Planning Commission meeting location change

The location of the April 3, 2008 Planning Commission meeting has been changed to Old Central High School, 714 S. Westnedge Avenue, Room #216. Enter the building on the north side, closest to downtown. Parking is available in the lot at the west side of the site, or along the streets north of the building. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.
Tentative Agenda  
Kalamazoo City Planning Commission  
April 3, 2008  
Regular Meeting  

Old Central High School, 714 S. Westnedge Avenue, Room #216 7:00 p.m.

A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Formal Agenda
D. Approval of Minutes (March 6, 2008)
E. Communications and Announcements
F. Public Hearings:
   P.C. #2008.03: Consideration of a request from James Murphy to rezone 2031 Rambling Road from Zone RM-36 (Residential, Multi-Dwelling District) to Zone CO (Commercial, Office District).  
   [Recommendation: motion to recommend approval of the rezoning request to the City Commission.]
G. Citizens’ Comments Regarding Non-Agenda Items
H. Old Business
   (Citizens’ comments are welcome before each item is voted upon by the Planning Commission)
I. New Business
   (Citizens’ comments are welcome before each item is voted upon by the Planning Commission)
   1. Presentation by Bronson Methodist Hospital on current projects
   2. Annual meeting of the Planning Commission:
      a. Chair and Vice-Chair elections
      b. Site plan review program
J. Citizens’ Comments
K. City Planner’s Report
L. Miscellaneous Comments by Planning Commissioners
M. Adjournment
The City of Kalamazoo Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Commissioner Kuseske at 7:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers, 241 W. South Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007. There were approximately 6 additional people in attendance.

MEMBERS PRESENT
Terry Kuseske, Chair; Sonja Dean; Casey Fawley; James Kneen; Merilee Mishall; Bertha Stewart; Linda Wienir

MEMBERS EXCUSED
Frank Cody, Vice Chair; Reed Youngs

CITY STAFF
Keith Hernandez, Deputy Director/City Planner; Robert Bauckham, Assistant City Planner; John Kneas, Assistant City Attorney; Amy Thomas, Recording Secretary

ROLL CALL
Planner Hernandez completed roll call and determined that the aforementioned members were present.

AGENDA (March 6, 2008)
There were no changes to the agenda.

Commissioner Kneen, supported by Commissioner Dean, moved approval of the March 6, 2008 Planning Commission agenda. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

MINUTES (February 7, 2008)
There were no changes to the minutes.

Commissioner Mishall, supported by Commissioner Wienir, moved approval of the February 7, 2008 Planning Commission minutes as presented. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
None

PUBLIC HEARINGS
P.C. # 2008.02: Consideration of a request from August Krymis to rezone 325 and 401 N. Sage Street from Zone CO (Commercial, Office District) to Zone CC (Commercial, Community District).
Planner Bauckham gave the staff report, which is incorporated in these minutes by reference hereeto. This application involves two parcels of land on Sage St. between W. Main and Stonebrook. There is a vacant building on the south parcel; an accounting firm is located in the building on the north parcel. The applicant wants to rezone the south parcel to allow a wider array of uses for the property. The north parcel is included in the request. The Future Land Use Plan for these parcels places them in the General Commercial category; this category would support a CC zoning district. The rezoning would provide continuity with the adjacent properties. The vacant building contains four tenant spaces, which could be altered or combined. The applicant has no plans to demolish the building, but could remodel it to suit future tenants.

(7:05 p.m. – Commissioner Fawley arrived.)

Commissioner Dean inquired if there is a trend in changing this area’s zoning from the CO to the CC zoning district. Planner Bauckham advised that rezoning the south parcel to the CC zone would provide a wider range of options for prospective tenants. Uses such as restaurants, retail stores, and convenience stores would be allowed in the CC zoning district but not the CO zoning district.

Commissioner Kuseske referred to the traffic light on Picadilly, which is near the subject property. He inquired if the traffic associated with this project had been taken into consideration. Planner Bauckham advised that a meeting is scheduled next week to discuss traffic issues regarding the property on the north side of W. Main, which is near the subject property.

The applicants were present to answer questions.

Public Hearing

No one spoke at the public hearing.

Commissioner Kneen, supported by Commissioner Dean, moved to close the public hearing on P.C. #2008.02. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Kneen, supported by Commissioner Stewart, moved to recommend to the City Commission, the approval of P.C. #2008.02, the request from August Krymis to rezone 325 and 401 N. Sage Street from Zone CO (Commercial, Office District) to Zone CC (Commercial, Community District). With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

CITIZENS COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None
CITY PLANNER’S REPORT

Planner Hernandez stated that 10 consultants submitted proposals for the Portage Creek Corridor project. City staff is in the process of ranking the proposals; the Stakeholders Committee will review the top three proposals.

The April Planning Commission meeting will be held in the Vine Neighborhood. Further details will be provided shortly.

Commissioner Fawley inquired as to who submitted proposals for the Portage Creek Corridor project. Planner Hernandez advised that two of the proposals are local, four are regional. Commissioners Kneen, Kuseske, Dean and Wienir are on the stakeholders group.

Commissioner Fawley inquired if a local group would have an advantage. Planner Hernandez advised that having a local office is not part of the criteria on which the consultants are ranked. However, they should be within a day’s drive from Kalamazoo. Accordingly, consultants from Chicago or Detroit might be under consideration.

Commissioner Kuseske inquired if the city is required to take the lowest bid. Planner Hernandez responded in the negative, and advised that city staff is working with a budget of $150,000 and there were a wide range of bids.

Planner Bauckham referred to the Wayside West/Franklin Valley Mobile Home Park project. He advised that the owners have plans to demolish Wayside West and construct a new commercial building in that location. There are also plans to clear the mobile home park and construct a multi-level apartment complex on that site. There are 129 sites in the mobile home park, and less than 50% of them have been occupied during the past two years. There were 43 tenant spaces occupied this week. There have been problems with late rent payments, meth labs in the trailer park, fires, arrests, etc. The park is declining and many of the homes have code violations.

The owners of the park decided that it is not financially feasible to continue this way. They have been approached by the developer of the proposed project. In 2006, city staff received the first concept plan for redevelopment of this park. In January of 2008, the owners obtained a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) to allow them to build the apartments with no commercial uses in the buildings. The commercial tenants will be in a separate building closer to Stadium Drive.

One of the park residents spoke at the ZBA meeting on behalf of the residents who don’t want to move. The owners sent a letter to the park residents in February regarding the proposed project. The letter provided six contacts where residents could move. Eviction notices were served at the end of February advising that the residents have 60 days to move; the law requires only a 30 day notice. There were no federal funds involved with the trailer park so there would be no federal relocation process required. Eleven of the residents either don’t want to move or they want to be compensated. Most of the trailers are 20 years old or more and each one would be valued at approximately $3,000 or less. Most mobile home parks won’t accept mobile homes over 20 years old. The owners are working with Housing Resources, Inc. to find suitable housing for the
residents. It was suggested that the owners of the trailer park pay the first month’s rent for the displaced residents.

It will cost approximately $1,500 to dispose of each of the mobile homes. The owners are considering paying the displaced residents the difference between the value of their trailers and the $1,500 disposal costs. The typical cost to detach a mobile home from utilities, move it to another facility, and reconnect it to utilities is approximately $3,000. There is also a risk that damage might occur when the trailer is moved. Due to the age and value of the homes, such moves are not very feasible.

A formal site plan has not yet been submitted for the new development; it is only a concept plan at this point. The site plan would have to be approved and the permits issued before the plan could proceed. The owners must provide updates to city staff as they move forward with this project.

Commissioner Wienir inquired if someone would be meeting with the tenants at the trailer park. Planner Bauckham stated that Housing Resources, Inc. (HRI) will meet with the residents to assess their needs and try to help them relocate. At this point, it appears that 32 of the tenants will be moving by the end of the 60-day notice period; 11 of the residents are reluctant to move.

Commissioner Mishall thanked city staff for having a dialogue with the owners of the trailer park. She requested more details as to how the tenants might possibly be compensated. Planner Bauckham stated that the tenants rent the land, but they own the structure. The code violations have not been enforced because of the potential move. There is some value in these homes/trailers but no one is sure at this point as to how the tenants will be compensated by the owners of the trailer park. City staff suggested to the owners that they find a way to compensate the tenants for their investment and provide city staff with that plan. City staff will provide further updates at the April Planning Commission meeting.

Commissioner Wienir inquired if brownfield redevelopment funds will be used for the proposed project. Planner Bauckham confirmed that is a possibility but no commitments have been made at this point. Other city departments will also be included in discussions involving this project.

Commissioner Kuseske advised that he met with Dale Shugars and Jeff Smith of the Home Builders Association regarding urban redevelopment and green buildings. Jeff Chamberlain and Bruce Merchant are working on green policies to benefit the private and public sector.

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Commissioner Kneen, supported by Commissioner Mishall, moved to adjourn the March 6, 2008 Planning Commission meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.*

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

________________________________
Keith Hernandez, AICP
Deputy Director/City Planner
Community Planning and Development
Project Address: 2031 Rambling Road

Case #: P.C. 2008.03

Request: Rezone the parcel from Zone RM-36 to Zone CO

Meeting Date: April 3, 2008

Applicant: James Murphy

Owner: Same

Public Hearing: Yes

Date Legal Ad Published: March 19, 2008

Project Summary:
The request is to rezone 2031 Rambling Road from Zone RM-36 (Residential, Multi-Dwelling District) to Zone CO (Commercial, Office District).

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the rezoning request to the City Commission.
ANALYSIS

Property Size:
- Approximately 1 acre

Description of Current Use of Property:
- The site contains a building that is used for a dentist office.

Current Zoning District:
- Zone RM-36

Future Land Use Map Designation:
- Office

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:
- North: Zone CC; medical office
- South: Zone RS-5; single-family home
- East: Zone RS-5; vacant land
- West: Zone CC & RS-5; law office and single-family home

Project Description:
This request is to rezone a parcel of land in the Oakland Drive/Winchell Neighborhood from a multiple-family residential zone to the commercial office zone. The current owner of the site formerly operated a dental practice in the building, and he is the applicant for the request. The property is being sold to another dentist, pending the rezoning. The prospective owner would like to expand the existing building on the site for his dental practice. A site plan for the expansion has not yet been provided.

The dental office on the site is a non-conforming use in the current zoning district, and the building could not be expanded in that zone. Before the zoning ordinance was amended in 2005, medical offices were a permitted use in the multiple-family zones under certain conditions. When the ordinance was changed, they became non-conforming uses in such zones, meaning existing office facilities could continue to exist but they could not be expanded. Rezoning of the parcel is needed to allow the prospective owner to enlarge the building.

The future land use plan designates the parcel in the Office category, which is compatible with the requested zone. The Commercial Office zone would provide an appropriate transition or buffer use between the existing commercial uses in the area on Stadium Drive and the residential uses to the south of the subject parcel. Various office uses are allowed in this zone, but not retail businesses or
restaurants, and only limited commercial uses such as a telephone answering service.

Back in 1966, the current site owner requested that the subject parcel be rezoned from the single-family zone to the multiple-family zone to allow the dental office building to be constructed. The Planning Commission considered rezoning it to the general commercial zone to promote compatibility with the commercially-zoned property to the north, but decided instead to recommend rezoning it to the multiple-family zone. The City Commission accepted the recommendation, and the parcel was rezoned to the multiple-family zone at that time.

Findings:
Staff has made the following findings regarding this request:

1. The parcel for this rezoning request is in the Office category of the future land use map, which supports the proposed rezoning.
2. The prospective owner of the parcel desires to expand the building for his dental practice, but such expansion is not allowed in the current zone.
3. Rezoning the parcel to the office zone will provide an appropriate transition or buffer between the commercial zoning to the north of the subject parcel and the residential zoning and uses to the south of it.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the rezoning request to the City Commission.

Attachments:
1. Existing and future land use plan maps
2. Existing and future zoning maps
3. Aerial photograph
2031 RAMBLING ROAD -- REZONE RM-15 TO ZONE CO

ZONING

AREA REQUESTED FOR REZONING

RS-5, RS-7, RESIDENTIAL, SINGLE DWELLING
RS-1, RS-4, RESIDENTIAL, Duple
CM, RS-3, RESIDENTIAL, Multi Family
RM-2, RM-4, RESIDENTIAL, Multi Building
RM-3, RESIDENTIAL, Multi Building
RM-1, COMMERCIAL, Office
RM-1, Neighborhood Office
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REZONING P.C. #2008-03

2031 RAMBLYNG ROAD -- REZONE FROM RM-15 TO ZONE C0
2031 RAMBLING ROAD -- REZONE FROM ZONE RM-15 TO ZONE CO

REZONING P.C. # 2008-03

Land Use

RESIDENTIAL OR RENTAL
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
INDUSTRIAL
PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL
VACANT
COMMERCIAL
REZONING P.C.#2008-03

2031 RAMBLING ROAD--REZONE FROM RM-15 TO ZONE CO

PROPOSED ZONING

EXISTING PUB AREAS
CCTR
CC
CBD
CN-1
CO
M-1
M-2
RD-19
RM-15
RM-15C
RM-36
RS-7
RS-5

AREA REQUESTED FOR REZONING
March 21, 2008

Sir or Madam,

The Community Planning & Development Department is always seeking ways to improve the services we offer to our citizens, including improved access to information related to our boards and commissions. To this end, we are pleased to announce that meeting packets (including agendas) and minutes for the Planning Commission can be accessed through the City’s website, www.kalamazoo.org/clerk.

As a result, our Department will no longer be distributing hard copies of these meeting records. We hope that electronic access to this information will improve delivery time, accessibility and portability of the board and commission information that you are interested in receiving.

To access meeting packets and minutes for the City of Kalamazoo’s boards and commissions, please visit www.kalamazoo.org/clerk. Thank you for your interest in the ongoing activities of the Planning Commission. Should you have any questions please contact us at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Keith Hernandez,  
City Planner/Deputy Director