

MUNSTER PLAN COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
Meeting Date: August 8, 2023

The announced meeting location was Munster Town Hall and could be accessed remotely via Zoom, a video conferencing application.

Call to Order: 7:31pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Members in Attendance:

Steve Tulowitzki
Lee Ann Mellon
Bill Baker
Andy Koultourides
Rachel Branagan

Members Absent:

Roland Raffin
Brian Specht

Staff Present:

Dustin Anderson, Town Manager
Jill DiTommaso, PE, Deputy Town Manager
Rachel Christianson, HWC Engineering
David Wickland, Attorney

Approval of Minutes:

a. July 11, 2023, Regular Plan Commission Meeting

The minutes were amended to include Mr. Baker's request that the Plan Commission be made aware of the particular parcel rules when a PUD amendment petition is brought before them in the future.

Motion: Mr. Koultourides moved to approve the July 11, 2023; meeting minutes as amended.

Second: Mr. Tulowitzki

Vote: Yes – 5 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

Preliminary Hearings:

a. PC23-016 Timothy Lentz of Tonn and Blank Construction LLC is requesting approval of an amendment to the Franciscan Alliance Planned Unit Development to accommodate height restrictions on the existing Hospital campus at 701 Superior Avenue.

Ms. Christianson said Franciscan Hospital is seeking an amendment to the PUD due to some newly revised height restrictions that have been placed on the development by the FAA. Currently, this PUD ordinance is governed by ordinance number 1597 that was established back in 2013. That was amended back in 2016, that is ordinance number 1677. The Planning Department has met with the petitioners on two separate occasions to discuss the PUD campus revisions. The reconfigurations are necessary because of the height restriction changes. For background, several years ago the FAA allowed the structures near the airport to be up to seven stories in height. That has now been changed to allow structures up to five stories in height. They are changing the plans, instead of vertical, they are getting more horizontal. She said the petitioner can speak in more detail about the plans they have for the site. In answer to Mr. Baker's question, she said that the site plan on page 5 of the staff report represents what the petitioners would like to do.

Tim Lentz of Tonn and Blank, 1623 Greenwood, Michigan City, introduced himself. He said he is representing Franciscan on the request to amend the PUD. The reason for the amendment is correct as stated; the FAA requirements have changed. Previously, they had planned for a six story building and a four story building on the campus. They were no longer able to put up a six story building because of the new height requirements. They are now editing the plan to be a five story building and a five story building. They are subtracting from one building and adding to another in order to balance the campus and meet the requirements for the FAA. In addition, the mechanical spaces were going to be interstitial spaces which added to the height of the buildings. They pulled the interstitial spaces out and moved the mechanicals to a central plant on the campus. That will fill the campus mechanical needs. They also shifted the helipad to the north. He explained that all the changes requested are meant to meet the new FAA height requirements. They are just editing and balancing the campus. Mr. Koultourides asked what they are looking at on the site plan in the diagram on page 5 of the staff report. Mr. Lentz explained that it is an edit of the currently approved PUD. The orange buildings exist. The east M.O.B. is existing as a three story building with approval to go to six stories. The future building tower was six stories and is now five stories and the future diagnostic center was four stories and is now five. Mr. Koultourides said he specifically wanted to know why there is a six story structure on the site plan when they are limited to five stories. Mr. Lentz said that was a great question. He explained that with a hospital building, the floor to floor height is higher. It is really a height restriction, not a floor restriction, so building a five story hospital building is higher than an M.O.B. Additionally, when you go further east the restriction gets higher. They are able to build the M.O.B. a little higher than the hospital buildings because it's further away from the airport. The same is true for the parking garage. They can leave that because the height from story to story is less. He clarified that M.O.B. stands for medical office building. Mr. Tulowitzki said he read in the staff report that another reason for the amendment is to change the traffic flow. He asked for a characterization of what changes are planned with the traffic. Mr. Lentz said they had talked in the site plan about various flows across the site. After those discussions, they decided not to change any traffic flows for the site. To accommodate the four story building, the footprint changes slightly, so on the south there is a shift but, per the discussions, they are maintaining that through put throughout the campus. Mr. Tulowitzki said he is assuming the new five story and the new five story will have the same number of beds and uses for parking requirements. Mr. Lentz said they will have the same uses. They have made sure that the parking ratio stays the same as the previous, 4.25 for medical office and 2.5 for hospital space. That still applies to this plan, they were not asked to change that. Mr. Baker asked if there was anything else going through the process or if this was just a change to the plan. Mr. Lentz said right now this is just the Planned Unit Development. He said there is more coming that would be going through the development plan process but right now this process is just to change the PUD. Mr. Baker said that when they move forward in the next step, they will need to have a copy of what is currently approved and what is being modified from that so they can clearly see the differences and are able to track them. For instance, it should show if the helipad moved at another time or if that move is part of this petition.

Motion: Mr. Tulowitzki moved to set PC Docket No.23-016 to a public hearing at the September 12, 2023, Plan Commission meeting.

Second: Ms. Mellon

Vote: Yes – 5 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

Public Hearings:

- a. **PC23-018 Maple Leaf Crossing LLC requesting approval of a Development Plan for a retail building at Maple Leaf Crossing Lot 5, located at 9470 Calumet Avenue**

Ms. Christianson said this is part of Maple Leaf Crossing. Page 2 of the staff report shows the area under discussion on this petition, it is outlined in red. This is governed by ordinance number 1803. It was adopted in July of 2020. The approved PUD includes developmental standards and the site plan. This project calls for the development of Lot 5, which is a 7,098 square foot retail structure that will have five units. Additional site improvements include sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting. The proposed structure has a mixture of brick, stone, and aluminum siding. The facade structure includes steel canopies. There is a rendering of this in the staff report. She reviewed the proposed building developmental standards in the site plans that were submitted and found very few issues. There were two she noted. All of the materials match up with what is supposed to be Lot 5 but according to the ordinance, all mechanicals should be screened so it is not visible to those at street level on all sides of the building. In the rear of the structure, there are regular mechanical elements that are not screened yet. She would recommend that the screening be added. It also states that the light fixtures should be of high quality, commercial grade and that those fixtures be constructed and installed to be glare-free in order to be in compliance with the applicable code requirements. This submission did not include the fixtures for this building or for the site so she recommends that when this goes to be permitted, they include those light specifications so staff can ensure the quality. Her staff recommendation is to approve this petition as presented with conditions.

Jay Lieser of Maple Leaf Crossing, LLC, 1630 Cherry Blossom Drive, said this is one of two buildings they have up tonight which are essentially identical buildings on Lots 5 and 6. He said the entire site plan is already approved; he is talking about the buildings today. To address Ms. Christianson's comments, the mechanicals will be on the roof, in the middle of the roof. The building has a four foot, 10 inch parapet in front and a 2 foot, 8 inch one in the rear. They believe the parapet will provide adequate screening for the mechanicals on the roof. The lighting in question are decorative LED lights that simply provide an architectural element. They shine up and down. They are not meant to be pedestrian lights. Ms. Branagan asked about the intent of the columns between the glass. Mr. Lieser said it is Indiana limestone. Ms. Branagan said it is a veneer and she thought it would be a less busy look with larger stone which has with less grout lines. She then asked about the roofline specifically why the stone doesn't go all the way across between the columns. There was further discussion about the materials and the lighting. Mr. Lieser said it will look very nice and will complement what they are doing elsewhere in the complex. Mr. Tulowitzki asked where they were with the containers. Mr. Lieser said they will be last. The Hyatt is opening next month the office building after that. The container inhabitants need the traffic from the hotel and the office building and the comings and goings from that. Mr. Tulowitzki said he's just trying to envision what those will be like. Mr. Lieser said that there are a pair of them in front and there will be more to come. They are committed but they will be driven by those other two buildings and a restaurant. Their goal is to be done with the whole development first. Mr. Tulowitzki asked if the tenants are known and sharable. Mr. Lieser said School of Rock is taking three units and there will be a yoga studio. They are working with other companies, a physical therapy place, a pain clinic and four units to doctors. They are limited in depth and square footage. Mr. Baker asked where the tenant signage would go on the facade. Mr. Lieser said it will go horizontal across between the columns. Ms. Christianson said in this PUD there is no specific mention of signage so any signs in the PUD would have to adhere to the town ordinance. They would have to adhere or seek a variance. Ms. Mellon asked Ms. Christenson to clarify the standards and the issues. In the one referencing lighting, was she referring to the decorative lighting on the building? Ms. Christensen said she is referring to both because the PUD ordinance is not specific for building lighting or site lighting. The way she interpreted it, it is for any lighting on the site. She doesn't believe they have specifications for the light fixtures for the site or for the building. Mr. Lieser said that he submitted a 43 page document on July 17, 2023. Ms. DiTommaso said they have been in contact with the lighting contractor

because, in the original submittal, they are not full cut off lights. Ms. Christianson said the reason for the condition is because we don't have the specifications yet. We can't say for certain because we don't have all of the information. She said she has confidence in the petitioner that those will be provided. If this gets approved and the wrong lights go in, it becomes a code enforcement issue later. We need the information up front so we can review them and avoid that enforcement issue later. Mr. Tulowitzki asked if condition one, the screening of the mechanicals, is satisfied by the placement of those on the roof. Ms. Christenson said yes, but the electrical service and meter boxes on the rear are technically mechanical. They are service and mechanical and should be screened. Mr. Anderson said we went through this exercise before with other large developments. The view was that the large HVAC units were the mechanicals that should be screened. In fact, NIPSCO was adverse to the screening of meters and service locations.

Mr. Baker opened the public hearing. There were no comments, and the public hearing was closed.

Ms. Christenson said the site plan should be submitted with proper drawings to reflect the most up to date information across the site plan for including Lots 5 and 6.

Motion: Mr. Tulowitzki moved to recommend approval of PC Docket No. 23-018, a Development Plan for a retail building at Maple Leaf Crossing Lot 5 located at 9470 Calumet Avenue, with the following conditions:

1. The petitioner will submit high quality commercial grade light fixture specifications for the structure and the site that are satisfactory to staff.
2. The petitioner will submit an updated lighting plan that reflects the site plan that was approved by the Town Council on July 17th, 2023.

Second: Mr. Koultourides

Vote: Yes – 5 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

b. PC23-019 Maple Leaf Crossing LLC requesting approval of a Development Plan for a retail building at Maple Leaf Crossing Lot 6, located at 9460 Calumet Avenue.

Ms. Christianson said this was an identical situation. Staff recommendation is to approve this petition with the condition that a building site plan be submitted. There is no site lighting on Lot 6 so a site lighting plan is not needed in this petition.

Mr. Baker opened the public hearing. Hearing no comments, he closed the public hearing.

Motion: Mr. Koultourides moved to recommend approval of PC Docket No. 23-019, a Development Plan for a retail building at Maple Leaf Crossing Lot 6 located at 9460 Calumet Avenue, with the following condition:

1. The petitioner will submit high quality commercial grade light fixture specifications for the structure and the site that are satisfactory to staff.

Second: Ms. Mellon

Vote: Yes – 5 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

Findings of Fact:

- a. **PC23-012 Dave Otte/Community Foundation of NWI, Inc. is requesting approval of an amendment to Ordinance 1206: The CFNI Business Planned Unit Development to accommodate an addition to the existing Diagnostic Center Building in Block 2.**

Motion: Mr. Tulowitzki moved to approve the Findings of Fact for PC Docket No. 23-012 granting approval of an amendment to Ordinance 1206: The CFNI Business Planned Unit Development to accommodate an addition to the existing Diagnostic Center Building in Block 2.

Second: Ms. Branagan

Vote: Yes – 5 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

- b. **PC23-013 Matt Kimmel/Centennial Village LLC, is requesting approval of an amendment to the Centennial Village Planned Unit Development, revisions to the CV Design Standards and Site Plan to include revisions to the size, location, and shape of Buildings "I" and "M".**

Motion: Mr. Tulowitzki moved to approve the Findings of Fact for PC Docket No. 23-013 granting approval of an amendment to the Centennial Village Planned Unit Development, revisions to the CV Design Standards and Site Plan to include revisions to the size, location, and shape of Buildings "I" and "M".

Second: Ms. Branagan

Vote: Yes – 5 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

- c. **PC23-014 Matt Kimmel/Centennial Village LLC, is requesting approval of a subdivision, replat of Lot A to create two new Lots (Lot 8 and Lot 9) Centennial Village Planned Unit Development**

Motion: Mr. Tulowitzki moved to approve the Findings of Fact for PC Docket No. 23-014 granting approval of a subdivision, replat of Lot A to create two new Lots (Lot 8 and Lot 9) Centennial Village Planned Unit Development.

Second: Ms. Branagan

Vote: Yes – 5 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

- d. **PC23-015 Matt Kimmel/Centennial Village LLC, is requesting approval of a development plan of Building "M" within Centennial Village Planned Unit Development.**

Motion: Mr. Tulowitzki moved to approve the Findings of Fact for PC Docket No. 23-015, a Development Plan of Building "M" within Centennial Village Planned Unit Development.

Second: Ms. Branagan

Vote: Yes – 5 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

Additional Business/Items for Discussion:

- a. **PC23-017 Maple Leaf Crossing LLC and HP Munster LLC are requesting approval of a final plat for Maple Leaf Crossing PUD, a replat that modifies Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and Outlots A and B.**

Motion: Mr. Tulowitzki moved to approve a final plat for Maple Leaf Crossing PUD, a replat to the Maple Leaf Crossing PUD that modifies Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and Outlots A and B. This is the second plat amendment.

Second: Ms. Branagan

Vote: Yes – 5 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

Next Meeting: Mr. Baker announced that the next Regular Business Meeting will be September 12, 2023.


Adjournment:

Motion: Ms. Mellon moved to adjourn.

Second: Mr. Koultourides

Vote: Yes – 5 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries.

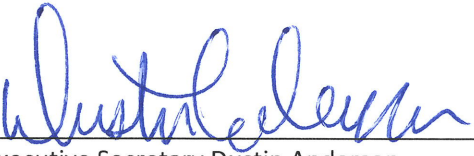
Meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm



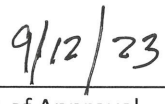
Chairman Bill Baker
Plan Commission



Date of Approval



Executive Secretary Dustin Anderson
Plan Commission



Date of Approval