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**SYCAMORE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**MINUTES OF OCTOBER 9, 2023, 6:00 PM**

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**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Bill Davey called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and City Clerk Mary Kalk called the roll. Those Commissioners present were Matt Woodstrup, Nancy Copple, Dave Finney, Eli Hamingson, Rachel Sauber, Ted Strack, and Chuck Stowe. Commissioners Alan Zantout, Doug Breunlin, Eric Jones, and Nate Kitterman were absent. Others present were City Manager Michael Hall, City Attorney Keith Foster, and Director of Community Development John Sauter.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion-** Commissioner Finney moved to approve the agenda and Commissioner Strack seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote** Chairperson Davey called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 8- 0.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of the Minutes for the Meeting of September 11, 2023.

**Motion-** Commissioner Strack moved to approve the Minutes of the September 11, 2023, meeting, and Commissioner Hamingson seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote** Chairperson Davey called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 8- 0.

**AUDIENCE TO VISITORS**

**NEW BUSINESS / ACTION ITEMS**

- A. Consideration of a Request by Chris Youssi of Youssi Custom Homes for a Variation from Article 6.5.2.3.B, R-2, Two Family Residence, of the Sycamore Unified Development Ordinance to Reduce the Required Rear Setback from 30 feet to 25 feet for Certain Lots within the Sycamore Crossings Subdivision.

Chairperson Davey opened the Public Hearing at 6:03 pm. Hearing no comments, closed the Public Hearing at 6:04 pm.

City Manager Michael Hall said that Mr. Youssi is asking for a variance from the UDO (Unified Development Ordinance) to accommodate a proposed three-season room. They are requesting, for lots 3-20, the required set-back distance be reduced from 30 feet to 25 feet. Lots 28-46 can already accommodate the three-season room as the current setbacks are fine.

Ron Harper 710 Anjali Court asked if this affects any existing lots.

Community Development Director John Sauter said it affects all but four on the west side of Anjali Court, where two are developed and two are large enough to accommodate the three-season room. There will be no effect on the existing lots.

**Motion**

Commissioner Hamingson made a motion to recommend to the Consideration and Commissioner Finney seconded the motion.

**Roll Call Vote** Chairperson Davey called for a roll call vote to approve the motion. Commissioners Woodstrup, Copple, Finney, Hamingson, Sauber, Strack, Stowe, and Chairperson Davey voted aye. Motion carried 8-0.

**WORKSHOPS**

- A. Consideration of a Development Proposal by Chris Mayer of BCM Industrial Park, LLC for the Property Located at 421 North California Street.

City Manager Michael Hall said this is a conceptual discussion, so no action or decisions are being taken. The applicant is looking to convert the current manufacturing space within the Sycamore Industrial Park into a distillery, full-service restaurant, tasting room, banquet hall, and live indoor/outdoor entertainment. The approximately 41,300 square foot building is currently zoned M-2, Heavy Manufacturing which does not permit the proposed retail, restaurant, tasting room, banquet hall, and live

entertainment as they are allowed in C-2, and C-3 districts only. Use categories for the proposed distillery and tasting room could be created to facilitate the proposal plus future requests. He reviewed the new and amended definitions and uses per the agenda. The petitioner is looking for feedback.

Mike Gilbert, 24231 Farmstead Lane, Plainfield, representing Chris Mayer, BCM Industrial Park, said they are excited for this proposed project and opportunity to save and repurpose the old buildings and structures yet keep the feel of the industrial park. The engineers and architects are here for questions.

Andrew Pape, 900 Chicago Avenue, Evanston, EPSTEIN Interior Designer, said they are excited for this project and said that the space will include a 20,000 square foot banquet hall, two kitchens; one for the banquet hall and the main kitchen for the restaurant which will have a bar and a stage, outdoor seating, and a tasting room for the alcohol sold on the premises. They are looking at the possibility of an inside courtyard area for small weddings.

Dave Hilty, 19391 Barron Road, Mokena, Civil Engineer, described the site plan of 4.7 acres of the industrial park for which they are maintaining most of the impervious area and squaring off the south parking lot to optimize parking. The required number of spaces is 224, for which there are 153 existing. This plan provides 166 spots, but the remainder will be provided with a shared parking agreement. The utilities, sanitary sewer, water service, and storm sewer, will be maintained. They are adding a proposed sidewalk along California Street, as well as sight lighting and landscaping. Truck traffic will continue to enter from California Street and added that the peak time of the restaurant and banquet hall won't be the same peak time as truck traffic.

Commissioner Stowe said they should talk to the people from the neighborhood and asked what the required distance from a church is to have a liquor license.

Community Development Director John Sauter said it is currently 100 feet and said this is a good point to bring up as there are two components to this. There is the development itself for which Mr. Mayer's team did a good job describing the project and then there's the use and liquor portion. He referenced the agenda background and said definitions and use groups would need to be created for this proposed use, but that this isn't specific to this use as the use groups and the UDO were adopted in 2005. It is a little outdated and they feel that the proposed use groups, most of which are ancillary to a primary use such as a distillery, would require a Special Use Permit. There's a good vetting process for those uses and it also opens the door for similar uses in other areas in town. Many towns have gone in this direction in transforming older buildings that are no longer being used for manufacturing. We would have the ability to do this, yet everything would be vetted because of the Special Use process. The liquor portion needs some attention and has been brought up to the appropriate people. He said that all of this would be in the form of amendments to the UDO which would come before the PZC and City Council and any liquor amendments would go before the City Council for approval.

Commissioner Strack said that Chris Mayer has done an amazing job with the factory and would like to find a way to make this happen. He said regardless of what they do, they won't keep everybody happy but that they need to do what the majority of the community wants.

Chairperson Davey said he agreed with Ted to get something to work in that area and that it is a good idea but would need to see about the neighbors.

Commissioner Hamingson said he is all for the additions of the uses but with this being so close to residential zoning, it seems it would be better suited to commercial zoning as a buffer.

Community Development Director John Sauter referred to the zoning map and explained that the purple area is manufacturing zoning and that if they inserted some commercial zoning, it would be spot zoning. They always want to keep the zoning congruent. He also added that the distillery is a manufacturing use as the others are ancillary which will need to come before the PZC.

Commissioner Woodstrup noted that the property has been vacant for so long that the neighbors are used to not having anything there so it's difficult for them to accept something new. He said if this isn't what they want, asked what do they want, and said "something's got to go there and at some point, somebody's got to decide what is acceptable".

Commissioner Stowe rebutted that they need to think of the neighbors and cannot just be the majority.

Commissioner Finney suggested the petitioners have a neighborhood meeting.

Commissioner Strack reminded that for the petitioner, it needs to be financially feasible.

David Scott, 2071 Bunker Circle, Naperville, Director of Professional Services, EPSTEIN, said there's a precedence for a development like this which often become destination points and can promote business to come from outside the community benefitting other businesses. He gave examples of ones in Three Oaks, Missouri, Valparaiso, Indiana, and Obscurity in Elburn, Illinois. He asked for all to look at it with open eyes as this could be good accelerators for positive growth.

Ryan Cardinali, 410 Fair Street, said this is a passion project but if you pour water on it, you may not get another chance. That industrial park is what brought people here to Sycamore to the Anaconda plant.

B. Consideration of a Development Proposal by Steve Glasgow of Primm Commercial Development, LLC for the Properties Located at 2145, 2235 and 2265 Primm Drive in Primm Prairie Commercial Subdivision.

City Manager Michael Hall said that this is a workshop where the petitioners are looking for feedback for the proposed 66 units over three buildings (18, 24, 24 units). The property is currently zoned commercial and would require rezoning to residential. From a planning standpoint, the PZC needs to consider if this is in the best interest for the community to rezone the property, if the proposed use is harmonious with the existing neighborhood use, and does the proposed use align with the objectives outlined in the Comprehensive Plan? For density, there is low-density; 0-3 units/acre, medium-density; 3-6 units/acres, and high-density; 6-9 units/acres. This proposal would be 11.22 units/acre. That is not unusual as there have been variances for density, so if it were to be rezoned, it would also need a variance on the density level. All else is compliant.

Commissioner Strack recalled two other proposals by Farm & Fleet where the first one was turned down because of density and the other one never came before them as a formal presentation. He said as much as he likes the project, modifying the density may be potentially problematic. He is not against apartments, he just thinks the density, because of other positions they have taken in the past to approve a density modification, is dangerous.

John Mataitis, 204 Northgate Drive, said that he lives near this and doesn't think anyone is going to go with this as it has been tried by Farm & Fleet and east of Caseys. He said nobody wants it.

Community Development Director John Sauter said that the petitioner for Farm & Fleet came before the PZC for a workshop and they did hit the density numbers. This was submitted by Mr. Glasgow, who was made aware the density was above the allowable 9 units/acre, but he still wanted to come before the PZC. He believes there are other multi-family residential developments in town that exceed 9 units/acres as it can happen by a variation through a Planned Unit Development.

Steven Glasgow, 3085 Wolfe Court, DeKalb, said he has owned the property for 18 years which has sat empty without one commercial nibble. This would not be the front row but in the second row. He noted the strip mall in front of Meijer is still empty besides Starbucks, as is by Jewel. He thinks multi-family designations would help the community expand with some young professionals. The buildings won't look much different than the commercial buildings would in front of them. He said they see 70% of young professionals in their other properties.

John Pappas said the one-bedroom units will be 600 square feet for \$1,400 and the two-bedroom units will be 1,000 square feet for \$1,700. The rent for these higher-end units would include everything. He said regarding density, that you could have the same density with four-bedroom units as with one-bedroom units and said this is literally the lowest they could go to make it work. He also confirmed that each person must be on the lease.

Steven Glasgow said they could start with one 24-unit building and see how it goes. He noted that anything that has been built since 2008 has been built with a very low interest rate.

Commissioner Stowe said the density has got to come down and said they can't concern themselves with interest rates as that is not how the city makes decisions. He said it should either fit in with the codes they are talking about, or it doesn't.

Ryan Cardinali made the point of setting a precedent of rezoning to R-3, Multi-family zoning because it will open it up to every petitioner and said they would need to look at everything because everything in that corner area is the same exact zoning.

Community Development Director John Sauter reminded that this is a workshop discussion to get feedback and if the property would be rezoned, or if it were to be considered as a Planned Unit Development, it would, according to state statute, have mailers sent to everyone within 250 feet, signs placed at the property, and a Public Hearing Notice published in the paper. He added that there are two methods to figure density; acreage divided by the number of units, and total square footage divided by 3,600 square feet (required for one-bedroom per unit) or 3,800 square feet (required for two-bedroom unit). He said he is not advocating for or against the project but said that density is compliant with one calculation and is not with the other calculation.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion**

Commissioner Strack moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. and Commissioner Finney seconded the motion.

**Voice Vote** Chairperson Davey called for a voice vote to approve the motion. All Commissioners present voted aye. Motion carried 8-0.

Approve:

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Chairperson – William D. Davey

Attest:

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Mary Kalk, City Clerk