braun: What kind of perennials?

Karen Stepanovich: Something like your living in a neighborhood like a one family home. There is an apartment across the street from me and there is no color it's just shrubs. It makes it look different from the rest of the houses and people generally plant and have flowers out there all summer. It's very easy with perennials. It's really less trouble the bushes because you have to trim them. Day lilies would be good and the grasses, there are just so many.

Robert Braun: Just like we have around our houses?

Karen Stepanovich; Yes. Once you plant them their good to go.

Barbara Ciampini: If you can get that to me Robert by November the 7th.

Rick Cutia: Karen, can you repeat the motion so we can get a second.

Karen Stepanovich: I make a motion to recommend to City Council approval of this site plan with the contingent of planting of perennials and you have the revised plan to Barb by November 7th.

George Smith: I second the motion.

All were in favor.

Jeff Anzovino: I make a motion to adjourn.

Pete Zaphyr: I second the motion

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM

