MINUTES
REGULAR PLAN COMMISSION MEETING
August 12, 2021

Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairperson Tim Loftus, who described the Commission's charge and function relative to zoning considerations. He introduced meeting participants Village Board Trustee Liaison Steve Thompson, Planning Manager Kelly Purvis, Planner Atrian Fard, Planning Intern Josh Hankins and Recording Secretary Barbara Dutton.

Roll was called. Present: Chairperson Loftus and Plan Commissioners Lloyd Berry, Laura Brown, Angela Fanella, Peter Cooper, Mohammed Saeed and Jamie Vondruska. Commissioner Matt Halkyard was absent.

Public Comment Non-Agenda Items

There was no public comment pertaining to non-agenda items.

Approval of Plan Commission Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Vondruska moved to approve the draft minutes of the July 8, 2021 Plan Commission meeting; seconded by Commissioner Berry. The motion passed by voice vote.

Motion to Open the Public Hearing to consider a Special Use Permit to Allow a Social Club and Office (Coworking Space) at 535 Pennsylvania Avenue (The Enclave)

A motion to open the Public Hearing for 535 Pennsylvania Avenue to consider A Special Use Permit to Allow a Social Club and Office (Coworking Space) at 535 Pennsylvania Avenue (The Enclave) was made by Commissioner Fanella and seconded by Commissioner Vondruska. The motion passed by voice vote.

Staff Introduction

Village Planning Manager Kelly Purvis and Planner Atrian Khodadadi Fard, 535 Duane Street, were sworn in. Introducing the Public Hearing topic, the latter stated that the Petitioner, the owner of The Enclave, seeks a Special Use Permit for a coworking office and social club with occasional special events on the premises. Planner Fard described the subject property location, which features retail in which it lies, as situated among commercial office, retail and entertainment businesses. She recounted that the enterprise opened in February 2020 as a retailer of furniture and decor – an operation permitted by right in the C5A zoning district – but subsequently it became apparent that the emphasis was more on running a coworking and social club establishment. Consequently, the Village required the owner to apply for a Special Use Permit (SUP). When this proposal was reviewed by the Plan Commission previously, several issues were cited: signage promoting the retail aspect of the business was absent, a "storefront" appearance was lacking due to "black-out" window shades; the establishment was not open regular business hours and merchandise didn't have price tags; and marketing conveyed the coworking office and social club aspects of the business over retail. Instead of proceeding to the Board, related Fard, the Petitioner chose to make the following changes to render the proposal acceptable to

the Plan Commission: advertising retail more; posting hours of operation and signage; adding price book for customers to use, altering window shade treatment to allow more visibility into the space; new merchandise was added to the offerings and a tab was added to The Enclave website specifically for retail. Planner Fard summarized the business model as one offering coworking space during the day in which members can work from home and meet with clients, while evenings would afford a lounge for social purposes. The environment, she explained, features a self-service bar area and all members have climate-controlled lockers for storing liquor to serve to up to two guests at a time. According to Enclave's website, she said, members must be at least 25 years old. Regular coworking and social club hours are specified as 9-4:30, she said, with after-hours access available to members via a bio-metric scanner.

Planner Fard described the "experiential" concept of the retail business, characterized by members being allowed to purchase amenities/decorations used on the premises. Items are also for sale through the website. She stated that records indicate that 80 percent of purchases were made by appointment. With average monthly sales comprising less than half of the enterprise's revenue, she explained, the Special Use request was made to reflect that more than half the revenue is from the coworking- social club dimension, rendering this the primary business of the enterprise, necessitating a SUP. Planner Fard displayed an image of The Enclave's floor plan, considered atypical of retail spaces; an aerial image of the building showing some 15 spaces in an associated parking lot of, as well as parking on the street; and a photo of the front of the building with new signage, and shades removed for public shopping hours. Further, she noted, the applicants have secured for its members discounts at local restaurants. Planner Fard listed Staff-recommended conditions for approval of the Special Use request, including substantial conformance with plans and testimony provided, maximum occupancy adherence, visibility into the establishments during normal hours (at which time doors are to be unlocked). Chairperson Loftus asked whether there is minimum number of hours required for retail businesses to be open. Planning Manager Purvis replied, "No," that such is up to individual business owners.

Petitioner's Presentation

Sworn in, Petitioner Robert Kellman, 535 Pennsylvania Avenue, Glen Ellyn, introduced an investor in Enclave who was also present. Mr. Kellman described the enterprise as a "hybrid" in that in addition to offering coworking space, it sells furniture and housewares. He related that the establishment, located at the edge of the commercial business district, opened in January 2020 for some six weeks, experiencing a "rocky start," but that Enclave is proud to partner with local businesses and be active in the community. The Petitioner went on to describe the "experiential retail" concept associated with Enclave: the concept, he conveyed, denotes a new type of retail that is popular on the Coasts. In application, potential customers use the goods on offer – perhaps in an unconventional way, he explained, citing as an example, a dining room chair used as an office chair. The coworking aspect of the business, he continued, is meant to dovetail with the retail dimension, enhanced by an interior designer network. The Petitioner stated that in the concept the coworking space *is* the retail space, listing conference rooms, phone booths, and a large, open shared space as components of the facility. Enclave, stated Mr. Kellman, has 71 members, the vast majority of whom are Glen Ellyn residents. He stated that

the club's members come downtown three -four times a week on average, which he said is two to three times more often than the average Village resident. He presented a few member testimonials.

Mr. Kellman concluded his presentation by saying that Covid didn't allow sufficient time for Enclave to develop relationships and get the full retail offering off the ground before being shut down, and hence it "leaned into the coworking side." Now, however, with Covid diminished, he said, the retail has picked up, representing 46 percent of the business' revenues – a share he maintains would have been more than half if the coworking aspect hadn't outpaced it due to conditions, inverting the emphasis. He added that coworking members are working from home, a trend he expects to remain. Daily use, he said, typically sees six to eight members, mostly during normal business hours (according to finger-scan reports). He added, due to a staffing shortage, retail hours are reduced, but he thinks this temporary.

Commissioner Vondruska said he was glad to get an explanation of "experiential retail," and asked the Petitioner if, given the modest retail offerings seen and that approval was recently granted for another coworking operation, committing to retail might limit Enclave, and whether keeping doors open during the day would present a problem. The Petitioner responded that he doesn't see limitations nor does he envision changes to the model. Commissioner Berry asked if during business hours staff qualified to sell retail is present, to which the Petitioner responded affirmatively. Commissioner Saeed asked if one needed to be a member to use the facility. Mr. Kellman replied that membership is necessary to use the coworking space.

Commissioner Berry observed that there wasn't much information on the Enclave website about retail. He said he's supportive of the Special Use but believes retail should be more prominent. The Petitioner attributed the website arrangement to a cheaper approach taken to update it. Chairperson Loftus asked if the Village derives any income from memberships. Planner Purvis stated it does not. Commissioner Brown asked if the Petitioner's Downers Grove operation has the same business model. Replying that this location, though similar in model, is not open yet, Mr. Kellman indicated it remains to be seen. Commissioner Cooper asked, since members could store and serve liquor on the premises, if there are any BASSET (Beverage Alcohol Sellers and Servers Education and Training) considerations. After being sworn in, Community Development Director Staci Springer, 535 Duane Street, stated that she can look into this, but that usually there are no BASSETT requirements with "bring your own licenses," as the scenario is akin to serving liquor in a home setting. The Petitioner stated that he and staff are BASSET-trained/certified and that members have to sign an agreement to abide by rules and indemnify Enclave and the Village. Commissioner Fanella asked if there are plans to rent the space out for events. Mr. Kellman stated none are planned.

Public Comment

None.

Commissioner Berry moved to close the Public Hearing; seconded by Commissioner Brown, the motion passed by voice vote.

Commissioner Discussion

Commissioner Berry said he thinks coworking space is great for the community, and that with 150-200 new apartment units on the market, it behooves the Village to have that type of offering. He opined that, the less than 2 percent of the members reported using the facility after 6 p.m. should address concerns expressed by Police Chief Norton at the last meeting. In that the Commissioner thinks the Petitioner addressed all of the issues brought up, the Commissioner is in support of the proposal.

Commissioner Vondruska voiced support of the Special Use, saying coworking space is valuable, while Commissioner Saeed expressed support in what he suggested is a "very new" concept for the Village. Concurring with Commissioner Berry, Commissioner Fanella said she believes the Petitioner has addressed the concerns voiced. She did, however, express that she thought this second coworking business downtown reaches a saturation point for such space in the district, but threw out the hint that more indoor spaces at which to book parties would be welcome. Commissioner Brown went on record in support of the proposal. Commissioner Cooper agreed with his fellow commissioners that adding coworking space to the community would be beneficial, but said he doesn't want to see the space become a private club with extended hours that takes the facility out of the Village's supervision; otherwise, he is supportive of the proposal. Chairperson Loftus voiced agreement with co-commissioners, adding that he is glad that half the business's revenue is retail, as this provides funding to the Village. Conveying interest in seeing how this new business trend goes, and said he could support the Special Use Permit.

Commissioner Vondruska moved for the following:

After conducting a public hearing and deliberating on the request of the petitioner, Robert Kellman, for approval of a Special Use to allow a social club and office at 535 Pennsylvania Avenue in the C5A Central Retail Core Subdistrict, the Plan Commission hereby recommends approval based on the findings of fact, as discussed or amended at the Plan Commission public hearing on August 12, 2021, which are hereby incorporated into the Motion by reference as though fully set forth herein, and a copy of which will be attached to the minutes of this meeting and kept on file as part of the permanent records of the Village. The Plan Commission makes this recommendation of approval with the following conditions:

1. That the project be operated in substantial conformance with the plans and testimony presented at the Plan Commission public hearing and before the Village Board of Trustees.
2. At no time shall occupancy exceed the posted maximum occupancy limit as determined by the Community Development Department.
3. Visibility into the establishment shall be provided during normal business hours.

Seconded by Commissioner Fanella, the motion passed by roll call vote: Commissioners Vondruska Fanella, Berry, Brown, Cooper, Saeed and Chairperson Loftus all voted "yes."

<u>Motion to Open and Continue until September 9, 2021 a Public Hearing on Brookshire Subdivision Jenna Court HOA Request for Sign Variation</u>

A motion to open a Public Hearing concerning a request for a sign Variation for the Brookshire Subdivision was made by Commissioner Berry and seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion passed by voice vote. A motion to continue until September 9th the Public Hearing concerning a request

for a sign Variation for the Brookshire Subdivision was made by Commissioner Fanella and seconded by Commissioner Vondruska. The motion passed by voice vote.

Trustee's Report

Trustee Thompson announced that the parking garage associated with the Apex apartment building development is partially open. The complex, he related, is scheduled for substantial completion February 22, 2022. He announced that a new Village commission is being formed; the Community Relations Commission, headed by Sania Irwin, is to focus on social relationships. He invited parties interested in serving on the body to submit an application. Trustee Thompson also related that the Village is reviewing the EMS contract, which governs ambulance service. Announcing that the architectural review process is to be reintroduced to Village deliberations, he invited input on how the process might operate. Finally, he reported that the Board is to receive an update from a consultant engaged to perform a market study pertaining to grocery stores in the downtown.

Chairman's Report

Chairperson Loftus welcomed new Commissioners Peter Cooper and Matt Halkyard, and said consideration is underway for filling the ninth spot on the Commission.

Staff Report

Planning Manager Purvis introduced new Village Planner Atrian Fard, and Planning Intern Josh Hankins, and said the effort to fill the Associate Planner spot continues. To a question from Commissioner Berry as to the status of the Glenwood Station complex, she said she thinks the developers are looking to sync up with the Village streetscape effort, and so she expects to see plans relative to the structure for a building permit in the Fall. She said Commission training will be held September 2nd. In response to a query from Commissioner Brown regarding progress on the chiropractor office planned for Five Corners, Development Director Springer said that, although the property had been purchased, the Village hasn't heard anything from the owner. She related that the Village is buying the hotel property on Roosevelt Road, but said the deal hasn't yet closed as the seller is working to get tenants out first. She added that the Village will look to hire a consultant to help craft an RFP to find a developer for the property. She also reported that the U.S. Bank property was purchased by the developer that built the Avere apartment building, and who, she said, is working on preliminary plans and a TIF request for consideration by the Village Board; if successful there, a proposal would move to the Plan Commission.

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

Chairperson Loftus adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m. following a voice vote on a motion to adjourn by Commissioner Vondruska, seconded by Commissioner Cooper.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Dutton-Thomas, Recording Secretary