

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OCTOBER 5, 2021

ROLL CALL

The Planning Commission of the City of Prairie Village met in regular session on Tuesday, October 5, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Commission members attended a virtual meeting via the Zoom software platform. Chair Greg Wolf called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Jonathan Birkel, James Breneman, Patrick Lenahan, Melissa Brown, Nancy Wallerstein and Jeffrey Valentino.

The following individuals were present via Zoom in their advisory capacity to the Planning Commission: Chris Brewster, Gould Evans; Jamie Robichaud, Deputy City Administrator; Keith Bredehoeft, Public Works Director; Ron Nelson, Council Liaison; Adam Geffert, City Clerk/Planning Commission Secretary.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Breneman moved for the approval of the minutes of the September 14, 2021 regular Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Lenahan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

NON-PUBLIC HEARINGS

PC2021-120	Site Plan Approval for Fence Exception 5108 W. 76 th Street Zoning: R-1A Applicant: Robert Kohl
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Mr. Brewster stated that the applicant was requesting to build a fence on the rear property line approximately 8' to 10.5' high, exceeding the 6' height limit for rear fences. Specifically, the request is for a chain link fence at the eastern edge of the rear property line to the west side of the rear property line, with a height varying in association with the gradually increasing height of a retaining wall. The retaining wall is on the edge of the property to the north, which is primarily used as parking for a multi-unit condominium building. The parking area is elevated from approximately 2' to 4.5' above the rear yard of the subject property, and there is little room for landscape and screening. Therefore, vehicle circulation, other utility activities, and general maintenance have a negative

impact on the rear yard of the subject property. The proposed fence would include a canvas screening element connected to the chain link.

Mr. Brewster said that staff recommended approval of the site plan with the exception subject to the following conditions:

1. The fence is designed as a continuation of the top of fence to the east of this property line, and tapers to the extent of the 10.5' high exception on the east end. This increase is in response to the retaining wall on the property to the north and will have the effect of a 6' high fence when viewed from the property to the north.
2. Any screening associated with the proposed chain link fence is earth tone or other muted colors to blend with the landscape in the area and is well-maintained for an acceptable aesthetic appearance.
3. The fence shall not violate any provisions of easements in the area, and to the extent any violations are subsequently encountered, the fence is placed at the applicant's risk and subject to removal according to any easement provisions.
4. The fence exception is to address the current condition on the property to the north. In the event of redevelopment of that property, proper design of the border shall be an obligation of any future redevelopment and may not rely on the location of this fence and exception.

Robert Kohl, resident and owner of the property, was present to discuss the application.

Mr. Birkel asked if a storm drain was located on the property. Mr. Kohl stated that there was a 7' easement in the rear yard for storm drainage. He added that the fence installation would not impair the drain, and that he was aware the fence might need to be removed if work had to be done in the easement. Mr. Bredehoeft stated that Public Works had no concerns with the location of the proposed fence.

Mr. Breneman made a motion to approve the site plan with conditions as presented by staff.. Ms. Brown seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PC2021-121 Site Plan for Redevelopment of Macy's Building
4000 W. 71st Street
Zoning: C-2
Applicant: Kimley Horn & Associates; GRI Prairie Village, LLC

Mr. Brewster said the applicants were requesting site plan approval for a remodel involving changes to the exterior of the façade, a small addition, and reconfiguration of parking and loading areas. The property is zoned C-2, and was previously used as a department store. The remodeling is primarily an interior tenant finish to convert the building to multi-tenant space, which is anticipated to include a retail tenant on the first level, offices on the second level, and a fitness center on the lower walkout level. Mr.

Brewster added that tenant finishes or changes of use typically only require building permits and business licenses, when compliance with standards and codes are verified. However, expansions of buildings and exterior renovations with substantial material changes require the Planning Commission to review and approve a site plan.

Mr. Brewster stated that staff recommended approval of the site plan subject to the following conditions:

1. Pedestrian connections are made near the southeast corner of the building to the Mission Road sidewalk, from the signal at 71st Street and Mission Road directly to the parking area, and by a more formal “internal street” design at the entrance extending from Alhambra Street. The latter should involve a mid-block crossing to the sidewalk on the south side of 71st Street, subject to Public Works approval with respect to signs and pedestrian activated signals, unless any of the concepts for an improved sidewalk on the north side of 71st Street are pursued by the City and/or applicant.
2. A final revised landscape plan be submitted to staff prior to any building permits addressing the following:
 - a. Douglas Fir be switched to Norway Spruce or Green Giant Arborvitae.
 - b. Convert the painted landscape island in the parking area to a planted island with trees and maintain trees at other internal islands and near the building frontage.
 - c. Provide parking screening along both Mission Road and 71st Street through dense hedges, ornamental fence/wall, or a combination of both.
 - d. Provide street trees at 40-feet on center along both Mission Road and 71st Street. The 71st Street frontage may use ornamental trees to adjust to overhead utilities, or otherwise be incorporated into the parking lot edge.
3. Sign permits demonstrating compliance with City regulations will be required prior to finalizing signs for the project.

Mr. Birkel asked if the proposed trees would interfere with the low utility lines on 71st Street. Mr. Brewster stated the trees would either need to be small ornamental trees or strategically integrated if they were larger.

Gregg Zike with First Washington Realty, 7200 Wisconsin, Bethesda, MD was present to discuss the project along with project manager Tom Hippman and architects Matt Kist and Tyler Wysong with Kimley-Horn & Associates, 805 Pennsylvania Street, Suite 150, Kansas City, MO. Mr. Zike stated that he agreed with all staff recommendations with the exception of the requirement to plant street trees at 40’ intervals noted in item 2-d. He suggested equivalently sized trees could be planted in groups instead. Mr. Brewster stated this alternative could be considered acceptable and reviewed by staff for compliance with the zoning ordinance at the time of permits. Zike also said that the included building design elements, such as window locations, could change as result of a structural analysis that was currently underway. Mr. Brewster stated there was flexibility

in design approval in the zoning regulations, and that changes that still met the intent of the proposed elevations would not require further approval from the Planning Commission.

Mr. Zike also stated that the installation of a sidewalk on the north side of 71st Street had been considered, but doing so would limit all landscaping on that side of the parking lot, and was therefore not preferred.

Mr. Valentino and Ms. Brown shared concerns about the proposed internal crosswalk from Mission Road to the building. Additionally, they noted the small size of the sidewalk on the east side of the building, and its close proximity to Mission Road. Mr. Kist stated that other options would be considered to improve the pedestrian experience on the east side and through the parking lot.

After further discussion, Mr. Valentino made a motion to approve the site plan with staff recommendations. Mr. Birkel seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Greg Wolf adjourned the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Adam Geffert
City Clerk/Planning Commission Secretary