

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF SOUTHFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 23, 2022  
6:30PM**

**Planning Commission Members Present:** Culpepper, Griffis, Martin, Stephens-Gunn and Willis

**Planning Commission Members Excused:** Miah

**Staff Present:** City Planner Croad and Planner Spence

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn called for a roll call. Planner Spence called the roll and determined there was quorum present to conduct business.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn called for Approval of the Agenda. Motion by Commissioner Martin to Approve the Agenda as Written. Seconded by Commissioner Griffis. Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn called for a Vote.

There was an affirmative vote for the Commissioners. Motion Carries

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn asked if there were any Announcements or Communications. Planner Spence noted that PSP21-0013 for Triumph Church and PSP22-0001 for Skye Construction would be postponed tonight later in the meeting and will be rescheduled to a future date.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn called for the first item.

**PZRRUDD22-0001** is a Rezoning Request to Create a Residential Unit Development District to rezone 4.62 acres of land from R-1, Single Family to Residential Unit Development District (RUDD), property located at 21030 Indian Street, on the east side of Indian between W Eight Mile Road and Shiawassee, Sidwell Parcel 2431-376-033, Thomas Hitchmans Subdivision Lots 7 & 9, Also N 140 Ft Of Lot 11 8-23-21 Corr Section 31, City of Southfield, Oakland County, State of Michigan.

Planner Spence gave a brief overview of the proposal for the John Grace Residential Unit Development District noting the petitioner was seeking to rezone the property to allow for the repurposing of the school for senior apartments and construct a new building for additional senior apartments. Various amenities were also being added including a dog walk area, outdoor courtyard and a .62-acre public park. He introduced Mr. John Abela to explain the proposal further.

Mr. Abela noted that the repurposed John Grace School would house 14 units on the first floor – 12 one-bedroom and 2 two-bedroom units, and 4 units on the second floor – 2 one-bedroom and 2 two-bedroom units. The new addition would house 21 units on the first floor – 19 one-bedroom units and 2 two-bedroom units, and 21 units on the second floor – 18 one-bedroom units and 3 two-bedroom units. 7 of the units would be barrier-free accessible. There would be two covered drop-off areas as well. New landscape is proposed as well as an outdoor courtyard and a .62 park on the south side of the site. The new addition would be constructed to look similar to the existing school building.

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Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn noted this was a public hearing and opened the Public Hearing for the rezoning.

Mr. Caleb Slade 20800 Indian noted that he and his wife had recently moved to Southfield and liked a lot about Southfield, from the Library to the park system. They visit the park at John Grace a lot and was disappointed that much green space would be lost. He was also concerned about noise with construction.

Mr. Thomas Daniel 20904 Indian noted he was a 30-year resident of Southfield and he had no objection the repurpose of the school for 20 units. However, he stated the existing park is used all the time and there was no other space like it in their area. He wanted to keep the green space. He wondered how he could sell his house when it's jammed up against an apartment complex. He encouraged people to go out and see how much the park is used by the people in the area.

There were no other speakers so Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn closed the Public Hearing and turned the discussion over to the Commissioners.

City Planner Croad noted that the John Grace Revitalization Plan, which will be a subarea to the Southfield Master Plan will be following the RUDD, and a ½ acre park is part of the Southfield Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as well.

Commissioner Culpepper noted this project will help beautify the area. It meets the RUDD standards. He noted talking with the neighbors is helpful.

Commissioner Griffis noted this is a great example of adaptive reuse. Does keep a ½ acre park which is a compromise for the neighbors. There is a need for new housing and that includes market-rate, too.

Commissioner Martin asked if barrier-free apartments would be available. It was noted there would be barrier-free apartments on the first and second floors. Both buildings would be served by an elevator. He noted he liked the project.

Commissioner Willis noted this project checks all the boxes. It's an adaptive reuse of an old school. He asked if the school renovation and the new addition would be constructed at the same time and what were the proposed rents. Janay Eisenmenger from Lockwood Properties noted both would be constructed simultaneously and rent should be about \$750 for a one-bedroom unit and \$900 for a two-bedroom unit.

Commissioner Huntington felt this proposal made sense. He inquired about a dog park. It was noted residents would be allowed to have pets and a dog walk was being provided in the courtyard of the new addition.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn noted this was a good project and much needed. She hoped that additional conversations with neighbors would occur.

There being no other comments, Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn called for a motion. Planner Spence obliged.

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The Planning Department recommends **FAVORABLE RECOMENDATION** of PZRRUDD22-0001 to rezone 4.62 acres of land to Residential Unit Development District (RUDD) for remodel and repurpose the existing John Grace School for 18 residential units for seniors and construction of a new addition for 42 residential units for seniors with various amenities for recreation, social and community activities per the RUDD regulations, for the following reasons and with the following conditions:

1. The Southfield Comprehensive Master Plan indicates Recreation/Conservation for this property.
2. The change to RUDD would be compatible with and similar to the existing adjacent zonings and land uses to the north and west.
3. The proposal is in accordance with the standards for rezoning of property and the RUDD regulations.
4. The petitioner is to work with the City Planner and the City Attorney to finalize the John Grace Arms RUDD Development Agreement and get recorded with Oakland County.
5. The development shall be commenced within eighteen (18) months of the schedule set forth on the approved plan for the RUDD. If construction has not commenced within the required time period, approval of the plan shall become null and void.
6. Unless waived or modified by the Development Agreement, the yard and bulk, parking, loading, landscaping, lighting, and other standards shall comply with those found in the Single Family Residential District standards (R-1).
7. Shall maintain 25% open space.
8. Must be located on a public thoroughfare with direct access to the thoroughfare.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Griffis for Favorable Consideration of PZRRUDD22-0001. Supported by Commissioner Culpepper.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn stated all in favor say Aye -- there were six (6) Ayes.  
All against say Nay -- there were no nays.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn noted the motion passes.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn called for the next item.

**PSP21-0013** is the Site Plan Review Request of Halo Architects, Inc, for interior and exterior modifications to convert the existing Star Theater to a religious institution for Triumph Church, property located at 25333 W Twelve Mile Road, Sidwell Parcel 2417-126-050, on the south side of W Twelve Mile Road between Case and Lockdale, Supervisor's Plat No 5 Part Of Lots 20 To 25 Incl, Also Of Supervisor's Plat No 6 Part Of Lots 31 To 34 Incl, Section 17, City of Southfield, Oakland County, State of Michigan.

Planner Spence noted the Planning Department is requesting Postponement of PSP21-0013 to a Date Certain being the April 27, 2022 Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission.

Chair Stephens-Gunn called for a motion.

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Motion by Commissioner Culpepper to Postpone PSP21-0013 to a Date Certain being the April 27, 2022 Planning Commission Regular Meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Willis.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn stated all in favor say Aye – there were six (6) Ayes.  
All against say Nay – there were no nays.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn noted the motion passes.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn called for the next item.

**PSP22-0001** is the Site Plan Review Request of Skye Construction, to construct a new exterior stairway leading to a rooftop deck on the existing building located at 29444 Northwestern Highway, Sidwell Parcel 2407-326-008, Supervisors Plat No. 2 E 123 Ft Of W 244.5 Ft Of Lot 2, on the north side of Northwestern Highway between Franklin and Rosemond, Section 7, City of Southfield, Oakland County, State of Michigan.

Planner Spence noted the Planning Department is requesting Postponement of PSP22-0001 to a Date Certain being the March 23, 2022 Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn called for a motion. Motion by Commissioner Culpepper to Postpone PSP22-0001 to a Date Certain being the March 23, 2022 Planning Commission Regular Meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Martin.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn stated all in favor say Aye – there were six (6) Ayes.  
All against say Nay – there were no nays.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn noted the motion passes.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn called for a Motion to approve the Minutes of January 12, 2022, January 19, 2022 and January 26, 2022.

Motion by Commissioner Martin to approve the Minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Griffis.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn stated all in favor say Aye – there were six (6) Ayes.  
All against say Nay – there were no nays.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn noted the motion passes.

Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn opened the floor for Public Comments. There were no public comments so Chair Dr. Stephens-Gunn closed the Public Comment portion.

Chair Stephens-Gunn asks if there are any Miscellaneous items. Planner Spence note the next meeting of the Planning Commission will be on March 2, 2022

There were no other comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:19pm.

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Rob Willis 03/23/2022  
Rob Willis (date)  
Secretary/js

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