

CITY OF MUSKEGON
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

June 11, 2020

Vice-Chairperson B. Mazade called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. and roll was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: T. Michalski, J. Montgomery-Keast, J. Doyle, B. Mazade, F. Peterson, L. Spataro, B. Larson

MEMBERS ABSENT: E. Hood; S. Gawron, excused.

STAFF PRESENT: M. Franzak, H. Mitchell

OTHERS PRESENT: T. Puffer, Lakeside Properties Group LLC.; A. Sydnor, 987 E Forest; K. Sydnor, 987 E Forest.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the Minutes of the regular Planning Commission meeting of May 4, 2020 was made by J. Montgomery-Keast, supported by B. Larson and unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Hearing, Case 2020-11: Request for a Special Use Permit to convert the ground floor commercial space in a legally non-conforming mixed use building into four additional apartments at 995 E Forest Ave., by Lakeside Properties Group, LLC. M. Franzak presented the staff report. The property is zoned R-2, Medium Density Single Family Residential. The building is a mixed-use type, with an apartment above a vacant commercial space. The commercial space has been vacant for many years. Its location and condition ensure that it will remain difficult to attract any commercial investors. The applicant is requesting to utilize the commercial space as four additional apartments, for a total of five apartments in the building. Staff agrees that the space would be better utilized as apartments, rather than to continue to sit vacant and become obsolete and blighted. The ordinance allows previously existing or established commercial uses not already converted to residential to be used for limited business purposes with a special use permit (see zoning excerpt below). Most of these allowed business uses are considered more intrusive to a neighborhood than additional apartments, so staff has interpreted the ordinance to allow less intensive (residential) uses with a special use permit as well. This will also ensure that in the event of a disaster, the property could only be redeveloped into a single family residence, which fits in with the neighborhood. Please see the enclosed floor plan. The plan is difficult to read, but it appears that the two 2-bedroom units both measure 754 sf and the two 1-bedroom units measure 650 sf each. The one unit apartments meet the minimum size requirements (required 650 sf) but the two-unit apartments do not (required 875 sf). It is also unclear how the southern most apartment is accessed. Apartments require two parking spaces per unit. There are two garage spaces on the Madison St side of the building. The terrace has been paved on both Madison St and Forest Ave, leaving enough room for six additional parking spaces. On-street parking is also allowed in this neighborhood and there is no room on the property for people to park illegally on grass. Staff believes that the parking is adequate for this type of development. Notice was sent to all property owners/tenants within 300 feet of this property. At the time of this writing, staff has not received

any comments. Members were supplied with the zoning excerpt for Single Family Residential Districts Section 401: Special Land Uses Permitted. Staff recommends approval of the request.

A new floor plan was shared with the commission members. J. Montgomery-Keast asked about any requirements for landscaping. M. Franzak stated that there aren't any requirements for properties that are already developed. They are required for new development. T. Puffer stated that the shrubs were already in place. He went over the site plan and stated that there would be 4 units in total. Both floors will have the same number of apartments. The 2nd floor apartment is a remodel with the other 3 apartments being completely started from scratch. The garage will remain. J. Doyle asked about the front doors. T. Puffer stated that one of the doors would be removed. B. Mazade asked if there had been any public comments. M. Franzak stated there hadn't been any and that anyone within 300 ft. of the property were sent notification letters.

A. Sydnor stated that he lives next door to this structure. He is concerned that there wouldn't be enough parking for four families to live in the building. There would be more parking on the street in front of the neighboring properties so there would be less parking for the neighboring properties.

L. Spataro arrived at 4:15 p.m.

K. Sydnor had concerns over the parcel being too small to accommodate the needed parking for the number of families that would be able to live in the structure.

A motion to close the public hearing as made by B. Larson, supported by J. Doyle and unanimously approved.

B. Mazade asked the applicant if he had done this type of development before. T. Puffer stated that he had done this before. This would make his third commercial building that he worked on with this being the first one that required Planning Commission approval. J. Montgomery-Keast asked what the timeline would be to complete this. T. Puffer stated that he would need about 6 months for the foundation. L. Spataro gave an example of another commercial building with this type of remodel that was near his home and that the benefit allowed it to be rehabbed instead of letting it sit and possibly demolished. B. Larson suggested that the owner also discuss this with he neighbors.

A motion that the request for a Special Use Permit to convert the ground floor commercial space in a legally non-conforming mixed use building into four additional apartments at 995 E Forest Ave, by Lakeside Properties Group, LLC, be approved, was made by L. Spataro, supported by B. Larson and unanimously approved with J. Monthomery-Keast, J. Doyl, B. Mazade, F. Peterson, L. Spataro, B. Larson, and T. Michalski voting aye.

NEW BUSINESS

None

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

HM