

MINUTES  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE OAK PARK PLAN COMMISSION  
VILLAGE HALL- COUNCIL CHAMBER

June 9, 2016  
7:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair David Mann; Commissioners Jeremy Burton, Mark Gartland (arrived 7:15 p.m.), Doug Gilbert, Greg Marsey, Kristin Nordman and Monica Sanders (arrived at 7:29 p.m.)

**EXCUSED:** Commissioners Lawrence Brozek and JoBeth Halpin

**ALSO PRESENT:** Craig Failor, Village Planner; Jacob Karaca, Attorney; Floyd Anderson, Village Architectural Consultant from Wight and Company  
District House Applicants: Christopher Dillion, Campbell Coyle Real Estate; Zev Salomon, Ranquist Development Group; Austin DePree and Brian Essig, Northworks; Michael Werthmann, KLOA , Inc.

**Roll Call**

Chair Mann called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Roll was called. A quorum was present.

**Non-Agenda Public Comment**

None.

**Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Burton motioned to approve the minutes from May 26, 2016. Commissioner Gilbert seconded. A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved unanimously as submitted.

**Public Hearing(s)**

**PC 16-01: District House Planned Development;** The Applicant seeks approval of a planned development for a mixed use project consisting of approximately 4,500 square feet of first floor commercial space, 28 condominium units, and 37 enclosed parking spaces. The applicant is also requesting;

- an allowance to increase the building height from 45 feet as required in Section 3.8.1 A(2) of the Zoning Ordinance to an overall height of 75 feet,
- an allowance to increase density from the allowed 26 dwelling units as regulated in Section 3.8.1 A(1)b of the Zoning Ordinance to 28 dwelling units, and
- an allowance for setbacks and landscaping along the north property line from a required 15 foot setback to zero feet and along the east property line from a required 5 foot setback to zero feet.
- a reduction of required parking spaces from 66 as required in Section 6.2.2(D) of the Zoning Ordinance to 37 parking space (30 are lift capable) and
- a reduction in the number of loading berths as required in Sections 6.2.8 of the Zoning Ordinance from 2 to zero.
- The applicant is also requesting a special use permit on the first floor and within the 50 setback of the Transit Retail Related Overlay District for a Health, athletic, recreation and amusement facilities, indoor.

Mr. Failor reviewed the application and said staff was in support of the development as noted in the staff report. He said the development was compatible with the goals outlined in the Envision Oak Park Comprehensive Plan and the Greater Downtown Master Plan. He said the height and setbacks fit within the area and it was a good transition from the commercial area of Lake Street to the residential area of

Euclid Avenue. To summarize, he said staff believed it was a great fit for the neighborhood and for the Village.

Chair Mann outlined the procedure for the public hearing. Chair Mann welcomed the applicant.

Mr. Chris Dillion, Campbell Coyle Real Estate, introduced the development team. Mr. Austin DePree, Northworks, reviewed the design of the development through an overhead presentation of renderings from the application. He said the design reflected architectural influences from both the Prairie school and the Chicago school of modernism with clean lines prevalent. He said the first floor was pulled back along Lake Street and at the corner to provide space for retail and pedestrians to gather. The transparency into the retail would provide vibrancy along Lake Street. He reviewed the green roof and building materials: aluminum, brick, glass and windows that were wood with aluminum cladding.

Mr. Brian Essig, Northworks, reviewed the variances requested in the application. He said the height was in context with surrounding buildings in the neighborhood. The setback relief was for the ground floor to shield the parking garage; the north wall would include planters on the terrace that would allow for plants to grow down over the edge and provide greenery to that wall. He explained the loading dock for retail would be on Lake Street and garbage service would be in the parking garage. He said because it was a transit-oriented development site less than ¼ mile from the Green Line L stop this drove the reduction in parking. The addition of the parking lifts could double the parking capacity for the units and they estimated nine parking spaces on the street.

Mr. Dillion reviewed the compensating benefits: removing the curb cut on Lake Street; reestablishing a retail wall along Lake Street; integrating the Lake Street streetscape palate and activating the outdoor area with café outdoor seating. Mr. Dillion noted the outdoor seating had been modified based on feedback from residents. Other compensating benefits: new plantings and trees in the parkway; a LEED for Homes certified building; and access to bike facilities to encourage alternatives on cars. He said \$280,000 of the purchase price would be routed to the Village for affordable housing. He said the public art element would be subject to approval by the Public Art Advisory Commission (PAAC), but they were proposing a catenary lighting system with sculptural vertical elements to create a sense of space and a gateway to the Hemingway and Downtown business districts.

Mr. Dillion said the development would meet the condominium demand noted in the CMAP study, Homes for a Changing Region. He said that study noted most condo units were two bedrooms or less and there was a large demand for larger units in Oak Park. He said the applicants were focused on the retail component and would treat it appropriately by having 16 foot ceiling heights to attract the right type of retail; the idea was to attract a balance of national and local tenants while taking into consideration what tenants and neighbors would like to see in the space.

Mr. Michael Werthmann, KLOA Inc., reviewed the traffic and parking information. He noted the former site was an auto-centric use with access on Lake Street while the new use would be a transit-oriented development. He said their study looked at nine intersections in the area at various times; they considered traffic generated by the potential development as well as including the developments under construction in the area. The study concluded the development would reduce the volume of traffic generated as compared to the former use. He said the study noted the benefits would include improving the flow of traffic on Lake Street as the flow would be moved to Euclid Avenue.

Mr. Werthmann said the development would provide a range of 1.3-2.3 parking spaces per unit (depending on if the parking lifts were used). He concluded the parking would be sufficient to meet the needs of the development as it was in a transit-oriented and pedestrian-oriented location. He noted village staff had reviewed the traffic study and concurred with it.

Chair Mann asked for the review from the village's architectural consultant.

Mr. Floyd Anderson, village architectural consultant from Wight and Company, said he was very much in support of the project. He said it was a sensitive design in terms of massing to the neighbors; it was a modern looking building and one of the better designs the village had seen in a long time. He said the façade colors and materials were a departure for the neighborhood as it was more greys and blacks versus the yellow brick of the neighborhood, but he believed it was done in a sophisticated manner. He said he was most concerned with the base of the north wall as it was a blank brick wall and stark, but he believed the applicant addressed that issue with the plantings. In summary, he said he was in support of the project and it was a great design.

Commissioner Marsey asked about the planting system. Mr. DePree explained it would be an automatic system for the green roof and the vine plantings through storm water retention and drought resistant plants. Commissioner Marsey said he would like more details on this, especially on the maintenance aspect. Mr. Dillion said the maintenance would be done through the condo association. Commissioner Marsey suggested more details would be helpful.

Chair Mann asked commissioners to address traffic issues first.

Chair Mann asked if the traffic study was based on the building being unused or its former use as Tasty Dog. Mr. Werthmann said the count was done when Tasty Dog was closed, so they used national rates to estimate the traffic Tasty Dog would have generated as a drive-thru. Mr. Werthmann said they concluded the trips would be reduced from 50 to 26 trips in the evening peak hour and from 88 to 28 on Saturday midday. Commissioner Burton noted there would be an increase in morning traffic but a decrease in the afternoon, so on balance overall a decrease in traffic trips.

Chair Mann asked what would trigger installing a lift for a parking spot. Mr. Dillion said potential buyers could negotiate installing a lift as part of their purchase of a unit. Chair Mann asked about the extra parking spaces in the garage and where those would be allocated. Mr. Dillion said likely those spaces would go to the larger units but it would be subject to buyer negotiations. Commissioner Gilbert asked if the spaces would be deeded. Mr. Dillion said they would be limited common elements assigned to units but not deeded. Commissioner Marsey asked about the availability of overnight parking in the village's Avenue parking garage. Mr. Failor said there was some availability, however currently it was limited as some garage space was off-line due to current developments. As those spaces open up again, more overnight parking was expected. Also, he said the village has some 24-hour permit lots around the tracks that were available for lease. Commissioner Marsey asked staff to comment on a resident's email questioning the Oak Park River Forest High School parking garage possibly being torn down for a new pool. Mr. Failor said that as far as staff knew, the pool plan was currently on hold.

Commissioner Marsey asked about the space between the development and the AT&T building. Mr. Dillion said they were proposing a 3 foot voluntary setback and the space would be maintained but not publicly accessible. Commissioner Burton asked for more information on the lift ready parking spaces. Mr. Essig said the spots would be 8 foot, 3 inches wide and the lift could be installed with 18 foot depth. The cost would be \$18,750 plus maintenance fees. Commissioner Gilbert asked about the existing street parking on Euclid Avenue. Mr. Werthmann said portions of Euclid were striped for no parking so the developer would have to discuss those spots with the Village those restrictions could be because of the current curb cut on Lake Street. Mr. Essig said they were in talks with the Village regarding parking along Euclid. Commissioner Burton asked where loading and trash pickup would be located. Mr. DePree said trash would be collected internally in the parking garage; trucks moving in residents would be on Euclid Avenue. Mr. Dillion said the retailers would be front-load stores and would work with the Village on when that would occur at the loading zone on Lake Street. Mr. Failor noted the loading zone might be

relocated midblock as currently it was closer to Oak Park Avenue. Chair Mann noted parking spaces would be lost on Euclid due to the parking entrance. Mr. Failor agreed.

Commissioner Marsey noted parkway and streetscape improvements were indicated and asked how would the developer compensate should the Lake Street streetscape palate not be completed in time. Mr. Dillion said they would agree to a minimum standard and the palate associated with that but couldn't comment on the streetscape timeline. Mr. Failor said the Village was close to a resolution on the palate design and expected the Village Board to have it before them in the next three months.

Commissioner Gartland asked about the parking garage gating and access system. Mr. DePree said it would be a roll-down steel door and from a safety perspective it would comply with all codes. The technology was yet to be determined.

Commissioner Gilbert asked about construction traffic and the staging plan. Mr. Dillion said the application included the construction plan, which would route traffic up to Harlem and Central Avenue in Chicago to minimize the impacts on Euclid Avenue. Chair Mann noted trucks would stage on Lake Street and asked why the traffic would route so far into Chicago. Mr. Dillion said this was due to Metra/CTA viaduct and clearance issues.

Chair Mann moved to cross examination.

Mr. Ryan Eikmeier was the first cross examiner, 125 N Euclid Ave. He said he was not certain the diagram accurately reflected parking along Euclid Avenue. Mr. Dillion said Euclid was not striped for spots so what they were showing were per code but would vary based on car size. Mr. Eikmeier asked if the parking would be taken away on Euclid north of the parking garage entrance. Mr. Dillion said it would not be taken away.

Mr. Eikmeier asked about the retail employee parking. Mr. Dillion said they may need to assign one or two spaces in the garage for management, but they were committed to working with retailers to emphasize a local workforce and as it was a transit-oriented development there would be alternative transportation.

Mr. Eikmeier asked about the reflective surface as he would be living across the street and worried about direct sun reflecting into his unit. Mr. DePree said the amount of glazing would be less than 30 percent on Euclid Avenue; the glass would have a low E coating and projecting fins would limit the amount of sun hitting the glass.

Mr. Eikmeier asked about the declarations for residents and the retail situation; he said he was concerned for residents living there and the potential for conflict between retail and residents. Mr. Dillion said they recently completed declarations for seven parties, and the mission for this development was to not treat retail as an afterthought. He said they will employ best practices. Commissioner Gilbert asked about the possibility of a restaurant creating noise issues into the evenings or smells. He asked about exhausting them and handling garbage from massive amounts of food. Mr. Dillion said from a merchandizing perspective they were not closing any doors, but when developing upscale condos they would put a lot of thought into what goes on ground floor. They would install black iron but hope not to use it; they could increase the frequency of garbage pickups for retail user. Commissioner Marsey said he appreciated they were not treating retail as an afterthought and asked how far along they were with tenants. Mr. Dillion said they have already traded a letter of intent with one tenant to take a little over half of the space and they were actively pursuing a tenant for the balance of the space. Commissioner Marsey asked if the tenant was contingent on the zoning variance being granted. Mr. Dillion said the request was based on marketplace trends, not a specific tenant. Commissioner Marsey suggested proper ducting of the black iron upfront. Mr. Dillion noted his suggestion.

Ms. Linda Haley was the next cross examiner, 160 N Euclid Ave. She asked for the dates that the traffic study was conducted. Mr. Werthmann said Thursday, March 10, 2016 and Saturday, March 12, 2016. Ms. Haley said Euclid Avenue was congested near Lake Street and if cars were parked on the street it would be difficult to maneuver past trucks or cars entering and exiting the garage. She noted she was happy to see less outside seating on Euclid Avenue based on feedback from residents. She asked about the color and materials of the building. Mr. DePree reviewed material samples and said the façade had changed since the resident meeting as they moved to a brick façade to be more contextual to the neighborhood. Commissioner Marsey asked about the coating on the windows. Mr. DePree said there would be a low E coating and no reflected glazing; the units would have uniform shade mechanisms within each unit.

Ms. Haley asked if the mechanicals would be outside. Mr. DePree noted the location on the roof in the renderings. Ms. Haley asked about the setbacks on Euclid. Mr. Essig noted the setbacks on the rendering. Ms. Haley asked if the trees would be removed on the parkway. Mr. Essig agreed saying they would be unable to save them.

Chair Mann called for break at 8:55 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 9:03 p.m. Chair Mann called for public testimony. Attorney Karaca swore in those wishing to give testimony.

Ms. Barbara Moline, 156 N Oak Park Ave. She said she was concerned about the alley between Euclid and Oak Park Avenues. She said the alley was congested as cars use it to bypass Lake Street or park to use the coffee shop. She hoped the village would look at traffic calming techniques for the alley and also noted the trash plan for the development seemed meager for serving 28 units and retail.

Ms. Linda Haley, 160 N Euclid Ave. She said the developer has taken some resident comments into consideration. She was concerned about congestion during construction, traffic, parking and noise as other condos have alleys. She said trucks delivering goods to residents will be an issue on Euclid Avenue. She said a number of residents could not come to the meeting and the post office did not ring doorbells to deliver the certified mail.

Ms. Liz McGinnity, 140 N Euclid Ave., echoed the concern about congestion and cars maneuvering single file, as more people use Euclid Avenue to avoid Lake Street. She was concerned there was no green on the street level and the added seating would diminish the parkway greenery. She said she liked the design as it was a real departure for Oak Park.

Mr. Failor summarized an email from Karen Doty, a resident who sent an email. The letter said she was in support of the architecture; she had an issue with the outdoor seating wrapping too far down Euclid Avenue; and currently, Euclid Avenue has resident permit parking and one hour parking and felt these should remain. She was concerned if the OPRF High School garage was removed what would happen to this area and parking.

Chair Mann asked for commissioner questions. Commissioner Burton asked about the change from Roman brick to the common brick shown tonight. Mr. DePree said they've moved to common brick. Commissioner Burton asked for the dimensions for Euclid Avenue to determine if it was unusually narrow. Mr. Failor agreed for the next meeting.

Chair Mann said parking on Euclid Avenue should be studied by the Village as it wasn't the applicant's responsibility. With the ingress/egress across from street parking, this could be an issue and should be reviewed.

Commissioner Gilbert asked if the applicant had considered making the garage entryway to the south. Mr. DePree said originally, they proposed two entrances but the current design moved the entrance far from Lake Street for safety and traffic reasons.

Commissioner Sanders asked about shadow study renderings and the north face of the building. Mr. DePree said as there was a 75 foot lot between the development and the closest building and so the shadows did not impact the neighbors. Commissioner Sanders asked if they considered adding an alley to the development. Mr. DePree said as there was no access to the adjacent street it wasn't feasible.

Commissioner Gilbert suggested working with the Village on a temporary loading area on Euclid Avenue or widening the street. Mr. Dillion said they were committed to working with the Village and maybe having a temporary loading zone with morning time restrictions. Commissioner Marsey argued trucks would find spots along Lake Street for loading as it was done currently.

Commissioner Marsey asked about the special use variance request. Attorney Karaca noted it would be an allowance as part of the planned development.

Commissioner Gartland asked about access to the second floor terraces. Mr. Dillion said the green roof portion could be potentially walkable for private residents. Mr. DePree reviewed the rooftop areas; the top floor residents would have private areas and a portion would be accessible for all residents. Commissioner Burton asked about storage and bike storage. Mr. Dillion said units would be large enough for storage; the ground floor would have some bike racks and also there was space above cars if a lift was not used.

Commissioner Gilbert asked why the design removed the Roman brick. Mr. DePree said they thought it would be more contemporary to fit in with the style of the building. Commissioner Gilbert argued it would be a unique opportunity as it wasn't used much in commercial buildings. Commissioner Burton agreed as the Roman brick was a reference to Frank Lloyd Wright and horizontality.

Chair Mann asked if the metal panels coming to the street would be textured as he was worried about damage from denting. Mr. DePree said there would be a 6-8 inch band of composite stone at the bottom; also they were meeting with the PAAC and the wall may be highlighted with lighting or public art. Chair Mann suggested a texture or perforation that could minimize visually any dents or damage.

Chair Mann asked commissioners for thoughts on continuing the hearing. A short discussion ensued with commissioners deciding to vote on the application with conditions to be added into the Findings of Fact.

Chair Mann said he appreciated the applicant going for LEED certified and encouraged the applicant to get silver and gold, if possible. He said he was concerned about the winter view of the north wall and if there was a way to get a shadow line to break down the wall. Mr. DePree said they could come back with a specific plan from their landscape architect. Chair Mann suggested using shifts in brick work as another development had done in the past to give interest during the dormant period. Chair Mann said the design was superb and appreciated the presentation and the commitment to the community.

Commissioner Gilbert agreed. He said he was concerned about moisture from the overhang: snow collecting and icicles, possibly on the sidewalk as well. Mr. DePree said they could return with a specific plan to address ice damming. Commissioner Gilbert reiterated he liked the Roman brick better. He asked about the height of the building versus the variance requested and wanted to note the building would be 69 feet, the mechanicals 75 feet. Chair Mann noted the renderings would reflect the height and would be in the record. Commissioner Gilbert said he liked the contemporary character of the development and the massing and that it was a transit-oriented development.

Commissioner Burton moved to approve the application with the following conditions: the applicant should return with information on whether the driveway could be used as a loading zone, on whether commercial vehicles would be able to park on Euclid Avenue without impeding the flow of traffic; with information on the maintenance and design of the north wall landscaping; and with information on the front façade overhang regarding water and ice issues. The height of the building would be shown in the plans of 69 feet and the mechanical area up to 75 feet. Commissioner Sanders seconded.

Chair Mann reviewed the variances requested. Commissioner Burton approved the variances as submitted. Commissioner Sanders seconded.

Commissioner Burton added that the standard conditions should be added to the motion. Commissioner Sanders seconded. A roll call vote was taken:

Burton – yes  
Sanders – yes  
Gilbert –yes  
Nordman – yes  
Gartland –yes  
Marsey- yes  
Mann – yes

The motion passed 7-0. Chair Mann said the Findings of Fact and response to the conditions would be at the next regular Plan Commission meeting on July 7, 2016.

**Other Business**

Mr. Failor said on June 13, 2016 the draft of the zoning code would be on the website. The public forums will be held on June 28 and 30 at Village Hall. More information would be sent to commissioners and publicized.

**Adjournment**

Commissioner Marsey moved to adjourn. Commissioner Burton seconded. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Angela Schell,  
Recording Secretary