

Present: Chairperson Ostrowski; Vice Chair Westerlund; Members: Abboud, Borowski, Freedman, Jensen and Ruprich

Absent: Peddie and Stempien

Also Present: Village Manager, Chris Wilson
Planning Consultant, Brian Borden

Chairperson Ostrowski called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Village of Beverly Hills municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

APPROVE/AMEND AGENDA

Motion by Westerlund, second by Jensen, to approve the agenda as published.

Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

REVIEW AND CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF A PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD OCTOBER 23, 2013

Motion by Borowski, second by Jensen, that the minutes of a regular Planning Commission meeting held October 23, 2013 be approved as submitted.

Motion passed.

REVIEW APPLICATION FOR DIVISION OF LAND FROM JIM AND TENNIE MERRITT OFF LAHSER ROAD, PARCELS 24-03-101-009 AND 010

Before the Planning Commission for consideration is an Application for Land Division from Jim and Tennie Merritt for property off Lahser Road, Parcels 24-03-101-009 and -010. The petitioners request to divide two contiguous parcels of land into four parcels and to develop the parcels. Planning consultant Brian Borden stated that most of the information required by the Village has been provided by the applicants. The land division must be reviewed by the Planning Commission and referred to the Village Council for approval. There will be a public hearing conducted on the Planning Commission and Council levels with proper notification as indicated in the ordinance.

Borden outlined two ordinance requirements that must be addressed before proceeding with the land division. The lot splits will be subject to a private drive. The ordinance regulating land division and private roads states that the applicant has to demonstrate that they have accessibility to the lots. The application should not proceed until it is determined whether the private road configuration is suitable. The petitioner should receive initial input from the Village engineer and possibly the Road Commission to affirm that the design, layout and circulation is feasible. Borden stated that the ordinance requires written approval from the Village Engineer or RCO with regard to compliance with applicable locations standards for all means of accessibility.

The other requirement that should be provided before proceeding is compliance with the lot area of existing parcels within 500 feet of the subject site. The ordinance section states that an applicant shall file the following with the Building Official for review and approval of a proposed land division: (g) A listing of each existing land parcel located within 500 feet of any portion of the parent parcel or parent tract proposed for division including the area of each. Said list shall be prepared, sealed and certified as accurate by a licensed engineer or registered land surveyor.

The applicant Jim Merritt affirmed that the Road Commission for Oakland County has to approve the ingress and egress. He has designed the road in accordance with RCOC requirements. Merritt displayed his plans to the Planning Commission. Manager Wilson stated that he spoke with Public Services Director Tom Meszler about the engineering side of this submittal. Wilson thought that this aspect of the plan could be addressed in short order.

Commission members discussed the requirement for a listing of each existing land parcel located within 500 feet and how it might affect the land division proposal. Borden clarified for the applicant that the ordinance does not require a survey of each parcel within the 500 feet. The list and documentation can be prepared by a licensed engineer or surveyor using existing property records.

Merritt stated that he is requesting a land division that will result in four parcels even though there is enough property to create six parcels. He is marketing this development and resulting product to a younger market that wants more property and does not want to be governed by condominium rules and regulations. Merritt will be out of town in December; he asked that his request for land division be placed on the agenda for the January 22, 2014 Planning Commission meeting. He will have all required documentation submitted at that time. A public hearing date will be advertised for the January meeting with proper notification sent to surrounding property owners.

DISCUSSION OF VILLAGE CENTER DESIGN STANDARDS AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION

A subcommittee of the Planning Commission met two weeks ago to discuss Village Center design standards. Ostrowski, Stempien, Westerlund and Jensen initiated a dialog on design guidelines and determined a schedule for the completion of this project. Westerlund stated that the subcommittee will be dealing with site amenities based on a broader consideration of the architectural guidelines. Jensen provided materials for review by the group. He offered to contact urban planner Bob Gibbs, who would be able to provide expertise in this area. His assistance would be beneficial in terms of gearing the architectural portion of design standards to be consistent with the development as well as the site amenities.

The main product of that meeting was an outline of items that the subcommittee needs to review as part of the selection and formulation of design standards. Another subcommittee meeting will be scheduled following communication with Mr. Gibbs. The goal of the group is to get through this task quickly and prepare the information for review by the Planning Commission at its February meeting.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Planning consultant Borden suggested that the Master Plan Update be conducted in early 2014. The Planning Commission should consider the scope of the update so that LSL Planning can prepare a work plan and cost estimate. At a minimum, Beverly Hills is due to conduct a five-year review of its Master Plan to be consistent with State Law. Borden related that he and Manager Wilson have been presented with a number of properties and issues over the last year that merit review by the Planning Commission. The Village Center code and plan will be incorporated into the master plan.

There followed a lengthy discussion on the scale of the master plan update. Topics for further review and consideration in terms of additions to the document included: Future land use expectations; Green initiatives and sustainability; Alternative land uses; Density and transitional issues; and cottage housing/pocket neighborhoods. Commission members were interested in determining where the master plan was deficient and where there are opportunities for positive changes.

Manager Wilson proposed that the Planning Commission consider what will be needed in the next 5-10 years in terms of changes that should occur to maintain Village priorities for future redevelopment. The future land use plan should be reviewed relative to areas where there is pressure for residential redevelopment. The Planning Commission with the assistance of LSL Planning could develop an outline of proposed master plan updates and present it to Council for funding consideration.

Borden proposed that the Planning Commission use its December 11 meeting as a workshop to discuss master plan update priorities. He asked that members go through the master plan prior to next month's meeting and come prepared to go through the document and suggest elements that need change or updating. Borden will look at the goals and objectives section of the plan, review what has been accomplished, and evaluate the remaining tasks to determine if they are pertinent. The follow up discussion will focus on what is missing and needs to be addressed to bring the plan up to today's standards.

PLANNING COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Westerlund commented about a development in Harbor Springs offering concierge service in response to a certain demographic and trend.

Aboud mentioned that he serves on a Senior Advisory Council, and he asked that Commission members be mindful of the aging population in Beverly Hills. The Village should think about the walkable aspect of the community. Aboud provided background information on Gould Court. He talked about the future redevelopment of McDonalds and asked that the Planning Commission understand that Gould Court is a private road.

Freedman mentioned that the Legislature is again trying to clean up problems with the medical marijuana statute. She questioned whether the Planning Commission was interested in placing this on the agenda of a future meeting to consider what other communities are doing relative to this law.

Ostrowski received an email from member Stempien who reported on the businesses in the Village that have signs that continue to be in violation of the sign ordinance. Stempien had concerns about the enforcement of the sign ordinance as well as future ordinances.

Wilson responded that there are issues with code enforcement. He referred to a change in State Law whereby municipal code violations were changed from criminal to civil infractions. This has worked well in 95% of cases, where people take care of an issue that is brought to their attention. Wilson talked about the difficulty of enforcing a civil infraction and the limited options available to the Village.

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

Motion by Freedman, second by Borowski, to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 pm.

Motion passed.

George Ostrowski
Planning Commission Chairman

Ellen E. Marshall
Village Clerk

Susan Bernard
Recording Secretary