

**City of Alma
Planning Commission Minutes
April 3, 2023**

Chairperson Heather Therrien called a regular meeting of the Alma Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Alma Municipal Building. A quorum of the Planning Commission was present.

Present: Justin Fonley, Sonia Gibson, Bill Gorton, David Justin, Greg Mapes, Michelle Pitts, Ellen Richter, and Heather Therrien.

Absent: Jessica Gilkins.

Chairperson Therrien led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Justin, seconded by Richter, to approve minutes of the March 6, 2023 regular meeting, as presented. Motion carried.

Yes: Fonley, Gibson, Gorton, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Richter, and Therrien.

No: none.

Absent: Gilkins.

Motion by Justin, seconded by Mapes, to approve minutes of the March 20, 2023 special meeting, as presented. Motion carried.

Yes: Fonley, Gibson, Gorton, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Richter, and Therrien.

No: none.

Absent: Gilkins.

Public Hearing-Special Use Permit Request

Chairperson Therrien explained that a special use permit request had been received for a new Crisis Residential Center, under the Adult Foster Care use as regulated by the State of Michigan. The request from Rangwani Real Estate LLC is for 317 E. Warwick Drive, which is zoned as OS. OS Districts allows for Adult Foster Care uses as a special use permit.

Motion by Pitts, seconded by Mapes, to open the public hearing regarding a special use permit request for 317 E. Warwick Drive at 6:02 p.m. Motion carried.

Yes: Fonley, Gibson, Gorton, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Richter, and Therrien.

No: none.

Absent: Gilkins.

City Manager Aeris Ripley provided additional information saying the building is currently vacant, and the grant funded rehabilitation is proposed through Mid-State Health Network-Region 5. The facility will provide a temporary stay and services for patients in mental health crisis. Owners have met with building officials regarding the site layout. The parking lot will be held to requirements of Hospitals. Lighting will remain the same. Ripley noted the current dumpster is not enclosed.

No public comments were received.

Commission members discussed lighting. Members agreed a dumpster enclosure would be needed.

Motion to close the public hearing regarding a special use permit request for 317 E. Warwick Drive at 6:10 p.m. Motion carried.

Yes: Fonley, Gibson, Gorton, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Richter, and Therrien.

No: none.

Absent: Gilkins.

Motion by Mapes, seconded by Justin, to approve a special use permit request from Rangwani Real Estate LLC for Adult Foster Care use within an OS District for a Crisis Residential Center at 317 E. Warwick Drive, provided a dumpster enclosure is included in the plan and potential light pollution is addressed. Motion carried.

Yes: Fonley, Gibson, Gorton, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Richter, and Therrien.
No: none.
Absent: Gilkins.

Public Hearing-Special Use Permit Request

Chairperson Therrien noted a special use permit request had been received for temporary outdoor sales of fireworks from Jake's Fireworks, Inc. in a sale tent located at 1720 Wright Avenue from June 25, 2023 through July 5, 2023.

Motion by Justin, seconded by Fonley, to open a public hearing regarding a special use permit request from Jake's Fireworks, Inc. at 6:11 p.m. Motion carried.

Yes: Fonley, Gibson, Gorton, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Richter, and Therrien.
No: none.
Absent: Gilkins.

Ripley added this is the second request this year for a fireworks sales special use permit. All the required paperwork has been submitted, and there have been no issues in the past with this vendor.

No public comments were received.

Motion by Pitts, seconded by Richter, to close the public hearing regarding a special use permit request from Jake's Fireworks, Inc. at 6:13 p.m. Motion carried.

Yes: Fonley, Gibson, Gorton, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Richter, and Therrien.
No: none.
Absent: Gilkins.

Motion by Justin, seconded by Mapes, to approve the special use permit request from Jake's Fireworks, Inc. for outdoor fireworks sales at 1720 Wright Avenue from June 25, 2023 through July 5, 2023. Motion carried.

Yes: Fonley, Gibson, Gorton, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Richter, and Therrien.
No: none.
Absent: Gilkins.

Proposal for 401 E. Warwick Drive

Owners of 401 E. Warwick Drive were present with Scott Bell of Lapham Associates to provide support for their letter requesting rezoning of this parcel. Bell explained they believed it would be easier to find a tenant for the building if it was zoned B2 (General Business District) rather than OS (Office Service Commercial District). Owner Pat Pnacek also spoke regarding their hope to put in a small café or similar business and asked about the process for formally requesting rezoning.

Lengthy discussion followed about potential tenant proposals, issues with the current building and sidewalk, spot zoning, conditional rezoning, per capita saturation, and the Commission's vision for that area. Commission members suggested repairing the sidewalk and sprucing up the existing building may help with the search for tenants.

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Ripley said both the city attorney and the zoning consultant had indicated rezoning this parcel to B2 would be spot zoning, and he noted overall changes to zoning in the area could be made during the upcoming master planning process. Additional discussion followed. Bell said they would take the Commission's feedback and decide how to move forward. Pnacek indicated they would like to be involved in the master planning process.

Other Business

Chairperson Therrien spoke briefly about the upcoming Alma Aspires vision plan reboot scheduled for May 1, 2023. Ripley reminded everyone to RSVP if they were planning to attend.

Invitation to Public

No comments were offered.


Adjourn

Motion by Justin, seconded by Richter, to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m. Motion carried.

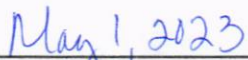
Yes: Fonley, Gibson, Gorton, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Richter, and Therrien.

No: none.

Absent: Gilkins.



Sara Anderson, Alma City Clerk



Date of Approval