

MINUTES
REGULAR PLAN COMMISSION MEETING
September 23, 2021

Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Acting Chairperson Angela Fanella, who introduced the evening's agenda along with meeting participants Village Board Trustee Liaison Steve Thompson, Planning Manager Kelly Purvis, and potentially Community Development Director (who ultimately did not join the meeting, though Associate Planner Atrian Fard did).

Roll was called. Present: Acting Chairperson Angela Fanella and Plan Commissioners, Laura Brown, Matt Halkyard, Mohammed Saeed and Jamie Vondruska. Chairperson Tim Loftus and Commissioners Lloyd Berry and Peter Cooper were 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 September 2, 2021 Plan Commission meeting; seconded by Commissioner Halkyard, the motion passed by voice vote.

Commissioner Vondruska moved to approve the draft minutes of the September 9, 2021 Plan Commission meeting; seconded by Commissioner Brown, the motion passed by voice vote.

Motions to Open and Continue the Public Hearing to consider a PUD Amendment for Apex 400 at 400 N. Main

Motions to open and continue to Oct. 7, 2021 the Public Hearing to consider a PUD Amendment for Apex 400 at 400 N. Main Street was made by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Vondruska. The motions passed by voice vote.

Motions to Open and Continue the Public Hearing to consider a PUD Amendment, Zoning Map Amendment and Lot Consolidation Request for Avere on Duane, 437 Duane Street & 424 Prospect Avenue

Motions to open and continue to Oct. 14, 2021 a Public Hearing to consider a PUD Amendment, Zoning Map Amendment and Lot Consolidation Request for Avere on Duane, 437 Duane Street & 424 Prospect Avenue were made by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Vondruska. The motions passed by voice vote.

Pre-Application Meeting for 453 Forest Avenue, 576-580 Duane Street – Avere on Forest Staff Introduction

Village Planning Manager Kelly Purvis introduced the proposal for a multi-family residential building brought forward by Reva Development Partners, explaining that 73 apartment units along with four townhomes are envisioned for the site, located at the northeast corner of Duane and Forest, across

from Leonard's Funeral Home. She displayed illustrations of the proposed development, pointing out terraces and lawn features, and said that two color palettes are being considered for the building, both of which meet Village guidelines. The four-story building, she related, is envisioned to reach 49 feet to the top of the roof, 51 feet to the top of the parapet, and 56 feet at the highest point, the elevator overrun. No height deviation is sought, she added, explaining that 60 feet is permitted by-right. She emphasized that the proposal is in Phase I of the review process. The complex would be predominantly residential, she said, but a small, local vendor (ice cream, coffee, beer, wine, etc.) is envisioned adjacent to the park amenity planned for the northwest part of the site. A standalone ATM is proposed, inclusion of which would require a zoning code text amendment, she said. The developer, she reported, has been in contact with the Glen Ellyn Park District (GEPD) to discuss working together to improve Prairie Path Park and/or coordinate design of open space for the development. Entrance to the parking garage would be via one-way access from Duane, with the exit to Forest.

Planning Manager Purvis listed deviations identified:

- The proposed parking garage design ratio for the development is 1.68 per unit, a variation from 1.8 per unit, but which is in-line with Avere on Duane and more than what was approved for Glenwood Station (recently approved Village projects).
- Setbacks would vary from the permitted 15 feet along the Prairie Path; 25 feet on the Duane Street side; 30 feet on the east (or rear yard) side; and 25 feet on the west (front yard) side.
- The proposed lot coverage of nearly 86 percent exceeds the 65 percent allowed for a PUD.

Signage, storm water management and other aspects of the proposed project will be reviewed as the project moves forward, she explained, but asked for Commission feedback this evening on preliminary plans, specifically anticipated deviations, color palettes, and architectural design.

Acting Chairperson Fanella asked if there had been any complaints about parking at the recently built Avere on Duane. Planning Manager Purvis replied that Staff is not aware of any formal complaints, but noted that the developer has an arrangement to use parking spaces in the commuter lot across the street, and hasn't reached full capacity. Commissioner Brown asked if there were any plans to incorporate the commuter parking lot to the west of the site into the development. Planning Manager Purvis replied that at this time there are no formal plans to change the parking lot, but that the Village may consider open space or an event space for the property in the future

Petitioner Presentation

Warren James, principal of Reva Development Partners, introduced business partners and team members, and reported that the Avere project his firm recently completed at Duane and Prospect is 100 percent leased and occupied. He added that Reva has acquired the property at 424 Prospect, on which the developer plans to construct an outdoor living amenity for the benefit of Avere's residents. Turning to the Avere project now proposed for a site at Duane and Forest, he said that two parcels are under contract and that the site's grade change and location on a one-way street influenced the design concept. Mike Fitzgerald, principal at OKW Architects in Chicago, additionally listed Prairie Path Park, the future underpass, and the anticipated new railroad depot as "forces" that shaped the design for an "H"-shaped building featuring two courtyards, outdoor terraces and below-grade parking. He added that

townhome components serve to break up the building's scale, and suggested that such a multi-family development would serve as a "great transition" from single-family residential to commercial areas.

The building, continued Mr. Fitzgerald, will have a ramp on the Forest Avenue side and will host the loading zone. The "ceremonial" entrance, he said, will be on Duane Street. In conceiving the building's architecture, Mr. Fitzgerald said commercial, civic and institutional buildings in the community were studied, and a number of "common threads" discerned. The buildings, he observed, represent their use, are predominantly masonry, and present a level of detail that imparts a "handcrafted" feel. Examples multi-family architecture, he noted, feature masonry, stepping and varying roof styles. He described the architectural expression of the Petitioner's proposed development as "fresh," and different from other buildings in town, yet containing a familiarity through massing, masonry, siting, and elements such as bay windows. He likened the south configuration to "arms embracing [the] front yard," and said the north side would serve as a connection to Prairie Path Park. Recessed balconies, he said, will avoid a flat façade, and landscaping will embellish the roof of the garage. The first-floor units, he said, will have outdoor terraces with landscape in between. Outdoor seating also figures into the plan. He said that the submerged parking keeps the building height within the allowed limit, with the height appearing at 50 feet on the Duane side and 56 feet on the park side. Showing a series of diagrams to depict sun and shadow patterns, he maintained there would be no adverse effect on any of the adjacent properties.

Mr. James stated that engineering details will be provided in final engineering plans. Relative to Prairie Path Park, he said Reva has been collaborating on site schemes development with the Park District, and that these entities will work out a maintenance agreement. Discussing amenity space, Reva Principal Matt Nix described a kiosk area with a "curated mix of interesting tenants." A market analysis, he said, indicates that Reva is providing the largest units in the market at each level, which he said Reva perceives significant demand. He concluded the allotted parking is "just about the right amount." Noting that the development is in a TIF district, Mr. James related that the Petitioner is having discussions with the Board, and will work to avoid traffic issues, particularly vis á vis Metra.

Commissioner Halkyard asked if the Petitioner anticipated issues connected to garage pick-up on Forest and traffic related to people needing to get to the train. Referencing plans for the revised drop-off for the new depot, Mr. James said while circulation needs to be addressed, he doesn't see an impediment. Commissioner Vondruska asked about provisions for overnight guest parking. Mr. James said the Petitioner would like to work with the Village to utilize existing parking, namely in the new civic parking garage. Planning Manager Purvis interjected that overnight parking is permitted in commuter lots as well.

Commissioner Vondruska wondered, given tenants could be people looking to downsize or to get into the community, about the affordability of larger units. He said he applauds the design, which he called a "nice departure" from other complexes, and complimented the green space. He said he'd like to see setbacks that allow for landscaping to soften the garage sides, and expressed optimism that the area by the Prairie Path Park might be developed to provide a "purposeful" place where people can relax. Voicing agreement with Commissioner Vondruska, Commissioner Brown praised the front yard concept. She asked if there would be a loading zone on Forest to pick someone up. Mr. James said one would be on Forest, and that people could also pick someone up from Duane. She was given an affirmative

response to her subsequent question as to whether there would be opportunity for a curb cut. She asked if the Petitioner had considered a low-pitched roof. Mr. James responded that sensitivity to height prompted the developer to try to utilize an architectural form that would keep the building under the maximum height. She asked if a rooftop garden is planned. Citing code challenges, Mr. James said green roof elements are specified for atop the parking deck, and that the roof is to be utilitarian.

Commissioner Saeed inquired about a drainage system. Mr. James said rooftop collection will discharge into a storm sewer and a sanitary sewer is to be employed inside the garage. He said a back-up generator is proposed for managing water in the event of a power outage. Commissioner Fanella asked if Avere on Duane residents are folks downsizing, families with children, or young couples. Reva's Matt Nix said a wide variety is represented. Commissioner Fanella suggested that the Library and Rotary Club might have some thoughts on utilizing Prairie Path Park. Mr. James said the petitioner is happy to collaborate.

Public Comment

Planning Manager Purvis read into the record the following letters:

Amy Crowley, 580 Hillside Ave.: *"Hello, I live on Hillside Ave, and my home backs up to 1- and 2-story apartments and condos on Duane, next to Leonard's. I'd like to know if the village is considering any developers with low-rise plans for the site. Single or double story residences give the Village a neighborhood feel, and allow new construction to blend in with existing homes and businesses. Are any 'shorter'/smaller options being considered for this site? Thank you!"*

Ed Melka, 41 N. Main: *"I have submitted this to the village President and board members and also on the village's Facebook pg.*

Glen Ellyn's infrastructure cannot handle the three massive apartment buildings currently being built and proposed. Glen Ellyn does not need another massive one! Trustees should remember Park Blvd and Main st are the only two lane streets feeding downtown Glen Ellyn! They already will not handle the traffic without major congestion! The trustees, plan commissioners and all the commissions I hope they remember they are Glen Ellyn citizens and represent all the citizens in Glen Ellyn. This project should be turned away. The Main st project should have not BEEN approved and there is a lot of speculation on the street on how that was approved!? Say no to the US Bank project on Duane!"

Julie Evans, 554 N. Park Blvd.: *"The proposed Avere on Forest development would be ideally located to address the needs of Glen Ellyn residents with disabilities who need centrally located, accessible housing within walking distance of Metra, PACE, employment opportunities and social/recreational opportunities as most do not drive. However, the proposed rental rates would be out of reach for many in this group. Please include affordable units within this development plan to allow residents with disabilities an opportunity to create a more independent future for themselves while remaining in Glen Ellyn where they have built their lives."*

Lee Marks, 425 Hawthorne, former chair of the Glen Ellyn Historic Preservation Commission, said that as a long-time preservationist he is disappointed in the design of the proposed development, preferring instead to see something akin to the Civic Center and the red brick office building east of the subject

property. And while he likes elements proposed for the potential development, he would like to see a more traditional architectural style applied in what he indicated is a distinctive community.

Sherry Theilgaard, 441 N. Park, said she moved to the community in 1976, after being charmed by the downtown. She said that, with the proposed development, she fears her “sunsets are going to be gone,” and that she is also worried about traffic. She said the proposed building oversized for the lot, and would like to see trees and park space added. She also thinks Prairie Path traffic might be problematic.

Expressing concern about a lack of affordable housing, Eleanor Saliamonas, 626 Newton, argued that “a concentration of luxury apartments is not good for the social dynamics of the Village.” She also expressed concern over energy efficiency, and was puzzled by the choice of synthetic turf, which she suggested could contribute to flooding.

Taivo Tammaru, 404 Prospect, stated that he is in support of the project, and suggested that the developer’s track record overrides any concerns about market feasibility. Living near the Avere on Duane complex, he reports a livelier neighborhood and no traffic issues. He said he is a licensed architect.

Steve Swanson, 159 N. Main, said he agrees with Ms. Saliamonas. He also said he is bothered by the utilitarian roof, an approach that renders the structure a “very 20th Century building.” He suggested that a Village sustainability plan would be desirable, and is curious about such applications for the proposed building (which he said he likes otherwise). He concluded with concerns about bicycles and pedestrians near cars exiting the garage, and called for scrutiny to ensure safety.

George Heidenreich, 704 Grand Ave., said his family chose Glen Ellyn because it felt like a village, and was pleased with the high percentage of property owners. Influenced by short-term residency, he suggested, renters vote differently, but their decisions have long-term tax ramifications for property owners. “Do we really need more rental in Glen Ellyn?” he asked. He asserted that it changes the complexion of the town, and that the community has enough.

Saying that his view reflects the prior gentleman’s sentiments, Rob Margets, 570 Hillside, advocated for condos (over rentals) to attract residents with “skin in the game.” Explained that his residence backs up to Leonard’s, he said traffic – specifically funeral and commuter traffic – would affect him. He wondered if the developers might consider a rooftop restaurant for the building, and thought trees that would grow big should be added along Duane Street.

Pam Albrecht, 587 Hillside, opined that the evening’s program was a “great presentation,” but favors a more traditional design and that sustainability “needs to happen.” She asked when a scale model would be available to view, and wondered about attention given to sound attenuation.

Zak Wilson, 716 Crescent Blvd., asked if a planning analysis will be been done and if the lifespan of the development has been calculated. Citing the IRS, he said depreciation is 39 years for a commercial building and 27½ years for residential.

Planning Manager Purvis said a market study will be performed and a 3D model produced.

Commissioner Discussion

Observing that building height has been a “spark point” in town, Commissioner Halkyard said he appreciates the attention to this aspect of the proposed project. He said he is comfortable with the setback, sees park integration as a “great opportunity,” and felt parking had been addressed. He thinks the proposed – on an underutilized space – will be a “great project for Glen Ellyn.” Commissioner Vondruska said he agrees with sustainability goals suggested, and wondered how developers view LEED Certification for these types of projects. He told the audience that he anticipates further review of the proposed project. Commissioner Brown said she likes the plan proposed and appreciates the thought that went into it. She said she agrees with Mr. Marks on the desire for “more of a timeless architectural style” and that what was presented is “very 2021-2022.” The prominent location, she suggested, calls for a design that represents the Village. Stressing the need for housing in the downtown, Commissioner Saeed said he supports the project. Acting Chairperson Fanella said that she likes the location for the project, and the treatment that hides parking. She said she’s not crazy about the wall with the terraced effect, but does appreciate the inclusion of larger units and townhomes, and the green space. She suggested moving the building closer to Duane to provide more space on the Prairie Path side. While she embraces sustainability, she realizes the economic challenges. She urged sound-proofing, given the site’s proximity to the train tracks.

Trustee’s Report

Trustee Thompson reported that the Village Trustees declined to allow cannabis sales in the Village. He said the presentation shown this evening was also given to the Board. He said the Board is discussing burying power lines/utilities along Hillside from Main to Prospect, which would increase street parking. He said that next Monday the Board is to discuss engaging a consultant to help with the Roosevelt Road motel project, and ideas for redevelopment include commercial business and affordable housing. He also said the Board will be deliberating the 2022 Village budget. Asked the status of the Comprehensive Plan, Trustee Thompson responded that he had no update to deliver.

Chairman’s Report

None.

Staff Report

Planning Manager Purvis said Staff awaits trustee comments on the Comprehensive Plan, but once received will be synthesized and given to the consultant to update the Draft. She introduced Planning Intern Josh Hankins and former Intern Adrian Diaz, in the audience, and said a new associate planner hired will be coming on board. Ms. Purvis said meetings are scheduled for Oct. 7th and 14th, but nothing is currently planned for the 28th. To a query as to when the Glenwood Station project would start, she said that demolition of the former McChesney building is likely to occur in November or December, but soils testing has pushed the project back some. Construction is to begin in the spring, she said.

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

Acting Chairperson Fanella adjourned the meeting at 8:57 p.m. following a voice vote on a motion to adjourn by Commissioner Vondruska, seconded by Commissioner Brown.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Dutton-Thomas

Recording Secretary