

SUMMIT TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

December 20, 2011

MEMBERS PRESENT: Raymond McQuillan, Chairman; Robert Simmons, Vice Chairman; Gordon Heins, Township Board Liaison; Natalie Stopyak, Recreation Planning Commission Liaison; George Gancsos, Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison; Stephen Artz; Jack Shelby, Richard Erhardt and John Worden, Summit Township Zoning Administrator.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dennis Hackett, Secretary

The meeting was called to order by R. McQuillan, Chairman, on Tuesday, December 20, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Township Hall meeting room at 2121 Ferguson Road.

A motion was made by G. Heins, supported by N. Stopyak, to approve the Tuesday, September 20, 2011 minutes as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Case #11-12-0016 – Rezoning 800 E. McDevitt (McDevitt School) from Urban Residential (RU-1) and General Commercial (C-2) to Multi Family (RM-1) – Peter Jobson, Applicant – Owner Excel-Vandercook LDHA LP.

Abstaining from this agenda item because his wife is an employee of Vandercook Lake Schools, R. McQuillan, Chairman, turned over the meeting to R. Simmons, Vice Chairman, and joined the audience. R. Simmons, Vice Chairman, invited the applicant representative Joe Brazier to come forward and describe the application in more detail.

A public hearing was held on behalf of Peter Jobson, 3690 Orange Place Suite 517, Beachwood, OH, to rezone 800 E. McDevitt from Urban Residential (RU-1) and General Commercial (C-2) to Multi Family (RM-1). Joe Brazier, Excel-Vandercook LDHA LP representative, spoke on behalf of the application. Excel-Vandercook LDHA LP entered into an option to purchase agreement with Vandercook Lake School District for the purpose of redeveloping the former McDevitt Elementary School. The proposed development program for "McDevitt Residences" consists of the adaptive reuse of the original two story structure and maintenance garage into a thirty-two (32) one-bedroom and eight (8) two-bedroom rental units. The first floor will contain nineteen (19) senior units and the second floor will contain twenty-one (21) non-age restricted living units.

The request for rezoning is needed before the applicant can submit for tax credits from MSHDA.

R. Erhardt, questioned if Excel-Vandercook LDHA LP had experience with residential reconstruction of a school

Joe Brazier responded that the company has no school to residential reconstruction experience, but the company was responsible for the Armory Arts Project (utilizing the previous Michigan prison) and a variety of other residences in the surrounding areas in Michigan.

Public Comment:

Tony Hollow, Superintendent of Vandercook Lake School, spoke on behalf of the application. He noted the rise in vacant schools in the area, and feels utilizing the property as specified by the applicant would be beneficial for the community. Further, the district received estimates for demolishing the school, and to do so would be a huge expense to the school's general fund. Also, he noted the physical location of the property is a good location for this type of development.

Opposition to this application was phoned by Marty Baumgartner of 113 Myrlice Court.

A motion was made by R. Erhardt, supported by G. Heins, to recommend to the Township Board the approval of the Rezoning from Urban Residential (RU-1) and General Commercial (C-2) to Multi Family (RM-1). The motion was carried with one abstention from R. McQuillan, Chairman.

At this point R. McQuillan, Chairman returned to the table.

Case #11-12-0017 – Site Plan Review Dependent on Approval of Case #11-12-0016 – Property Located at 800 E. McDevitt – 19 Senior Units and 21 Non – Age Restricted Units – Peter Jobson, Applicant – Owner Excel-Vandercook LDHA LP

As stated in Case #11-12-0016 the proposed development program for “McDevitt Residences” first level residents will consist of (19) senior units and the second floor will contain twenty-one (21) non-age restricted living units. The property will be rent-restricted, meaning the prospective residents will be required to fall under 60% of Jackson County median income. On site property management staff will provide leasing services and all potential lessees will be screened thoroughly via background, reference and credit checks.

Prominent exterior amenities will include a landscaped courtyard between the two buildings, along with a gazebo in the parking lot. A common laundry facility is proposed for the second floor of the building. There will be two separate parking lots that contain a total of at least eighty (80) spaces. The proposed parking lots should not affect traffic in the area negatively.

Interior common amenities include a lobby/lounge, commons area and an activity room on the stage and one elevator. All units will be equipped with energy-efficient HVAC systems, lighting and appliances, washer and dryer hook ups, a full kitchen and central air. The average square feet for a unit will be five hundred (500) to six hundred (600). Residents will have access to storage in the basement.

G. Gancsos questioned if the school would be able to keep the historic status

Joe Brazier, Excel-Vandercook LDHA LP Developer, responded that the “McDevitt Residences” would retain the historic status.

Excel-Vandercook LDHA LP uses the maintenance company, Michigan Asset Group, for the building maintenance and Wolverine Building Group out of Grand Rapids as the general contractor.

R. McQuillan, Chairman, asked if the units would be charged for their electrical use?

Joe Brazier, Excel-Vandercook LDHA LP Developer, responded yes.

Public Comment:

Bob Sunday, of 110 Myrlice Court, noted an existing five (5) feet cyclone fence around the school, but heard that Excel-Vandercook LDHA LP is proposing to remove this and install a four (4) feet barrier fence.

Joe Brazier, Excel-Vandercook LDHA LP Developer, agreed to installing, five (5) to six (6) feet of vinyl fence.

Bob Sunday noted lighting concerns that would affect the surrounding neighbors, but stated he is in favor of supporting the school district

Pam Vassor of 812 Cass Street expressed concerns over the non-age units.

Joe Brazier, Excel-Vandercook LDHA LP Developer, reaffirmed that this is an affordable housing project that will allow housing for lower income people.

A motion was made by S. Artz, supported by R. Erhardt, to recommend to the Township Board approval of the Site Plan contingent upon the recommendations and compliance with letters received from the Jackson County Road Commission, the Jackson County Drain Commissioner, the Summit Township Department of Public Works and Fire Department requirement for a KNOX Box. Also, that the lighting, screening, buffering and installation of five (5) to six (6) feet of vinyl fence around the property.
The motion was carried unanimously.

J. Worden spoke on the proposed medical marihuana amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.

Prior to the meeting the medical marihuana sub-committee of George Gancsos and Jack Shelby met to discuss and make recommendations. There was some discussion on the recommendations.

G. Gancsos noted that his research found that even after two years studies found 61% of Michigan residents approve of use of medical marihuana. Currently, 50,000 Michigan residents are licensed to legally use medical marihuana.

J. Shelby questioned if the amendment will make things more restrictive for the Township residents.

J. Worden stated the Township currently does not have any regulations on medical marihuana this amendment would be the Townships first attempt on the issue.

G. Heins stated the Township Board is waiting for a recommendation from the Planning Commission on medical marihuana.

A motion was made by G. Heins, supported by G. Gancsos, to publish the amendment for a public hearing at the February 2012 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

A request was made to change filing deadline for a Site Plan review from twenty-one (21) days to thirty (30) days, so that it will be consistent with the filing deadline for other applications on the meeting calendar.

A motion made by G. Gancsos, supported by J. Shelby, to change the filing deadline for a site plan from twenty-one (21) days to thirty (30) days. The motion carried unanimously.

The Summit Township Planning Commission appreciates the many years of service provided by Dennis Hackett, and regrets that he has submitted his resignation from the Planning Commission to the Township Board.

Elections for officers will take place at the January 2012 meeting.

A motion was made by S. Artz, supported by G. Heins, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Erhardt, Acting Secretary
Summit Township Planning Commission