

APPROVED

VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE  
PLAN COMMISSION MEETING

September 13, 2021, 7:00 P.M.

Chairman Pro tem Maurer called the September 13, 2021 meeting of the Downers Grove Plan Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Plan Commissioners and public in the recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Pro tem Maurer, Commissioners Boyle, Majauskas, Patel, Rector, Toth

**ABSENT:** Chairman Rickard, Commissioners Dmytryszyn, Johnson

**STAFF:** Planning Manager Jason Zawila and Development Planner Gabby Baldassari

**OTHERS**

**PRESENT:** Petitioner, Mr. Duffey Phelps, One Walker Avenue, Clarendon Hills; Traffic Consultant Mr. Michael Werthmann, with KLOA, Civil engineering consultant, Mr. Oz Pastrona with CivWorks; Mr. Scott Richards, 1130 Warren Avenue, Downers Grove; Michael Cassa, Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Pro tem Maurer entertained a motion to approve the minutes.

**MINUTES OF THE JUNE 7, 2021 PLAN COMMISSION MEETING WERE APPROVED ON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER RECTOR. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER BOYLE. MOTION PASSED BY VOICE VOTE OF 6-0.**

**MINUTES OF THE JUNE 14, 2021 PLAN COMMISSION MEETING WERE APPROVED ON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER BOYLE. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER TOTH. MOTION PASSED BY VOICE VOTE OF 5-0. (COMMISSIONER MAJAUSKAS ABSTAINS)**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Chairman Pro tem Maurer explained the protocol for the public hearing process and swore in those individuals that would be speaking during the public hearing.

**FILE 21-PLC-0015: A petition seeking approval of a Planned Unit Development, map amendment from O-R-M, Office-Research Manufacturing to B-3, General Services and Highway Business, a Special-Use for a drive-through, and a Final Plat of Subdivision to construct a restaurant and a hotel. The property is zoned O-R-M, Office Research-Manufacturing. The property is located on the southeast corner of Walnut Avenue and**

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### **Ogden Avenue (PIN 08-01-304-031). Chicago WSS Developer II, Petitioner and Tag Land DGC, LLC Owner.**

Petitioner, Mr. Duffey Phelps, One Walker Avenue, Clarendon Hills, Suite 300, shared that he is Vice President of Development with Holladay Properties, and was the developer for the Burlington Station project. A background of Holladay Properties followed. The proposed 3.4-acre site is planned to be subdivided into three separate lots – the eastern portion will be for the proposed hotel, the west portion for the restaurant and the southwest property will have the detention pond. Mr. Phelps discussed that the necessary parking requirements and cross access easements were considered in order to meet the Village’s ordinance for this development. Phase 1 will include the development of the 122 room Wood Springs Hotel and necessary infrastructure, traffic lanes off Walnut Street, stormwater facilities, and public improvements. He did meet with the Downers Grove Park District to review the plans and to have connectivity to the park district site.

Mr. Phelps stated that Phase 2 will be the development of a restaurant but two plans exist: the first option is for a sit-down restaurant with a deviation request of 184 parking spaces, when the Zoning Ordinance requires 187 spaces. The reason for the reduced number of parking spaces was due to the nearby south wetland which encroaches onto the property and he was trying to limit the impact to it, yet keep the drive aisle for emergency vehicle access. The second option calls for a drive-through restaurant with a double drive-through lane. A special use is being requested for it. For this plan there will be 182 parking spaces while the ordinance states 165 spaces are needed; so a surplus exists.

Mr. Phelps discussed that the Wood Springs Hotel is a fast growing chain in the U.S. Users will be extended stay travelers, business travelers, and (traveling) sports teams. BRR Architects is the architect design firm for the project. Materials on the hotel’s facade will include stone “bump outs” and a canopy. The site is also a catalyst site in the village’s Comprehensive Plan. Renderings of the building and floor plans followed. Mr. Phelps elaborated that there are interested parties for the restaurant and the site is located in a good location near the expressways and park district. A list of how the development met the requirements of the village’s Comprehensive Plan followed. He believes the project fits well as a planned unit development site and makes the site cohesive.

Traffic Consultant, Mr. Michael Whitman, with KLOA and civil engineering consultant Mr. Oz Pastrona with CivWorks were introduced.

Commissioners confirmed with the civil engineer that the utilities from Phase 2 will be delivered to the future restaurant pad, the 184 shared parking spaces will accommodate the full hotel, the hotel’s room rates (differ seasonally), the “typical” guest, and how the sports park will play into the hotel, its amenities, etc. Mr. Phelps explained the brand can provide a market needs study, if necessary. Per Commissioner Majauskas’ question, the hotel would accommodate traveling youth sports clubs. It would not be providing housing for the homeless or evicted, etc. Commissioner Majauskas stated she would have preferred to see some studies provided and for the petitioner to explain how the development was a gateway that included retail, when she did not see any retail being planned. Per a question, Mr. Phelps explained that Holladay Properties does hire third-party management companies to manage their hotel – JMP Asset Management and Nationwide Management. He confirmed that the company does have corporate relationships to allow for flexibility per week.

Chairman Pro tem Maurer invited public comment.

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Mr. Michael Cassa, with the Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation, explained to commissioners that the village is known as an office community in the Chicagoland area with three office parks – Esplanade on Butterfield, Highland Landmark on Butterfield, and the Corridors, which is directly across the street from the proposed site. Mr. Cassa believed the applicant would draw its business from the Corridors, since there is no close hotel in the vicinity. Regarding a future sports park, Mr. Cassa shared that sports tourism is the fastest growing tourism segment in the U.S. and the proposed hotel/restaurant is to attract sports tournament to the area. Details followed.

Mr. Scott Richards, 1130 Warren Avenue, inquired if such facility would attract truck traffic and whether it would impact Ogden Avenue; whether the proposed retention pond would be dry or wet; whether a coffee/breakfast bar would be offered; and how many staff would be on-site at night. Lastly, Mr. Richards commented that retail for the site would not be a good fit since the industry was struggling. The proposed use was a good choice.

Ms. Gabby Baldassari, Development Planner for the village, summarized the request before the commissioners, presented the existing conditions of the area, and said the entire property would be split into three lots containing the hotel, restaurant, and stormwater retention, respectively. Two options for the restaurant were being proposed: Option one involved a fast casual dine-in, or option 2 would involve a drive-through (requiring a special use). Elevations for the hotel followed. Parking for both options would be shared across Lots 1 and 2, but Option 2 would be short by three parking spaces. A petition for a deviation from the zoning ordinance was being sought by the applicant to provide 184 spaces where 187 would be required. A review of the easements followed as well as the recommended site objectives under the village's Comprehensive Plan (a Catalyst D-1). Staff believed the criteria for the proposal was met and referred to the motion in staff's report.

Commissioner questions centered on the purpose of subdividing the third lot and that the commission was not voting on two options but was providing one vote, leaving the applicant the option that works best for them.

Addressing the public questions above, Mr. Phelps explained that semi-trucks will not allowed to be parked in the hotel lot and was not designed to allow that type of parking, three staff work overnight, and the detention point will be wet with wetland plantings on the bottom with surrounded landscaping. A coffee bar and grab and grow breakfast will be offered to guests. Mr. Phelps extended appreciation to the commissioners for their consideration and was looking forward to growing the hotel's presence in the community.

Chairman Pro tem Maurer closed public comments.

Chairman Pro tem Maurer voiced support for the project, believed hotels were great contributors for a community, and he had confidence in the Wood Springs brand. He believed the use was appropriate for the site. Other commissioner comments included support for the project. The village could benefit from the proposal. Commissioner Majauskas voiced the fact that the commission was not following the village's Comprehensive Plan and questioned why have the plan, citing Page 118 of the Comprehensive Plan and its recommendation for the site. Planning Manger Zawila stated that for the record Commissioner Majauskas's reference was incorrect.

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Commissioner Majauskas pointed out that after some phone calls, the Lisle Hotels were at 10% capacity and struggling. The Red Roof Inn was selling the pads as a transient apartment complex and she did not see the need for another hotel. The site was not zoned for it, it was in a wetlands area, there was no marketing study produced by the applicant. The proposal did not make sense for the site.

Chairman Pro tem Maurer explained that the hotels will rebound and the need will always be there. Another commissioner suggested that the applicant produce the marketing study before he appears before the village council, as it would provide good feedback. Another commissioner understood the proposed hotel was a premium mid-tier product which was different from a Red Roof Inn and the customer base was a very specific use type that would draw customers into such type of hotel. Examples followed on the type of customer that would use such a hotel.

Another commissioner, in reviewing the Village's Comprehensive Plan, believed the proposal fit the site and offered an ancillary service to the businesses to the north. Inn Town Suites was booked which conveyed to him that a market does exist. The petitioner was a long-term holder and did not flip properties. For those reasons, he supported the proposal. It was also stated that there was a need for such hotels because when he travels he prefers a room with a kitchenette, takes his family to sports tournaments, and agrees that the village is missing a significant revenue stream.

**WITH RESPECT TO FILE 21-PLC-0015 AND BASED ON THE PETITIONER'S SUBMITTAL, THE STAFF REPORT, THE TESTIMONY PRESENTED, AND HAVING MET THE STANDARDS OF APPROVAL FOR A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT, ACCOMPANYING MAP AMENDMENT, SPECIAL USE AND PLAT OF SUBDIVISION AS REQUIRED BY THE VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE ZONING ORDINANCE AND IT BEING IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST, COMMISSIONER BOYLE MADE A MOTION THAT THE PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMEND TO THE VILLAGE COUNCIL APPROVAL OF FILE 21-PLC-0015, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- 1. THE SPECIAL USE, PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AND MAP AMENDMENT SHALL SUBSTANTIALLY CONFORM TO THE STAFF REPORT, RENDERINGS, ARCHITECTURE PLANS PREPARED BY HOLLADAY PROPERTIES, DATED DECEMBER 14, 2021, ENGINEERING PLANS PREPARED BY CIVWORKS CONSULTING LLC, DATED AUGUST 30, 2021, LANDSCAPE PLANS PREPARED BY LG WORKSHOP LLC, DATED JULY 2, 2021, AND TRAFFIC PLANS PREPARED BY KLOA DATED AUGUST 30, 2021 EXCEPT AS SUCH PLANS MAY BE MODIFIED TO CONFORM TO THE VILLAGE CODES AND ORDINANCES;**
- 2. THE PETITIONER SHALL SUBDIVIDE THE LOT INTO THE THREE LOTS OF RECORD PURSUANT TO SECTION 20.5 OF THE SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF ANY SITE DEVELOPMENT OR BUILDING PERMITS;**
- 3. THE BUILDING ELEVATIONS FOR LOT 2 SHALL BE CONSISTENT AND COMPATIBLE WITH THE HOTEL BUILDING DESIGN;**
- 4. A PERPETUAL CROSS ACCESS AND PARKING EASEMENT IS PROVIDED BETWEEN LOTS 1 AND 2;**

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5. **A PERPETUAL CROSS ACCESS EASEMENT IS PROVIDED TO THE PROPERTY IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF THE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT;**
6. **A PEDESTRIAN EASEMENT IS PROVIDED ON LOT 1 FOR THE BENEFIT OF PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE PROPERTY IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF THE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT;**
7. **APPROVAL OF PARTICIPATION IN THE COUNTY WETLAND BANKING PROGRAM IS REQUIRED PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF ANY SITE DEVELOPMENT OR BUILDING PERMITS;**
8. **PARKING SHALL BE UTILIZED ACROSS BOTH LOTS 1 AND 2, FOR THE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT. IF AT ANY POINT THE PROPERTIES ARE UNDER SEPARATE OWNERSHIP, AN OFF-SITE PARKING AGREEMENT MUST BE COMPLETED IN A FORM APPROVED BY THE VILLAGE ATTORNEY. THE AGREEMENT MUST PROVIDE FOR THE PERPETUAL USE OF PARKING ACROSS BOTH LOTS;**
9. **PAYMENT OF A FEE-IN-LIEU OF PLACEMENT OF THE SIDEWALK AS REQUIRED BY VILLAGE ORDINANCE. THE FEE WILL BE DETERMINED BASED ON THE SQUARE FOOTAGE AREA OF THE SIDEWALK, WHICH WILL BE LOCATED IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF THE WALNUT AVENUE ACCESS DRIVE TO THE SOUTHERN PROPERTY LINE. PAYMENT MUST BE MADE PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF ANY SITE DEVELOPMENT OR BUILDING PERMITS; AND**
10. **ALL SIGNAGE SHALL CONFORM TO THE VILLAGE'S SIGN ORDINANCE.**

**SECOND BY COMMISSIONER RECTOR. ROLL CALL:**

**AYE: BOYLE, RECTOR, PATEL, TOFF, MAURER**

**NAY: MAJAUSKAS**

**MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 5-1**

Planning Manager Zawila reported that the Maple and Washington project was approved last month by Village Council.

**THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:14 P.M. UPON MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MAJAUSKAS. SECOND BY COMMISSIONER BOYLE. A VOICE VOTE FOLLOWED AND THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

/s/ Celeste K. Weilandt  
Recording Secretary  
(As transcribed by MP-3 audio)