

MINUTES
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
April 16, 2019

Present: Desmond Baker (Acting Chair), J. Brett Taylor, Anthony J. Hill, Tanya Washington, and Lloyd Budd (Commission Members); and Herb Inden, Gwinneth Kaminsky, and Jessica Molina (Planning).

The meeting was convened at 6:04 p.m. by Desmond Baker.

Approval of the minutes of the March 19, 2019 Planning Commission Meeting

Mr. Baker asked the Commission to make a motion on the minutes of the March 19, 2019 City Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes, and Ms. Washington second the motion. All members voted to approve the minutes.

REGULAR MEETING

New Business

Resolution 05-19: Annual Review of the FY2020-FY2025 Capital Improvements Program and FY2020 Capital Budget.

Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky, from the Department of Planning and Development, presented the report for Resolution 05-19. Ms. Kaminsky explained that the City Planning Commission was authorized by City Charter to review the City's Annual Capital Budget and Six Year Capital Improvements Program when they are prepared each year and at any other time revisions might be required. She stated that the Capital Improvements Program under consideration covered the six-year period from Fiscal Years 2020 through 2025, with the first year representing the Capital Budget. She mentioned that because the City generally only enters the bond market every two years, the Capital Improvements Program was designed with alternating "off years" in which there were no expenditures and therefore, no funding considerations.

Ms. Kaminsky noted that the FY 2020 Capital Budget represented a funded year, with a proposed Budget of \$79,833,910. She clarified that the Budget consisted of several funding sources, including the general fund, water fund, and other funds, such as grants. The expenditures for the remaining five fiscal years of the Program simply reflected anticipated projects and their estimated costs, which amount to \$196,656,195. She explained that these projects were not actually being funded, they were merely placeholders for consideration when developing future Capital Budgets.

Ms. Kaminsky said that together, the Budget and the Program outyears for the six-year period totaled \$276,490,105. She explained that the total amount was also broken down into general, water and other funding sources. She highlighted that this year's program was fairly typical of

City Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2019 Meeting

Page 2

past years; it included thirty-seven projects spread among six departments and the Mayor's Office. She disclosed that twenty-seven of these represented ongoing projects which have continued from year to year and were included in both the Budget and in the outyears for ongoing programming. Ms. Kaminsky explained that the program included 8 projects that were only included for Budget year funding, because they were not expected to require future funding. There were also two projects represented for outyear programming. These projects were not being funded in the 2020 Budget because they did not have an immediate funding need, so they served as a placeholder in anticipation of future funding needs.

Ms. Kaminsky stated that in addition to specific project funding, the Capital Budget also included the cost of bond issuance, estimated at \$960,910 for the 2020 Capital Budget. She said that the funding for the 5% for Art Program was also included in the Capital Budget, under the Mayor's Office. She disclosed that this year, the program added an additional \$113,000 to the Capital Budget because there were three projects eligible for these funds.

Ms. Kaminsky clarified that the enacting legislation which adopts the Capital Improvements Program and Capital Budget, together with the FY 2020 Operating Budget, was introduced at City Council on March 28, 2019, at which time Mayor Purzycki presented his Budget Address. She revealed that the Planning Department found this year's Capital Improvements Program and the Capital Budget consistent with past planning and budgeting efforts and was in accordance with the City's comprehensive planning process. Ms. Kaminsky completed her presentation by stating that Resolution 5-19 recommends to City Council that the FY 2020 - FY 2025 Capital Improvements Program, which includes the FY 2020 Capital Budget, be approved.

Mr. Baker asked Commission Members if they had any questions. Mr. Baker asked Ms. Kaminsky if the increase in sewer and water fees were addressed in the Budget. Ms. Kaminsky said that these fees were not included in the report. She clarified that those fees are included in the Operating Budget which the Planning Commission does not review. Mr. Baker told Ms. Kaminsky that there were no further questions. Mr. Baker asked Commission Members for a motion. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve Resolution 05-19: Annual Review of the FY2020-FY2025 Capital Improvements Program and FY2020 Capital Budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hill. With all members being in favor, Resolution 05-19 was approved.

Resolution 06-19: Planning Commission review of the Riverside Redevelopment Project (Phase I), 1400 Todds Lane, which is located within an R-5A zoning district and requires the approval of proposed garden apartment developments in accordance with Section 48-136 (c)(4) of the Zoning Code.

Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky, from the Department of Planning and Development, also presented the report for Resolution 06-19. She explained that the Planning Commission was being tasked with the review and approval of a garden apartment development plan being proposed for the Riverside community. This review was in accordance with the requirements of Section 48-136(C)(4) of the Zoning Code.

City Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2019 Meeting

Page 3

Ms. Kaminsky disclosed that in Fall 2018, the Riverside neighborhood in Northeast Wilmington was designated as a Purpose-Built Community and was undergoing a major revitalization initiative which focused on the site of the Wilmington Housing Authority's Riverside public housing complex. She mentioned that the community was working together with the REACH Riverside Development Corporation, Wilmington Housing Authority (WHA), Kingswood Community Center and East Side Charter School to develop a Master Plan which focuses on strategies for redeveloping the public housing complex with mixed income housing, including market rate and subsidized rentals. This Plan would also address the need for improved services and amenities to revitalize and support the community, including education, jobs, health and wellness.

Ms. Kaminsky shared an aerial image of the site and showed that the area was bounded on the west by Claymont Street, on the east by Edgemoor Avenue, on the south by 23rd Street and to the north by Todds Lane. The area was zoned R-5A (Low Density Apartment Houses). She then disclosed that the complex originally consisted of 530 two-story, barracks-style housing built on two parcels totaling 24.6 acres. Two hundred and thirty-three of these public housing units had been demolished, and of the public housing units that remained on site, 272 were still occupied and 25 were vacant. Ms. Kaminsky stated that ultimately, all the public housing units would be demolished and redeveloped under this program.

Ms. Kaminsky said that WHA was serving as the property owner, and Pennrose LLC was serving as the developer and would also be responsible for project management, as well as the leasing and management of the newly built units. She disclosed that portion of the funding for this first phase is being sought from the Delaware State Housing Authority Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, with additional funding expected to come from City and County HOME funds. In order to meet April deadlines for funding consideration, Phase I plans were submitted to the City of Wilmington to secure all necessary zoning approvals required as part of the financing process.

Ms. Kaminsky explained that Phase I of the Riverside initiative called for a garden apartment development in an area zoned R-5A. Although garden apartments were permitted as a matter-of-right in this zoning district, there were conditions for approval. She elaborated that in accordance with Section 48-136(C)(4) of the Zoning Code, garden apartment developments proposed within R-5A districts must be submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Commission to ensure that the use is consistent with the intent of the zoning district and was appropriate for the surrounding neighborhood. She said that the Code limits garden apartments to no more than eighteen family units per principle building, and that the development must be designed as a single unit, with common parking, access drives, courts, and service areas. In addition, landscaping must be integrated with the buildings on the site. Ms. Kaminsky also discussed the district's density, floor-area-ratio, building height, setbacks, side yards, minimum lot area, parking, and width requirements. She then followed with an analysis that pointed out how the proposed site plan was evaluated in accordance with these requirements.

City Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2019 Meeting

Page 4

After the analysis, Ms Kaminsky concluded that the Phase I Plans were consistent with the purpose, intent, and requirements of the R-5A zoning. The Phase I Plans were designed as a single entity with common parking, access drives, courts, common service areas and landscaping that is integrated with the buildings. Each of the eleven proposed buildings provided well under the eighteen maximum units permitted. And as required, development plans were submitted to the Planning Commission for review and approval in accordance with Section 48-136(C)(4) of the Zoning Code.

Ms. Kaminsky disclosed that the Phase I Plans were part of a larger development initiative which intended to replace the existing distressed public housing complex in Riverside with re-imagined mixed income housing that were well designed, with attractive buildings surrounded by ample open space. The master planning effort for this project was ongoing and would integrate the necessary support services and amenities intended to revitalize and support the community. She concluded her presentation by stating that Resolution 6-19 recommended the approval of the Phase I Riverside Redevelopment Plan. As presented, the character of the proposed garden apartment development was consistent with the nature, intent, and requirements of the R-5A zoning district, and would provide an appropriate model for the continued revitalization of the Riverside community.

Ms. Kaminsky informed the Commission Members that Mr. Ryan Bailey from Pennrose, LLC., Roger Turk from the Wilmington Housing Authority, and Mr. Steven Rosenfeld from VanDemark Lynch, Inc. were present at the meeting. She notified Commission Members that they were able to ask them any questions regarding the project, and the applicants would be able to elaborate on the proposal if needed.

Mr. Budd asked the applicants if they had a tool where the public would be able to track the project's progress. Mr. Bailey informed the Commission Members that there have been several meetings regarding the Master Plan process. However, they did not have a website. He considered the possibility of using the Wilmington's Housing Authority website and disclosed that there would be other meetings in the future. Mr. Budd asked Mr. Bailey to disclose what tools he has used to advertise the meetings. Mr. Bailey said that the Housing Authority gave out information to all of their residents. The meetings were also advertised at the Kingswood Center, REACH Board, community churches, civic groups, and City Council.

Ms. Washington asked Mr. Turk if there was any particular reason why the development started farther back along Bowers Street as opposed to closer to Northeast Boulevard. Ms. Turk replied that they decided to start where the land was already vacant, so it would assist them in relocating current residents. Ms. Washington asked Mr. Turk if the market rate housing would be facing the Northeast Boulevard. Mr. Turk replied that the market rate housing was going to be blended in with the subsidized housing. He suggested that people would not be able to distinguish between the market rate and subsidized housing.

Mr. Bailey expressed that he was pleased with Ms. Kaminsky's presentation. He clarified that in Phase I, there were 15 market rate apartments out of the 74. Mr. Taylor asked the applicants if the units were going to be separately metered for water and sewer service. Mr. Bailey replied that

City Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2019 Meeting

Page 5

they would be. Mr. Taylor asked Mr. Bailey if the management company or the residents would be responsible for the payment of stormwater, water, and sewer fees. Mr. Bailey replied that the company would be paying for water and sewer fees, and the residents would be paying for electricity and gas charges.

Mr. Hill asked Ms. Kaminsky to confirm that the resolution was not a rezoning but a development review. Ms. Kaminsky agreed, clarifying that the type of development, garden style, was permitted as a matter of right with conditions for approval. One of these conditions was the review by the Planning Commission and this was the reason why Resolution 06-19 was being presented. Mr. Hill then confirmed that the conditions for approval were all those presented by Ms. Kaminsky. Ms. Kaminsky added that the Zoning Board of Adjustment had also reviewed the plans and approved two variances for setbacks which were also a condition for the financing approval.

Mr. Budd asked if any traffic studies had been conducted as part of this design process. Mr. Bailey replied that there were no traffic studies at the moment. He stated that there used to be over 500 hundred units on the development site. Phase I only included 74 units so traffic would be lower than previous levels. Ms. Kaminsky also clarified that there were no right-of-way changes proposed.

Mr. Baker commended the Wilmington Housing Authority, the City, and all the parties involved for the development which he believed was long overdue for the neighborhood. Mr. Baker asked if any of the proposed properties were within the floodplain. Mr. Bailey replied that none of the Housing Authority properties were within the floodplain. Mr. Baker asked the applicants if the future property owners of the subsidized housing units would receive any training on property maintenance. Mr. Baker mentioned that WHA and Habitat for Humanity have provided training for their tenants in the past. Mr. Bailey stated that it is important to maintain the building and train residents as the buildings are incorporating new technologies. He stated that the tenants have received videos and the buildings would have on site maintenance. However, he agreed with Mr. Baker and said that they might find additional ways to train the tenants. Mr. Taylor pointed out that similar apartment complexes have issues paying the water and sewer bills. He asked the applicants to make sure they take care of this issue, so the City does not have to deal with it in the future. Mr. Bailey replied that this was one of the reasons why the management company would be taking care of it.

Mr. Baker asked the Commission Members if they had any questions. There were none. Mr. Baker then asked for a motion on Resolution 06-19: Planning Commission review of the Riverside Redevelopment Project (Phase I), 1400 Todds Lane, which is located within an R-5A zoning district and requires the approval of proposed garden apartment developments in accordance with Section 48-136 (c)(4) of the Zoning Code. Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve Resolution 06-19. This motion was second by Mr. Hill. With all members in favor, Resolution 06-19 was approved.

Adjournment

Mr. Baker called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hill moved to adjourn, and Ms. Washington second the motion. With all members being in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.