

Present: Chairperson Jensen; Vice-Chair Ostrowski; Members: Abboud, Borowski, Peddie, Ruprich, Stempien and Westerlund

Absent: Freedman

Also Present: Village Manager - Wilson
Planning consultants – Brian Borden, Dan Beard and Kathleen Duffy
Council Liaison, Oen
Council member, Briggs

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF A PLANNING BOARD MEETING HELD JULY 25, 2012

Motion by Westerlund, second by Ostrowski, that the minutes of a Planning Board meeting held July 25, 2012 be approved as submitted.

Motion passed.

REQUEST FROM JOEL STEMPIEN, “GET SOME FITNESS”, 31119 GREENFIELD ROAD TO ERECT PERMANENT OUTDOOR PROJECTING SIGN

The petitioner Joel Stempien related that he originally proposed erecting a projection sign on the building at 31119 Greenfield where his gym is located. The sign would help customers find his location and attract new business to the gym, which is located behind the front building on the main road. Stempien understood that the proposed sign cannot be approved because it does not comply with the current sign ordinance. His ultimate goal is to apply for the more creative projection sign following the adoption of a new sign ordinance.

As an alternative, Stempien proposed erecting a 3’ x 5’ sign on the face of the building. He displayed a picture of what the sign would look like. It will be same logo as the projection sign but with white letters on a black background.

Planning Consultant Brian Borden commented that the direction proposed by the applicant for a projection sign is consistent with signage that will be considered in the corridor overlay district and the updated sign regulations. The current ordinance does not permit the type of sign originally proposed.

Commission member Robert Stempien mentioned that Council passed a resolution at its meeting last night placing a moratorium in effect, during which time no signs requiring Planning Commission approval will be considered for 180 days effective today. Wilson noted that this sign application was submitted prior to the moratorium; it is appropriate for the Planning Commission to consider the sign request.

Commission members reviewed the sign proposal, noting that the 15 sq. ft. sign is within the allowable size limits for the business district. The applicant indicated that the sign will be made from MDO (medium density overlay) board with the logo printed on the panel. The sign will be mounted on the building and will not be illuminated. The applicant has approval from the building owner to erect the sign. The directional sign at the site will remain.

Motion by Westerlund, second by Peddie, that the Planning Commission approve a revised sign request from Joel Stempien for a wall sign saying “Get Some Fitness” to be affixed to the building at 31119 Greenfield Road subject to the sign being a 3’ x 5’ rigid board similar to MDO or plywood; graphics consisting of white letters on a black background with blue trim; sign to be mounted on the building facing Greenfield Road; no illumination; subject to final review by LSL Planning.

Motion passed.

CONTINUE DISCUSSION ON SOUTHFIELD ROAD CORRIDOR

Planning consultant Brian Borden introduced LSL Planning staff members Kathleen Duffy and Dan Beard. The Planning Commission subcommittee members have met with these individuals and are familiar with their work. Duffy and Beard will present a brief overview of concept plans that they have developed. Two alternative concept plans have been created based on topics that have been discussed by the Planning Commission up to this point.

Borden reviewed that the Planning Commission has conducted one public workshop. A property owners meeting was held with members of the Southfield Road Corridor subcommittee. A base 3-D model for the entire corridor has been completed, from which the LSL staff will mold the upcoming overlay district. There have been a number of subcommittee meetings where much of the work has been done.

Borden related that Kathleen Duffy’s plan will depict a complete overhaul redevelopment of the entire study area. There would be consideration given to existing conditions, but less than the alternative plan. The plan developed by Dan Beard can be described as retain, retrofit and redevelop. It allows for different layers of what could occur in the corridor. Borden stated that LSL and the Planning Commission subcommittee have been working with a Road Commission subcommittee studying the Southfield Road construction project. He will present a couple of different layouts that might be feasible for the actual roadway portion of the corridor plan.

Borden referred to the slide presentation to outline goals of the redevelopment plan and the key elements of a successful town center. The development will be targeted to local businesses. An active vibrant town center would attract families to Beverly Hills and retain the quality of life in the community. The redevelopment plan would allow taller mixed-use buildings closer to the

street, uniform setbacks and traffic flow, pedestrian access, coordinated parking and access, and green gathering spaces.

Kathleen Duffy stated that LSL staff and the Planning Commission subcommittee met to talk about how to create a town center. Elements to be addressed are creation of a more walkable streetscape by pushing the buildings forward on much of the Southfield Road frontage; reduce the number of driveways along Southfield Road and encourage accessibility across the district; provide balance of parking across the corridor; and improve the 13 Mile entrance to serve as a gateway into the Beverly Hills town center.

Duffy commented that we are trying to work out the boundaries of the district. The frontage is the primary phase followed by connecting parcels in terms of the apartment complex or residential neighborhood to the northwest. She displayed a graphic showing how to group smaller parcels into larger developable sites.

Dan Beard presented the more conservative redevelopment option (B), which considers the existing site lines and existing buildings that are likely to remain. There are opportunities to integrate retrofitted or new development around the existing buildings that may be retained. Beard talked about specific parcels in the corridor indicating what types of uses they could accommodate. The theme of the town center focuses on Southfield Road frontage with parking pushed to the back. There will be an attempt to share and link parking, improve circulation and limit driveways so people can park and walk to the various uses. Beard discussed a long-term view of retrofitting the apartment complex and connecting it to the town center. He addressed questions from Commission members regarding his plan.

Duffy presented another redevelopment alternative, Option A. She considered the corridor as a complete site and assumed that a developer would want to come in and assemble a number of parcels, keeping the context in mind. Her option generally follows property lines but takes a more aggressive approach to redefine the character of the development. Duffy referred to the drawing to describe her plan. The proposal pushes the buildings to the front and provides for a walkable streetscape along Southfield Road. She talked about providing access to the interior of the site via north/south connectors and a series of east/west connectors to reduce the amount of driveways. Duffy responded to inquiries from members.

It was emphasized that the two options are not mutually exclusive. These concepts could occur using the principals that will be established along with design guidelines in the code.

Duffy mentioned that the Road Commission will be looking at Southfield Road reconstruction plans at the service area into Beverly Hills. LSL staff and Beverly Hills representatives are working together with Road Commission people on this project. She indicated that the likelihood of the road being reduced to three lanes in Beverly Hills is low unless there is a roundabout constructed. Duffy outlined creative options for Southfield Road improvements with the installation of a median or a “slip” parking lane that would maintain the capacity required by the Road Commission. There are alternatives that could be applied to the concept plans. Conversations with the Road Commission will continue.

Borden stated that the next steps will include converting the concepts into 3D models to acquire a feel for building height and layout. Parking will be an important factor and will require application of use/mix ratios. Parking structures will be part of the conversation. The design guideline booklet will be developed and will include photographs, graphic representations and text to provide guidance for redevelopment of a site. Once these components are completed, there will be another public workshop. The ultimate steps will be development of a Code that implements this plan and the formal adoption process via an ordinance amendment.

Discussion followed on the two options presented with conversations on road and parking alternatives, incorporating Township property, the possibility of redeveloping the apartment buildings, green spaces and pedestrian traffic, and design guidelines.

Wilson highlighted a recent meeting with the Road Commission regarding the reconstruction of Southfield Road and the development of a 20-year model for the Southfield Road corridor. Wilson discussed the traffic volume counts that were reviewed at that meeting for various sections of Southfield Road in Beverly Hills. The Road Commission attached a figure of 8% growth in traffic volume over a 20 year period north of I-696 and 5% south of 696.

PRESENTATION FROM ROBERT STEMPIEN ON SIGN ORDINANCE REVISIONS

Stempien led Commission members through a review of the definition section of the proposed sign ordinance. Members suggested wording changes and decided which definitions should be incorporated into the document. Borden will provide sample language for some of the definitions to be considered at the next meeting. The proposal was made to continue review of the ordinance definitions with a Planning Commission subcommittee.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS

Peddie distributed a draft Beverly Hills noise ordinance for review by the Commission. It is a combination of sections from the Lathrup Village and Berkley ordinances. She commented on remarks made at the last Council meeting regarding progress being made on the Southfield Road corridor project.

Westerlund questioned the status of contracting with Royal Oak or Birmingham for building department services. Wilson responded that he has another meeting scheduled with Birmingham City officials in two weeks. He added that Royal Oak has not responded to the draft agreement provided by Beverly Hills to provide building department service for the Village. Royal Oak continues to conduct inspections for Beverly Hills. Wilson commented that the Village will have three options: sign an agreement with a neighboring community, negotiate these services with a private corporation, or bring in a building official to conduct inspections in house.

Ostrowski commented on the paving and grading work being done at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs school and church and asked whether the plan approvals and permits were in place. He questioned if the work warranted site plan review. Wilson responded that building inspection permits for school property are issued by the State. If a site plan review by the Village is warranted, the State issues permits and conducts inspections. Wilson will review the work being done at Queen of Martyrs. Westerlund suggested that the Village ask that LSL Planning staff review projects from the standpoint of site plan or administrative review.

Abboud thanked Manager Wilson for contacting McDonalds representatives about erecting a construction fence during the demolition process. Abboud commented on the sale inappropriate items at the gas station at Southfield and 13 Mile Road. Wilson remarked that he has had conversations with the owner on this topic.

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS

Wilson reported that Council declared a moratorium effective August 22, 2012, and effective for 180 days, concluding at midnight on February 18, 2013 during which time no additional site plans within the Southfield Road corridor or any signs requiring Planning Commission approval will be considered. Council was supportive of what the Planning Commission is doing in terms of revising the sign ordinance and drafting an overlay code. Wilson related that it was also clear from the discussion that Council would not entertain extending that moratorium. There was concern raised regarding the impact of the moratorium on business owners.

There was a member who voted against the moratorium and was concerned that the Planning Commission has been working on the Southfield Road redevelopment plan for too long. Wilson gave Council his assurances that the work would be completed as expeditiously as possible. He reminded Commission members about the time needed for notifications and to hold multiple public hearings prior to Council approval.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Briggs commented that he supported the 180 moratorium and was hopeful that the process would move forward. He looks forward to seeing the results.

Motion by Abboud, second by Westerlund, to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 pm

Motion passed.

David Jensen
Planning Board Chair

Ellen E. Marshall
Village Clerk

Susan Bernard
Recording Secretary