

1 MEETING: City of Pontiac Planning Commission Meeting
2 Minutes on Wednesday, February 3, 2016, Pontiac City Hall,
3 48450 Woodward Avenue, Pontiac, Michigan 48342

4 COMMISSIONERS: Chair Dayne Thomas
Ms. Mona Parlove
5 Ms. Lucy Payne
Mayor Deirdre Waterman
6 Ms. Hazel Cadd
Mr. Christopher Northcross
7

FROM THE CITY: C. James Sabo, City Planner
8 Derek Dowdell, City Planner

9 CHAIRMAN THOMAS CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6:30 P.M.

10 ROLL CALL:

11 PRESENT: Chairman Dayne Thomas, Comm. Lucy Payne,
Comm. Mona Parlove, Comm. Hazel Cadd,
12 Comm. Deirdre Waterman

13 EXCUSED: Vice-Chair, Ashley Fegley

14 ARRIVED LATE: Comm. Christopher Northcross

15 Mr. Sabo reported a quorum present.

16 COMMUNICATIONS: None.

17 MINUTES FOR REVIEW: January 6, 2015

18 COMM. WATERMAN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES WITH NO
NOTED CORRECTIONS

19
COMM. PARLOVE SECONDED

20
VOTE: AYES: Parlove, Waterman, Thomas, Cadd, Payne

21 NAYS: None
ABSENT: Northcross

22
Vote 5-0-1 motion carries

23
SITE PLAN REVIEW

24
PF-16-07, (PUBLIC HEARING) SPECIAL EXCEPTION PERMIT

1 PROPERTY ADDRESS: 772 Cesar Chavez Avenue
LOCATION: Parcel Number 14-19-282-021

2
3 APPLICANT: Steinway Property Management

4
5 Presentation of facts given by Mr. Sabo

6
7 Mr. Forrest, for Steinway Property Management,
8 5303 Boulder Ridge Trail, Milford, Michigan, stated that
9 they take their business as landlord seriously and are very
10 proud of the progression they've made in the last 30 days.

11
12 COMM. NORTHCROSS INDICATED THAT HE'S SEEN SOME IMPROVEMENTS
13 AND ASKED IF THEY WERE SELLING CARS CURRENTLY.

14
15 Ali Ibrahim Ghossin answered negatively.

16
17 Mr. Forrest indicated that Mr. Ghossin is moving his cars
18 there from his lot in Taylor but will not sell until
19 receiving approval.

20
21 COMM. CADD INDICATED THAT THERE HAS BEEN QUITE AN
22 IMPROVEMENT IN THE LAST 30 DAYS.

23
24 COMM. WATERMAN INDICATED THAT SHE WASN'T AT THE LAST MEETING
25 BUT SHE DID FOLLOW THE MINUTES AND WANTED TO REITERATE WHAT
26 WAS SAID, SHE'S HAPPY THE BUSINESS IS MOVING HERE AND IT IS
27 WELL RECEIVED BY EVERYBODY WHO DOES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN
28 THE CITY.

29
30 COMM. PARLOVE THANKED THE APPLICANT FOR THEIR EFFORTS,
31 STATED IT'S LOOKING CHEERFUL AND SHE CAN DEFINITELY SEE A
32 LOT OF IMPROVEMENT.

33
34 COMM. PAYNE THANKED THE APPLICANTS FOR THEIR INTEREST AND
35 ASKED IF REPAIRS WOULD BE MADE ON SITE.

36
37 Mr. Ghossin indicated repairs and preparing the automobiles
38 for sale is done at the Taylor site.

39
40 COMM. PAYNE ASKED IF THEY WERE USING THE LOT TO THE RIGHT OF
41 THEIR BUSINESS FOR OVERFLOW.

42
43 Mr. Ghossin answered that that is a separate auto dealer's
44 property.

45
46 COMM. PAYNE INQUIRED ABOUT GARBAGE PICKUP.

25 Mr. Sabo answered that Mr. Ghossin will be using the weekly pickup.

3

1
2 COMM. PAYNE ASKED MR. GHOSSIN IF HE WAS IN AGREEMENT WITH
3 THE RECOMMENDATION.

4 Mr. Ghossin answered affirmatively.

5 CHAIR THOMAS INDICATED THAT HE WAS SURPRISED AND PLEASED
6 WITH THE PROGRESS AND IS HOPING THAT THEY CAN ADD-ON WITH A
7 COUPLE OF ADDITIONAL PROPERTIES AND CONTINUE TO UPGRADE A
8 VITAL SECTOR OF EVERY ECONOMY.

9 COMM. PAYNE INQUIRED ABOUT SIGNAGE.

10 Mr. Sabo indicated that they need to pull a permit for the
11 sign.

12 COMM. PARLOVE MADE A MOTION TO CONSIDER UNDER WHICH
13 CIRCUMSTANCES A USED VEHICLE SALES LOCATION MAY BE
14 APPROPRIATE FOR THE PROPOSED SITE PLAN AND SPECIAL EXCEPTION
15 PERMIT FOR PF-16-07 STEINWAY PROPERTY MANAGEMENT USED
16 VEHICLE AND SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS LISTED BELOW:

17 COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 2.514(B)(1) FOR
18 DISPLAY OF VEHICLE SETBACK REQUIREMENT OR OBTAIN A
19 VARIANCE FROM THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS.

20 COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 2.514(B)(2) FOR AN
21 OBSCURING FENCE OR WALL FOR THE ADJACENT RESIDENTIAL
22 ZONE DISTRICT OR OBTAIN A VARIANCE FROM ZONING BOARD OF
23 APPEALS.

24 COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 2.514(C) FOR SITE
25 DEBRIS AND WEED.

26 COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 4.408 SERVICE AREA
27 SCREENING FOR THE TRASH RECEPTACLE OR A VARIANCE FROM
28 THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS.

29 COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 4.405 FOR A TYPE A
30 RESIDENTIAL BUFFER OR A VARIANCE FROM THE ZONING BOARD
31 OF APPEALS.

32 AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE CITY OF PONTIAC
33 DEPARTMENT REQUIREMENTS AND CITY BUSINESS LICENSE
34 REQUIREMENTS.

35 COMM. CADD SECONDED

36 VOTE: AYES: Parlove, Payne, Thomas, Cadd, Northcross,
37 Waterman

38 NAYS: None

39 ABSTAIN: None

40

Vote 6-0-0 motion carries
25 CHAIR TAYLOR OPENED THE DISCUSSION REGARDING PROPOSED
ENTREPRENEURIAL DISTRICT OVERLAY ZONE FROM 2014 MASTER PLAN

4

1 UPDATE.

2 Charles Smith gave an overview and indicated that they've
added two overlay districts and that their strategy is to
3 allow an applicant to use a number of different zoning
district designation standards as a tool in determining how
4 they might redevelop a property. He also indicated that
this will be a benefit for somebody trying to redevelop,
5 that they don't have to go through the rezoning process
which will make it a much easier process for them to come in
6 with an idea that is admittedly outside of the box that we
are accustomed to thinking in. He stated that the way he's
7 written it is that the Planning Commission will have the
discretion to use the most lenient standards applicable to
8 the use and uses the context of the neighborhood to kind of
guide what the development standards are. He also stated
9 that next month, they're going to come with a really precise
map of where these districts are and which the different
10 ones are.

11 CHAIR TAYLOR INDICATED HE THINKS IT'S A GREAT IDEA AND ASKED
THE FELLOW COMMISSIONERS IF THEY HAVE ANY COMMENTS.

12

COMM. PARLOVE ASKED MR. SMITH IF HE WAS "CHIP", THE NEW
13 COUNCILPERSON.

14 Mr. Smith answered affirmatively.

15 COMM. PARLOVE INDICATED THAT THIS IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT
DIRECTION TO BE WIDE OPEN AND A BLANK CANVAS FOR AN
16 OPPORTUNITY THAT SOME OTHER COMMUNITIES WILL ULTIMATELY ENVY
PONTIAC FOR AND THAT THEY'LL COME AND ENJOY AND THAT SHE
17 APPRECIATES ALL THEIR HARD WORK ON THIS.

18 COMM. NORTHCROSS ASKED IF THERE IS ANYTHING TO BE GAINED
FROM A REVIEW POSSIBLY OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS AND
19 INDICATED THAT HE AGREES THAT WE DO NEED LOTS OF FLEXIBILITY
BECAUSE THINGS ARE CHANGING SO RAPIDLY. HE ALSO STATED THAT
20 THIS IS A GOOD FIRST STEP TOWARD WALKING THROUGH AND
CHANGING THE ORDINANCES THAT NEED TO BE CHANGED TO SUPPORT
21 THE MASTER PLAN.

22 Mr. Smith indicated that when the City's competing against
Detroit or Auburn Hills or Sterling Heights for advanced
23 manufacturing, for clean industrial uses, nobody has this
level of flexibility, nobody can take an applicant through

24 the process as quickly and come up with as good a product as
Pontiac, which is one more tool in marketing properties.

25

5

1 COMM. CADD ASKED IF THE EICG AND THE ERCG WILL OPEN UP SOME
START-UP MONEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESSES THAT WANT TO
2 START UP TO GIVE THEM MORE FLEXIBILITY.

3 Mr. Smith indicated that their strategy is to try to create
opportunities FOR clusters of industry groups through office
4 groups to cluster together to share ideas to share costs, to
bounce ideas off of one another, to really create what they
5 would call the ecosystem of innovation.

6 COMM. WATERMAN INDICATED THAT SHE COULD ATTEST TO THE FACT
THAT, AS SOON AS IT IS PUT IN THE MASTER PLAN, IT WILL BE
7 USED.

8 Mr. Smith indicated that it is so important and when new
developers or businesses come in, Pontiac really needs to be
9 prepared and ready for that and that he will present a
finalized draft to review in advance of next month's
10 meeting.

11 COMM. NORTHCROSS ASKED IF THERE WAS A WAY OF PUTTING A LINK
IN THE ZONING ORDINANCE IN REFERENCE TO THE DEVELOPMENT
12 STANDARDS.

13 Mr. Smith indicated that is what they plan to do.

14 CHAIR TAYLOR OPENED PUBLIC COMMENT.

15 Mr. Cole Yoakum, 32 Newberry, Pontiac, Michigan introduced
himself and indicated that Micah 6 is a collaboration of
16 himself and several friends from college. He indicated
that, three years ago, they wanted to come in and start
17 doing positive things on a neighborhood level and so they
bought the house at 32 Newberry and then they expanded and
18 bought a second house at 42 Newberry and they purchased the
vacant lot in the middle with the intention of building
19 community gardens. He stated that in their third year of
growing they've grown 5,000 pounds of food that they've
20 given away in their neighborhood. He stated that in the
first year they had an issue with people cutting through
21 their lots, sneaking in at night or kids throwing tomatoes
at each other so they decided to build a privacy fence
22 around the garden. He indicated that he, then, got a notice
in the mail that he was supposed to pull a permit for that.
23 He concluded that, when attempting to do so, he found he
could not, due to the rule of not being able to put a fence

24 around vacant property.

25 CHAIR TAYLOR STATED THAT IN TRYING TO FIND A HOME FOR A
THOUSAND PARCELS IN THIS CITY, THERE MIGHT BE SOMEONE WHO

6

1 WANTED TO HAVE A CHILD PLAYGROUND WHO LIVES NEXT DOOR AND
ALL KINDS OF ISSUES AND THAT THEY ARE GOING TO HAVE TO
2 CHANGE THAT ORDINANCE.

3 COMM. WATERMAN INDICATED THAT EVERYTHING ISN'T FORESEEN, AS
YOU PUT THE ORDINANCE IN AT ONE TIME, IT MIGHT HAVE MADE
4 SENSE BUT IT DOESN'T NOW AND THAT THE ORDINANCE AND LAWS
SHOULD BE MADE TO BENEFIT WHAT YOU WANT TO DO FOR THE
5 PEOPLE. SHE ALSO THANKED THE CHAIR FOR BRINGING THE ISSUE
TO THE BOARD'S ATTENTION AND ADDED THEY WANT TO ENCOURAGE
6 THAT AND FIND POLICIES THAT WILL HELP TO SUPPORT THAT.

7 Mr. Karl Gleiss indicated he owns a high-tech manufacturing
company and his realtor told him his property was zoned C3.

8 He indicated the business needed a wider door and the
contractor told him he did not need a permit but he was
9 wrong, so he ran into some trouble and also found that the
zoning does not allow for operation of lathes and mills.

10

CHAIR THOMAS INDICATED THAT MR. GLEISS HAS A MEETING WITH
11 THE ZBA ON 2-16-16 AND THAT IN HIS OPINION, THIS IS THE KIND
OF BUSINESSMAN THAT IS NEEDED IN PONTIAC AND THAT THEY'VE
12 LOST SO MUCH MANUFACTURING. HE STATED THAT HE THOUGHT IT
WAS IMPORTANT FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION AND IN REGARDS TO
13 THE MASTER PLAN TO HEAR THE DAY-TO-DAY ISSUES OF A
BUSINESSMAN WHO WANTS TO COME HERE AND DO BUSINESS AND THAT
14 THE CITY NEEDS TO MAKE IT AS SIMPLE AS THEY CAN IF IT'S A
VIABLE PROPOSAL AND, IN HIS OPINION, THIS IS AN
15 EXTRAORDINARILY VIABLE PROPOSAL AND HOPEFULLY THEY CAN FIND
A PROPER SOLUTION.

16

Mr. Smith indicated that, because Mr. Gleiss' property falls
17 into the overlay district, this would have been something
they could have just applied a different district standard
18 to and he wouldn't have had to go through the Zoning Board
of Appeals. He also stated that all of that language about
19 lathes and light industrial is a holdover from the '80s and
is just something that's never been changed.

20

CHAIR THOMAS INDICATED HE MET KARL AT HIS PLACE OF BUSINESS
21 AND WALKED AWAY AND THOUGHT HERE'S A GUY WE HAVE TO FIGURE
OUT HOW TO GET HIM INTO BUSINESS AND THAT, THIS IS NOT MEANT
22 TO FAULT ANYBODY THE CITY IS TRYING TO MOVE FORWARD AND IT
HAS TO BE UNDERSTOOD WHAT THE PROBLEMS ARE AND THEY HAVE TO
23 MEASURE THE OLD ORDINANCE, THE OLD ZONING, THE OLD CODES OR

WHATEVER THEY HAPPEN TO BE AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT WHAT PEOPLE
24 ARE TRYING TO DO IN 2016.

25 COMM. PARLOVE INDICATED THAT HER REQUEST WOULD BE FOR
MR. GLEISS TO HAVE PATIENCE AS WELL AS OTHER PEOPLE THAT ARE

7

1 COMING TO OUR CITY AS EVERYONE WORKS THROUGH THIS TOGETHER.

2 Mr. Karl Gleiss indicated to the Commission that he is
losing \$1,000 per week and that he wishes he didn't have to
3 go through the whole zoning Board of Appeals, which would
mean another six weeks.

4

COMM. NORTHCROSS ASKED IF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL DISTRICT
5 OVERLAY ZONE WOULD AFFECT HIS AREA.

6 Mr. Sabo answered negatively.

7 COMM. NORTHCROSS ASKED IF HE WAS NORTH OF WALTON.

8 Mr. Sabo answered affirmatively.

9 COMM. NORTHCROSS ASKED IF HIS AREA WAS IN THE PURPLE.

10 Mr. Gleiss answered that his business is not, that it is
across the street from it.

11

Mr. Sabo indicated that the future land use map can be
12 changed to make his area purple and that they all made the
best call they could in terms of figuring out where these
13 areas are and indicated that the purple areas are industrial
lands.

14

COMM. NORTHCROSS INDICATED THAT WOULD SET A PRECEDENT TO
15 HANDLE ITEMS IN THE FUTURE. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT SPECIFIC
TYPES OF EQUIPMENT OR CERTAIN TYPES OF STRUCTURES THAT
16 REFLECT A TIME PERIOD WHEN THAT'S NO LONGER APPROPRIATE TO
UTILIZE THOSE ITEMS IN WAY WE'RE USING THEM TODAY. THAT
17 WOULD ADD A BRIDGE TILL WE CAN GET GOING TO HEAD OFF FUTURE
ACTIVITIES SUCH AS THIS. WHO USES A LATHE ANYMORE? MAYBE A
18 HOBBYIST WITH A WOOD LATHE.

19 Mr. Gleiss answered that it's all CNC equipment that
everyone is seeing on the projector.

20

COMM. NORTHCROSS INDICATED THAT IT'S ALL OLD-STYLE LANGUAGE
21 AND THAT IT NEEDS TO COMPORT WITH 2016, GOING INTO 2036 AND
THAT THERE CERTAINLY WILL BE A NEED TO FENCE IN VACANT LOTS
22 WITH THE RISE OF URBAN GARDENS.

23 COMM. CADD ASKED IF THERE IS A WAY TO SPEED IT OR MASSAGE IT
OR MODIFY IT TO MAKE IT QUICKER BECAUSE WHAT SHE PICKED UP
24 ON IS IT'S COSTING HIM \$1,000 A DAY.

25 Mr. Gleiss indicated that it was \$1,000 per week.

8

1 CHAIR THOMAS INDICATED THE BOARD HAS DONE SOME GREAT STUFF
AND, AS THEY TRY TO GO FORWARD, THESE ARE SOME THINGS THAT
2 THEY JUST NEED TO PUT THEIR RADAR ON TO SEE IF THEY CAN
FACILITATE AND HELP TO CHANGE.

3
4 COMM. PAYNE INQUIRED, WHEN APPLICANTS COME FORWARD AND THERE
ARE PUBLIC HEARINGS, IF THEY ARE ADVISED TO WRITE LETTERS TO
THE NEIGHBORHOODS AROUND THEM.

5
6 Mr. Gleiss indicated that he would but is concerned he might
run across somebody that was opposed to everything and then
would raise a stink about it, so he trusts the judgment of
7 the Zoning Board, thinks they'll be reasonable about it. He
also indicated that he went to the last meeting to get a
8 feel for it and his impression is, as long as the community
doesn't complain, they probably aren't going to see a reason
9 to complain.

10 CHAIR THOMAS INDICATED THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION LIST HAS BEEN
BROKEN OUT INTO A MORE READABLE FORMAT AND NUMBERED.

11
12 COMM. NORTHCROSS INDICATED THAT HE HAD NOT ARRIVED WHEN THE
MINUTES FROM JANUARY 6, 2016 WERE APPROVED BUT WOULD LIKE TO
HAVE THE SECTION WHERE IT SAID THAT HE READ THE SAMPLE
13 RECOMMENDATION EXPANDED INTO THE ACTUAL VERBIAGE OF THE
SAMPLE RECOMMENDATION SO THAT IT'S LISTED IN THE RECORD
14 VERBATIM AS TO WHAT WAS READ IN CASE THERE IS ANY QUESTION
IN THE FUTURE. HE THEN INDICATED THAT PEOPLE NEED TO
15 REGISTER TO VOTE, AS THERE ARE SOME VERY IMPORTANT ISSUES.
HE FURTHER ADDED THAT HE FEELS SCHOOLS ARE THE BACKBONE OF
16 ANY CITY AND THAT PEOPLE SHOULD VOTE ON ISSUES AFFECTING THE
SCHOOLS.

17
18 Mr. Paul R. Smith, a real estate agent, 3269 Shawnee Lane
Court, Waterford, Michigan indicated he came here tonight
for the purpose of gaining information regarding what's
19 happening in the City of Pontiac. He said he's currently
working with many clients that are interested in Pontiac and
20 that many times the comments that you hear or read in the
paper, everything you see about Pontiac is negative
21 unfortunately, so he didn't want to use that as his basis of
gearing information to pass on his opinion about what's
22 going on in Pontiac. He stated that he decided why not

start with the Planning Commission, it might be interesting
23 and that he wants to say that he's compelled to compliment
everybody in the room on the positive attitude, the great
24 things that they're attempting to do, encouraging investment
in the community by working with local business people, by
25 working with local residents. He concluded it was very
refreshing and he's pleased as punch and glad to see it and

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1 that he'll be back again to see how things continue to
happen positively in the City.

2

COMM. PARLOVE INDICATED THAT SHE JUST HANDED OUT A COMPLETE
3 STREETS FLYER AND THAT THERE WILL BE INPUTTING SESSIONS TO
MAKE THE STREETS WALKABLE AND BIKE-ABLE AND THERE ARE
4 APPROXIMATELY EIGHT DIFFERENT OPPORTUNITIES TO INPUT THROUGH
THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY AND INTO THE EARLY PART OF MARCH AND
5 TWO DIFFERENT PLACES TO FIND OUT THE INFORMATION, A PHONE
NUMBER OF (248) 858-8810 OR THE WEBSITE IS
6 walkbike.info\pontiac AND THEN RECITED THE DATES, TIMES AND
PLACES. SHE CONCLUDED WITH ENCOURAGING RESIDENTS TO PROVIDE
7 INPUT, STATING THAT IT IS VERY IMPORTANT IN CONTINUING TO
GROW THE CITY.

8

CHAIR THOMAS CLOSED PUBLIC COMMENT AND ASKED IF THERE WAS A
9 MOTION TO ADJOURN.

10 COMM. PARLOVE MOVED TO ADJOURN.

11 COMM. CADD SUPPORTED.

12 ADJOURNMENT: 8:13 P.M.

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