

MINUTES OF THE OTTAWA PLAN COMMISSION MEETING

August 22, 2011

Chairman Tom Ganiere called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. in the Ottawa City Council Chambers.

ROLL CALL

Present: Barron, Buiting, Burns, Ganiere, Howarter, Perry, Stone

Absent: Less, Reagan

Others: City Planner Tami Huftel

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the June 27, 2011 meeting were approved as published.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

a. Public Hearing – Conditional Use Permit – Ottawa Senior Housing - Champlain Street
Jason Racine representing The Stough Group explained to members the plans and amenities of the proposed senior housing development proposed for a 15+ acre parcel that is located along Champlain Street and just south of Turnberry Subdivision. The applicant is requesting a conditional use permit for a planned unit development that will contain 12 single story multi-unit buildings that will total 60 living units. The housing is age (62+ year old) and income restricted (\$27,000/1 person, \$30,500/2 person). Similar developments owned by this group have 100% occupancy and experience only about a 5% turnover annually. The group has meet with the Design Review Committee regarding the structure setbacks, infrastructure, drainage, etc. Engineer Tom Duttlinger advised he is working with the County Engineer regarding ingress and egress and noted that they are making every effort to match up the entrance with the cemetery entrance across Champlain Street. Stone asked about the lighting planned for the northside of the project which would affect the Turnberry properties. Developers are planning on dusk to dawn lighting for security purposes but also noted that there will be a landscape buffer between the properties that should eliminate any concerns. He also said there will be one full time and one part time manager. Exterior walks and a gazebo will be installed in the front of their property, along Champlain Street, for the use of the residents and the general public.

There being no further discussion or questions, Tami indicated that 2 separate votes should be taken. It was moved by Barron and seconded by Howarter that the OPC recommend the City Council approve the Conditional Use for the Ottawa Senior Housing development to the Stough Group as per staff report. Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Barron and seconded by Howarter that the Ottawa Plan Commission recommend the City Council approve the Planend Unity Development Preliminary Plat for the Ottawa Senior Housing project. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Public Hearing – Conditional Use Permit – 1101 W. Norris Drive

John Nordstrom advised OPC members that he and his wife Glenda purchased the existing storage facility on west Route 6 in July 2011. He noted that since at the time of the purchase an efficiency apartment was partially completed above the office they assumed that the project had already been approved by the City. They proceeded to finish the area and rented the 20' x 25' unit. In referring to the City's Zoning Ordinance District D, Item A-5, it was noted that such residences created after 3/6/1996 are only allowed by Conditional Use Permit. The Nordstrom's said the tenant will usually only be occupying the space when home over weekends and he has agreed to oversee activity at the storage units as needed. Burns commented that having such a residency for security purposes is not uncommon. Howarter questioned the staff report recommendation to deny the request. Tami suggested the permission for the conditional use should be considered for later use after this tenant leaves. She also noted that the outside storage areas still need to be screened. There being no further discussion, it was moved by Howarter and seconded by Perry that the OPC recommend the City Council approve conditional use for a dwelling unit above the office of 1101 W. Norris Drive with the condition that the unit not exceed 525 sq. ft. and is used for a caretaker and/or watchman. Motion carried unanimously.

c. Public Hearing – Conditional Use Permit – 107,109,113 W. Michigan Street

Owner John Grieves advised OPC members that the potential buyers of his W. Michigan Street property propose to build a 3200 sq. ft. structure for a pharmacy that will include a drive-thru access at the east end of the building. An estimated 30 to 50 customers would use the drive thru daily, 6 days week. It was noted that the existing structures on the property would be razed to accommodate the new building. There is ample ingress and egress to the property from Michigan Street without any changes on the Columbus Street side of the property. The layout of the site will include additional green space to the existing site. Howarter asked what the historical significance of the brick building on the south side of the property is. Grieves advised none other than at one time it was used as a welding shop. He added that the site has never been designated as an historical site/structure, he had checked with Assistant City Engineer Arnie Bandstra if he knew of any significance and in that regard felt there was no need to provide any additional research. Howarter disagreed with Grieves and added it was part of the City's tradition and if it should be a truly historical structure it should be preserved. Adding he objected to the plopping down of a fairly mundane building in an historical district. Chairman Ganiere reminded Howarter that Grieves is the owner of the structure in question and, therefore, since it has not been designated an historical structure, he has the right to tear it down if he wants to. Members questioned if it could have been part of the old inter urban system. It was noted that most records of that nature were destroyed many years ago. Members also discussed the actual ownership and Canal ROW, 10 ft. reserved for cleaning and enlarging of the I & M Canal, what portion the State owns and what right of easement they may have. It was moved by Howarter and seconded by Barron that a decision on whether or not to allow a Conditional Use Permit be tabled until such time as the property owner can research the historical significance of the parcel and also check with the IDNR regarding the Canal Reserve. By oral vote, four ayes (Barron, Buiting, Burns, Howarter) and three nays (Ganiere, Perry, Stone) the request for a Conditional Use was tabled until further research can be done. If such can be accomplished before the next regular OPC monthly meeting, a special meeting will be called.

d. Public Hearing – Conditional Use, PUD – 1840 Guion Street

Bill Borgo of CMT, Inc. is proposing two multi-unit buildings at 1840 Guion Street. His original plan submitted in January was for two 8-unit rental buildings but since that time a water line has been discovered and so the plan has been reconfigured to one 6-unit and one 10-unit building. It is expected that these high quality 1000 sq. ft. apartments will rent for \$800/mo. plus utilities. A “blind” ad that ran in The Times for 30 days brought in 12 – 20 calls per day. The project will be done in phases with the 6-unit being started first and then the 10 unit planned for 2012. Due to the odd shape of this lot, a 25 ft. setback from the perimeter property line would be difficult so a variance is being requested. All apartments will be oriented toward the front of the property with the feeder canal and its’ existing trees and shrubs and the railroad switching yard at the back of the units. An easement across the existing lots will be in place so access in the future cannot be denied. Since this particular type of housing appeals more to those retired or empty nesters and have only 2 bedrooms, developers do not anticipate a draw from family with children so no fencing is planned. There being no questions, Tami reminded members that two motions will be required. It was moved by Howarter and seconded by Barron that the OPC recommend the City Council approve the Conditional Use Permit for CMT, Inc. with a variance for a 25 ft. setback requirement. Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Howarter and seconded by Barron that the OPC recommend the City Council approve the Preliminary Plat for the PUD located at 1840 Guion Street. Motion passes unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy C. Stisser
Recording Secretary