

MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE OAK PARK PLAN COMMISSION
VILLAGE HALL- COUNCIL CHAMBER
August 10, 2017
7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair David Mann; Commissioners Glenn Brewer, Lawrence Brozek, Jeremy Burton, Doug Gilbert, Greg Marsey (arrived at 7:09 p.m.), Paul May and Kristin Nordman

EXCUSED: Commissioner JoBeth Halpin

ALSO PRESENT: Craig Failor, Village Planner; Jacob Karaca, Plan Commission Attorney; Bill McKenna, Village Engineer; Tammie Grossman, Development Customer Services Director
For Applicant: Andrew Yule, Albion Residential; William McKenna, attorney; Ted Wolff, Landscape Architect; Paul Alessandro, HPA Architecture; Javier Millan, KLOA
Cross Examination: Mark Burkland, attorney for the Park District of Oak Park

Roll Call

Chair Mann called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. Roll was called. A quorum was present. Chair Mann reviewed the order of procedure. He started with the objectors' witnesses. Commissioner May confirmed he reviewed the video of the last meeting.

Non-Agenda Public Comment

None.

Approval of Minutes

None.

Public Hearing(s)

PC 17-01: 1000 Lake Street; Albion Residential LLC, the Applicant, seeks approval of an 18 story mixed use planned development consisting of approximately 9,500 square feet of first floor commercial space, 265 dwelling units, 235 enclosed vehicular parking spaces, and 265 enclosed bicycle parking spaces. The applicant is requesting an allowance to increase the building height from 80 feet as required in Section 3.9.4 E(1) of the Zoning Ordinance to a height of approximately 199 feet, an allowance to increase density from the allowed 40 dwelling units as regulated in Section 3.8.3 A(1)b of the Zoning Ordinance to 265 dwelling units, and an allowance for setbacks and landscaping along the north property line from a required 10 foot setback to zero feet required in Section 3.8.3 B(2) and along the east property line from a required 5 foot setback to zero feet 3.8.3 B(1). The applicant is requesting no landscaping within the required setback areas 6.4.2 A. *Continued from August 3, 2017*

ALBION PLAT OF SUBDIVISION: The applicant is also seeking a subdivision of land as depicted on the Final Plat of Subdivision titled "Albion at Oak Park" submitted with the planned development application

Mr. Scott Stewart, Executive Director of the Millennium Park Foundation in Chicago, presented four points on the applicants' shade study.

- First, he said the report was very general and narrow in its application.
- Second, he said the representation of shade tolerance in the report was narrow in scope and lacking in current scientific robustness. He said there was a growing body of scientific knowledge with regards to shade and effects of shade to the rhizopheric community.

- Third, he said the assessment of tree age and the age implications represented an incomplete picture of tolerance and effects of shade tolerance.
- Fourth, he said regarding the soil microbial communities that exist in Austin Gardens; the report has no discussion on the rhizosphere communities or the effect of shade on those microbial communities.

Commissioners asked about potential impacts or ways to mitigate impacts. Mr. Stewart said impacts and mitigation would require additional study. Commissioners asked about the additional study requirements. Mr. Stewart suggested further study by a professional soil microbiologist and ecologist. Commissioner Marsey asked if matures trees were more vulnerable. Mr. Stewart agreed.

A short discussion ensued regarding tree health and shade impacts. Mr. Stewart said in the applicant's report, shade tolerance per species was presented as an absolute factor but the broader scientific community recognizes shade tolerance along a spectrum. Mr. Stewart said tree appearance was not directly correlated to tree age or tree health so a simple observational study of a tree was only one of many factors that play into determining the age of a tree.

Commissioners asked about further study to determine tree health and age. Mr. Stewart said the study would include tree coring, nutrient testing of the soil and live plant material plus observational data.

Chair Mann moved to commissioner questions for the Park District witnesses. Commissioners asked about the height of the Sketchup model and the Park District's discussions with Albion. Ms. Jan Arnold, Executive Director of the Park District, said the Park District told Albion if a building larger than 80 feet in height was approved there would be impacts to Austin Gardens; dollar figures were generated after consulting with a landscape architect and solar provider: \$280,000 for landscape impacts and \$120,000 for solar panel removal. She said a consideration to create public access to the park from Lake Street was also discussed.

Commissioners discussed the amounts requested by the Park District regarding impacts to the park. Ms. Arnold said that included monitoring the park over a 10-year period, as well as replacement of trees or other plant life. Chair Mann asked if the \$120,000 was for solar panel relocation. Ms. Arnold agreed and said it was also repairs to the roof.

A short discussion ensued about tree replacement and landscape replacement costs. Ms. Arnold said she would get more information to the commission regarding this estimate.

Commissioner Marsey asked Mr. Tom Bassett-Dilley, solar consultant to the Park District, about the solar impact and net zero of the center. Mr. Bassett-Dilley said they were in the early stages of monitoring the building and it was very close to net zero, losing 10 percent of solar access will throw them out of net zero.

Chair Mann moved to cross examination of the objectors' witnesses by the applicant.

Mr. William McKenna, the attorney for applicant, questioned Mr. Basset-Dilley regarding the modeling and shadow study he prepared. He asked about the environmental center's net zero status.

Mr. McKenna asked Ms. Arnold about the shade study from the Park District. Mr. McKenna asked Mr. Travis Stephen, the Park District's sports field manager, questions about the turf in Austin Gardens. Mr. McKenna asked Ms. Arnold about the report of trees damaged by high winds in Austin Gardens.

Chair Mann asked for a break 8:45pm. The meeting resumed at 8:57 p.m. Chair Mann opened up commissioner questions.

Commissioners asked about the timing to complete a soil study and the data on the Park District's solar study.

Chair Mann asked for the applicant to present information requested by the commission at previous meetings.

Mr. Andrew Yule, Albion Residential, presented their intended improvements to the greenway and the first floor elevation changes. He said the overhead lighting over the greenway extended down with strip lighting as an overheard sculpture; this idea was from the Oak Park Area Arts Council. He said Visit Oak Park indicated many tours would start at this location and the lighting program could be a fun and memorable part of the tour.

Mr. Yule presented two options on the first floor layout- one putting the lobby to the west and one a hybrid option of having less walls in the lobby to the east, but more public gathering spaces on the west side. He discussed changes in the setbacks as the first floor was recessed while the garage level would be at the zero lot line along Forest Avenue and the alley.

Mr. Paul Alessandro, the applicant's architect, reviewed the changes to the elevation and noted an additional five foot set back on the first floor at the alley and a ten foot set back from the podium. Mr. Ted Wolff, the applicant's landscape architect, said the additional setbacks would allow for more planting areas.

Commissioners discussed the greenway and suggested the applicant work with the Park District to create a gateway to Austin Gardens. The applicant agreed. Commissioners suggested enlivening the first floor along Lake Street through either a water feature or architectural expression. Mr. Yule said they could come back with more information on this.

Chair Mann asked how the applicant could mitigate noise levels spilling into the park. Mr. Yule said the restaurant could limit outdoor dining on the days the theater was performing.

Commissioner Gilbert urged both the Park District and the applicant to work together to understand how the two shadow studies differ.

Mr. Mark Burkland, the attorney for the Park District, asked Mr. Alessandro about the setbacks.

Chair Mann moved to questions for Mr. Bill McKenna, Village Engineer. Commissioner Brewer asked about impacts on Ontario Street. Mr. Javier Millan, traffic consultant for the applicant, reviewed the traffic study on Ontario.

Mr. McKenna reviewed the construction traffic plan and clarified the Lake Street streetscape schedule has not been finalized by the Village Board.

A discussion ensued regarding traffic at Harlem and Lake and Ontario south of the diverter.

Commissioners asked about loading along Lake Street. Mr. McKenna said the enclave to the west of the development was heavily used and he didn't anticipate much opportunity for trucks or cars to use it.

Commissioner Gilbert reviewed parking spaces for the downtown developments and asked Mr. Millan for data on car ownership near transit development sites. Mr. Millan said he would bring that to the next meeting. Mr. Yule said the development would attract millennials who would not be coming with cars. Commissioner Gilbert said he was concerned there wasn't enough parking currently and long term trends could change regarding parking.

Commissioner Gilbert asked staff for more information on the parking reduction applied through the zoning ordinance in relation to transit oriented development. Mr. Failor noted the reduction was determined by the zoning administrator. Commissioners Gilbert and Marsey said they believed this should be determined by the Plan Commission and not the zoning administrator. Mr. Failor said it was noted in the zoning ordinance that the administrator has the authority.

Chair Mann noted the commission received parking utilization rates of the Vantage garage. Chair Mann continued the public hearing. Mr. Failor reviewed date options for continuing the hearing. Commissioners chose August 22 and August 29 for the next meeting dates.

Adjournment

Commissioner Burton moved to continue and adjourn. Commissioner Marsey seconded. The next meeting will be August 22, 2017. The meeting adjourned at 11:17 p.m.

Angela Schell,
Recording Secretary