

**THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BERKLEY CITY PLANNING COMMISSION WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:00 PM, OCTOBER 24, 2023 AT BERKLEY CITY HALL BY CHAIR LISA KEMPNER.**

*The minutes from this meeting are in summary form capturing the actions taken on each agenda item. To view the meeting discussions in their entirety, this meeting is broadcasted on the city's government access channel, WBRK, every day at 9AM and 9PM. The video can also be seen, on-demand, on the city's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofberkley>*

**PRESENT:** Mike Woods Josh Stapp  
Joe Bartus Lisa Hamameh  
Lisa Kempner Eric Arnsman

**ABSENT:** Shiloh Dahlin

**ALSO, PRESENT:** Kristen Kapelanski, Community Development Director  
Michelle Marin, Planning Consultant

Motion by Commissioner Hamameh to excuse the absence of Commissioner Dahlin. Motion supported by Commissioner Woods.

Voice Vote to excuse the absence of Commissioner Dahlin.

AYES: 6  
NAYS: 0  
ABSENT: Dahlin

**MOTION CARRIED**

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**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Commissioner Bartus to approve the agenda and supported by Commissioner Woods.

Voice vote to approve the agenda

AYES: 6  
NAYS: 0  
ABSENT: Dahlin

**MOTION CARRIED**

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**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Motion by Commissioner Bartus to approve the minutes of the regular Planning Commission meeting on September 26, 2023 and supported by Commissioner Arnsman.

Voice vote to approve the meeting minutes of September 26, 2023.

AYES: 6  
NAYS: 0  
ABSENT: Dahlin

**MOTION CARRIED**

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**COMMUNICATIONS**

NONE

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**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

NONE

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**OLD BUSINESS**

1. **PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT PUD-01-23: The Columbia:** The applicant, Designhaus Architecture on behalf of WJ Ventures LLC, 2465 Columbia, 2475 Columbia, 2468 Columbia and 2476 Columbia and 2475 Cambridge, is requesting Planned Unit Development approval for a multiple-family development on the east side of Coolidge Highway, south of Cambridge Road and north and south of Columbia Road

Community Development Director Kapelanski went over the specifics of the proposal. She described generally what a Planned Unit Development (PUD) is and the approval process. A PUD must meet three of the seven public benefits identified in the Zoning Ordinance. The City's Planning Consultant, Carlisle Wortman Associates, provided a thorough review of the plans and an analysis of the public benefit standards. All reviewers were recommending approval of the plan. The public hearing was held at the previous meeting and there have been no substantial changes to the plan since that time.

The applicant, Wayne Wudyka, presented the project describing the physical changes to the site and addressed questions/issues from the previous meeting including parking, traffic, building height and pedestrian safety. He also presented how the project meets the required public benefits in the PUD ordinance. Other presenting team members included Peter Stuhlreyer of Designhaus Architects and Joe Anderson of Giffels Webster.

Commissioner Hamameh noted several concerns with the project including the lack of retail on the first floor, adequate parking and the benefit of the project to the City.

The applicant stated that it's his understanding that the retail requirement will not be part of the future zoning ordinance regulations and that the market for retail is not there. Additionally, the lots are not large enough to accommodate the required parking for retail. The current multiple family parking requirements are dated and not consistent with other communities in the area.

Chair Kempner confirmed parking will only be assigned for tandem spaces.

Commissioner Woods asked how maintenance of or damage to the residential bridge will be addressed.

Mr. Wudyka confirmed the height of the bridge exceeds requirements for emergency vehicles and masonry construction will not easily incur damage. Brick veneer will not require substantial maintenance but any that is required has been built into the project.

Commissioner Hamameh asked if the applicant planned to record shared parking agreements between the subject property and other properties he controls nearby.

The applicant stated he did not plan to do that. While those parking areas could be used by tenants or visitors of the new development, the team did not feel shared parking agreements were necessary and that there was adequate parking on site.

Commissioner Hamameh asked staff what the direction of multiple family parking requirements was as part of the Zoning Ordinance Steering Committee discussions.

Director Kapelanski stated that the overall feeling of the Committee was that two spaces per unit was probably too much for one bedroom and studio units. A definitive standard has yet to be determined.

Commissioner Bartus confirmed the project will be properly insured, especially liabilities related to the proposed bridge.

Chair Kempner asked if there were any comments from the public.

Frank Buzolits, 2414 Princeton Dr., presented a petition opposing the project, which had also been provided to the Planning Commission in writing.

Patrice Von Liske, 3299 Tyler Ave., noted several concerns and questions including:

- What are the prices of the units? Are they affordable housing?
- Will there be an additional stop light or other traffic control measures installed?

Steve Tomkowiak, of the Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit provided some background on his organization. He supports the project. He would like to see a more diverse community.

Chair Kempner stated the apartments will be market rate. There are no plans for a stoplight or any additional traffic control in the area.

The Planning Commission moved onto to discussion.

Commissioner Hamameh asked Ms. Marin how the applicant has met the factor for provision of open space.

Ms. Marin stated that as the ordinance is written, the open space or public plaza benefit is an 'or' item, meaning the open space does not have to be open to the public to be counted towards that benefit.

Chair Kempner asked how this project would meet the complementary mix of uses benefit.

Ms. Marin stated the current ordinance is vague in that regard and that CWA determined this benefit was met because it provided a complementary mix of uses to the community, not necessarily as part of the project. The Planning Commission may want to discuss this further.

Commissioner Hamameh confirmed the bridge would be occupying the public right-of-way and that residents along Coolidge in the upper units could not walk to the edge of the rooftop patio. The first approximately fifteen feet of the roof facing Coolidge is walled off from the roof gardens. The setback to the rear property line is eighteen feet, which exceeds the fifteen-foot requirement. Is there any opportunity for additional trees given the number of trees that will be removed?

Mr. Anderson said the existing trees cannot be saved because of their locations on the property.

The Planning Commission moved onto discussion of the PUD standards, having to find that three of the seven have been met. All agreed the historic preservation benefit was not met.

Commissioner Bartus proposed the standard for shared vehicular access was met because of the assemblage of the parcels.

Commissioner Stapp agreed.

Chair Kempner noted those existing curb cuts are rarely used and a more intense use is proposed.

The Commission agreed shared vehicular access would include shared driveways for multiple uses.

The majority of the Commission did not feel shared vehicular access was met but did feel consolidation of parcels was met.

Chair Kempner did not feel the standard for high quality architectural design was not met because the building span and colors make the building feel large. She pointed out the Downtown Design Guidelines include several ways of minimizing the feel of a building's size and the incorporation of those should be a given.

Commissioner Hamameh stated CWA offered some suggestions that might help meet the high-quality architectural design standard.

Mr. Stuhlreyer said the building design is purposefully scaled downwards towards the back. The Design Guidelines also talk about staying away from residentially scaled things along the Coolidge frontage and the massing and articulation of this building meets the general feel of the Design Guidelines without including every element listed. The bottom floor parking was designed to look like a storefront. A greenwall or mural could perhaps be added there in place of the bronze panels but there are no blank walls that need to be hidden. A mural could be entertained in this area as well.

Commissioner Bartus felt the high-quality design was illustrated on Sheet A4.2 of the plans with the wrapped roof, the bronze screening, the balconies, etc.

Commissioner Stapp agreed, also noting the building height requirements were within current ordinance standards.

The Commission agreed to move onto to other standards with no consensus.

Commissioner Stapp stated the 400+ plantings proposed greatly exceed the removal of the proposed trees and the standard addressing a greater amount of landscaping than would typically be included was met.

Commissioner Hamameh noted the planning review did not feel this proposal exceeded the requirements of what similar developments have included in the recent past.

Chair Kempner thought there might additions that could be made to meet this standard suggesting a green roof, living wall or rain gardens.

Commissioner Bartus noted the current ordinance does not list any specific landscape requirements and he felt the landscape standard was met.

Mr. Anderson said they were not planning on planting trees along Coolidge but they would be willing to in place of the driveways that will be removed if the DPW Department was amenable to that.

Mr. Wudyka added that they were willing to plant evergreens on the residential properties adjacent to the development. Two of the three neighbors are interested at this point.

The Commission agreed to move onto to other standards with no consensus.

The majority of the Commission agreed the open spaces or public plaza standard was met. The open space at the rear of the property and the path going around the proposed building will be open to the public. Chair Kempner and Commissioner Woods disagreed.

Chair Kempner asked if a rain garden could be incorporated into the site.

Mr. Anderson said the stormwater detention design would not accommodate a rain garden.

Chair Hamameh confirmed with the applicant that they would be open to conditions requiring additional trees where the driveways are removed along Coolidge and to working with the adjacent neighbors on plantings in their yards.

The Commission agreed with those additions the landscape standard is met. Chair Kempner confirmed the Commission had agreed that with the consensus on the consolidation of parcels standard, the Commission agrees two of the minimum three PUD benefit standards have been met.

Commissioner Bartus felt that the complementary mix of uses/variety of housing standard was met because the variety of housing would apply to the entire community.

Commissioner Hamameh felt this standard was met as well but could be improved with the addition of retail.

Chair Kempner thought the standard referred to a mixture of housing types within the development and therefore this standard was not met.

Commissioner Woods agreed with Chair Kempner.

Chair Kempner directed the discussion back to open space.

Commissioner Woods asked how one determines what open space is.

Ms. Marin said greenspace should be included and it should be accessible. It could be natural or formal landscaping but a lawn area would not qualify.

Director Kapelanski suggested the Commission think of it as an activated and planned space, something being used or either passive or active recreation.

Commissioner Hamameh confirmed with Ms. Marin that the plan also included streetscape elements, landscaping and benches along Coolidge on the applicant's property.

The Planning Commission agreed that the open standard has been met. The Commission agreed the project met the minimum three of the seven standards.

The Commissioners could not come to a consensus on standards one (high quality architectural design) and seven (complementary mix of uses/variety of housing types).

Commissioner Bartus noted parking counts should be corrected on Sheet A1.0 and assigned parking should be indicated as assigned for the tandem spaces only.

Chair Kempner asked about deliveries and the applicant stated they are considering service lockers on the first floor.

The majority of the Commission agreed the no east turn sign should be removed since it cannot be enforced.

Chair Kempner confirmed there will be space for snow storage on site and asked the applicant to work with the DDA to make sure trash receptacles and benches match the aesthetic of the downtown.

The Commission discussed the deviations. They agreed that the deficient setback along Coolidge did not pose an issue nor does the lack of non-residential space.

Commissioner Hamameh was not comfortable with the parking deficiency. She asked if the applicant would be willing to entertain a requirement in the PUD Agreement that the developer must have a plan to address any parking issues, perhaps a shared parking agreement.

Commissioner Bartus noted there are 30 parking spaces available along Coolidge in front of this development. He feels there is sufficient parking.

Commissioner Stapp noted visitor parking is no different than how it would operate for single family homes and the number of required visitor spaces would be all speculation.

Commissioner Woods said the concern is the concentration of units in one area. He suggested that the City could explore permit parking.

Director Kapelanski noted permit parking anywhere in the City was not being considered at this time.

Mr. Wudyka said he thinks there is sufficient parking for this project including guests and he would not agree to a contingency at the City's discretion requiring him to encumber other properties with shared parking agreements.

Commissioners Woods and Hamameh stated they would like to see a contingency parking plan.

The Commission agreed the standards of approval in Section 138-537 have been met.

Motion by Commissioner Bartus to recommend approval of PUD-01-23 The Columbia with the following ordinance deviations:

- Deficient setback along Coolidge (10 ft. required, 5 ft. 2 in. provided);
- Deficient number of parking spaces (114 required, 80 provided);
- Deficient use (non-residential use is not provided on the first floor); and

With the following findings:

- The minimum of three of the seven public benefits listed in Section 138-533 have been met including:
  - That the project provides extensive landscaping, beyond the site plan requirements of this title provided the applicant installs additional trees along Coolidge with the approval of the DPW and works with the three abutting properties to provide landscaping on their properties with their approval;
  - That the project provides open space or a public plaza; and
  - That the project provides efficient consolidation of poorly dimensioned parcels; and
- The standards for approval in Section 138-537 are met.

Motion supported by Commissioner Stapp.

Roll call vote on the motion to recommend approval of PUD-01-23 The Columbia.

AYES: 4

NAYS: 2 (Hamameh, Woods)

ABSENT: Dahlin

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## **NEW BUSINESS**

1. **PSP-08-23: 3055-3063 Twelve Mile Rd.:** The applicant, Iconic Salon, is requesting site plan approval for a façade change to an existing building at 3055-3063 Twelve Mile Rd., on the south side of Twelve Mile Rd., between Griffith Ave. and Robina Ave.

Community Development Director Kapelanski went over the specifics of the plan, indicating this is a façade change only.

Zaid Arabo, representing the applicant presented the plans and described the façade changes.

Motion by Commissioner Hamameh to approve the site plan for PSP-08-23 3055-3063 Twelve Mile with a finding that the plan meets the standards of Section 138-679.

Motion supported by Commissioner Woods.

Roll call vote for approval of the site plan request for PSP-08-23 3055-3063 Twelve Mile.

AYES: 6  
NAYS: 0  
ABSENT: Dahlin

**2. 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule**

Motion by Commissioner Bartus to approve the 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule.

Motion supported by Commissioner Hamameh.

Voice vote on the motion to approve the 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Schedule.

AYES: 6  
NAYS: 0  
ABSENT: Dahlin

**3. Committee Liaisons**

Community Development Director went over potential liaison postings at the Chamber of Commerce, the Environmental Committee and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Commissioner Bartus volunteered to be the Chamber liaison.

The Commission did not have volunteers for appointments to the Environmental Committee or the Zoning Board of Appeals.

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**LIAISON REPORT**

Commissioner Stapp went over the items from the most recent Council meeting.

Chair Kempner highlighted Bookley events and noted Coolidge crosswalks will be undergoing updates beginning next week.

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**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

NONE

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**STAFF COMMENTS**

Community Development Director Kapelanski directed the Planning Commission to the memo detailing the activities of the Zoning Ordinance Steering Committee and asked them to send any comments to her.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Hamameh supported by Commissioner Woods.

Voice vote for adjournment

AYES: 6

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: Dahlin

**With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:42 p.m.**