



DRAFT MINUTES

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
505 BUTLER PLACE
PARK RIDGE, IL 60068**

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2018 AT 7:00 PM

Commissioner Arrigoni called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

I. Roll Call

Present

Jim Argionis (arrived 7:20pm)
Lou Arrigoni, Acting Chairman
John Bennett
Jim Coogan
Lou Giannetti
Rebecca Mills
Chris Zamaites

City Council

Alderman Gail Wilkening

Staff

Jon Branham, Senior Planner
Josie Faraci, Administrative Assistant
Kerry Cwick, Administrative Assistant

Absent

Joe Baldi
Jim Hanlon

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 9, 2018

On a motion by Commissioner Mills, seconded by Commissioner Zamaites, the Commission AGREED to approve the minutes from the meetings of January 23, 2018.

Vote on the motion as follows:

AYES	7	Commissioners Arrigoni, Arigionis, Bennett, Coogan, Giannetti, Mills, Zamaites
NAYS	<u>0</u>	None
ABSTAIN	<u>0</u>	None
ABSENT	<u>2</u>	Commissioners Baldi, Hanlon

The motion passed.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Case Number 18-02-SU:

Special Use for Personal Service Use (Pearle Vision) in the B-4, Uptown Business District, Uptown-Core Sub-District, at 1 South Prospect Avenue

Acting Chairman Arrigoni introduced the case and explained the public hearing process.

Mr. Branham provided background information and summarized the application. He stated the proposed use would occupy approximately 2,350 square feet of the ground floor tenant space area and would contain two exam rooms and retail space for eyewear. The business is expected to have three to four employees. He stated the recommendations for this area in the Uptown Plan indicate that retail, restaurant, entertainment uses should be located on the ground floors of buildings throughout this district, particularly in the blocks along Prospect Avenue north of the railroad. He stated pedestrian-oriented commercial, service and office uses should also be permitted on the ground floors of buildings in the blocks along Prospect and Main Street, south of the railroad. Office, service, institutional, and residential uses should be permitted on the upper floors of buildings throughout the Uptown Core. Buildings with architectural and historical interest along Prospect Avenue and Main Street should be preserved and protected.

Mr. Branham also stated that the 1996 Comprehensive Plan advised that retail, restaurant, and entertainment activities should be strengthened throughout the Central Business District, especially in proximity to Pickwick Plaza.

He stated the Pickwick Theater Building is a Park Ridge local landmark and is also on the National Register of Historic Places. Any modification to signage would require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission due to the local landmark status. Additionally, approval from the State of Illinois' Historic Preservation Division will be required due to their supervision of the National Register criteria.

Mr. Branham stated additional ground floor approvals for office and medical / dental uses in the B-4, Core over the past several years include offices at 110 South Prospect Avenue (Pusheen Corp.), 116 South Prospect Avenue (AANA), 132 South Prospect Avenue (Lincoln Park Financial) and 28 Main Street (now vacant). Other approvals for ground floor personal service uses in the B-4, Core include salons at 124 South Prospect Avenue, 141 Vine Street, and 147 Vine Street. He stated all the uses were located south of the railroad tracks.

Andrew Ladochi, Park Ridge Ventures, LLC, applicant, further summarized the application. He stated he had been in the optical business for over eight years and decided to open his first franchise with Pearle Vision because they are a charitable organization. He stated the business would provide eyewear and eye exams. He reviewed potential business operations and stated he was certified with the American Board of Optician.

Commissioner Bennett inquired if the applicant has looked at other viable properties in the area where the use would be permitted. The applicant replied yes that they had looked at over eight properties in the area.

Commissioner Coogan inquired if the applicant has a contingent lease agreement with the owner and if the applicant was aware of the sign restrictions. They applicant agreed they had a contingent lease and was aware of the sign restrictions.

Commissioner Mills inquired if a financial institution was also considered a special use. Mr. Branham replied financial institutions were separately identified and considered as permitted use in the district.

Commissioner Arrigoni addressed the public regarding testimony. He indicated that all correspondences which had been received regarding the case would be part of the record.

Amy DeGrazio, resident and business owner in Park Ridge, stated the site was a focal point and premier space for the City. She stated the space should not be considered for anything other than retail or a restaurant. She provided alternative locations available for the use.

Dave Huber, resident, stated he represented a restaurant group interested in the location. He indicated he had previous discussions with the owner about renting the space, however, due to time constraints it was not possible. He stated having a restaurant at this location would give patrons with more dining

options. He stated he would appreciate if the Commission took careful consideration in allowing this special use.

Terry Flynn, resident, highlighted social media comments regarding the proposal, and stated that due diligence has not been performed to obtain the right business in the location.

Tom Sotos, resident, expressed his empathy towards the owner and stated that the community needs to be fair to the landlord. He stated the owner has been a part of this community for many years and has given back to the community. He stated the owner is trying to lease a space that has been vacant for a long time with two prior failed restaurants.

Ginger Pennington, resident, asked the Commission to deny the special use. She stated the Commission should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. She stated she felt that all criteria for the special use were not being met.

Simon Bellevue, resident, and leasing agent for the owner, stated that the owner's intentions were to have a restaurant lease the space, but unfortunately, it did not happen. He felt that Pearle Vision was a great fit for the community and would sustain longevity.

Mr. Dino Vhalakis, Pickwick Enterprises, LLC, owner of the property, stated his family has owned the Pickwick Theater Building for over fifty years. He stated he loved the community, but it hurt when you get called greedy. He stated if he were greedy he would have never made the Pickwick a local landmark. He stated he would like to see a restaurant in the space; however the last couple tenants did not succeed. He stated within the last three years, he only received one year and one month of rental income at the space. He stated that Pearle Vision was a strong national tenant.

Missy Langan, resident, stated she agreed this use should not be allowed north of the railroad tracks and was concerned with the use not generating sales tax.

Tom Bachman, resident, emphasized that the landlord and agent should possibly put a better effort in finding an appropriate tenant.

Judy Barclay, resident, Chairman of the Historic Preservation Commission, stated her love for the Pickwick Theater Building. She inquired as to why staff had not put any effort to help lease the premier location in Park Ridge.

Kathy Meade, resident, stated that our long-term goals should not be focused on a short term gain.

Mr. Ladochi clarified the sales tax issue and business hours.

On a motion by Commissioner Bennett, seconded by Commissioner Mills, the Commission AGREED to close the public hearing. The motion carried by voice vote.

Commissioner Bennett stated that he struggled with this case. He saw the plight of vacant storefronts in the Uptown area. He stated he did not want to stand in the way of the landlord. He understood the purpose of the Uptown Plan vision, however, the Zoning Ordinance allows the proposal as a special use. He stated he was hoping for feedback from fellow colleagues to help him make a decision.

Commissioner Argionis referred to the special use standards and stated each should be evaluated on an individual basis. He stated two of the three criteria were not met. He listed the Uptown Plan objectives specific to this location, which calls for a strong retail and entertainment focus. He stated the location is a center piece and focal point of the community. He stated that looking at the totality of the application, this proposal does not fulfill the spirit and intent of the Comprehensive Plan. He referred to other similar cases reviewed by the Commission.

Commissioner Bennett discussed the retail component of the proposed use. He also emphasized that this location could be permitted as a retail establishment.

Commissioner Mills stated she shared the same struggle as Commissioner Bennett. She noted the number of empty storefronts in Park Ridge. She stated that the City should be advocating and actively looking to fill these sites.

Commissioner Zamaites concurred with Commissioner Argionis. She stated she struggled with the proposed use not being compatible with adjacent properties and opined that it is not in spirit of the Comprehensive Plan and did not meet the special use criteria.

Commissioner Coogan stated the factor in which should be looked at is the spirit of the Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan. He also stated clearly the spirit of the community is shown from the public response.

Commissioner Giannetti opined that the past restaurants at the Pickwick failed due to poor quality and service.

Commissioner Arrigoni agrees with Commissioner Argionis the Commission needs to follow the Comprehensive Plan. He stated it is not an appropriate use for this space.

On a motion by Commissioner Bennett seconded by Commissioner Mills, the Commission AGREED to recommend approved of Case Number 18-02-SU: Special Use for Personal Service Use (Pearle Vision) in the B-4, Uptown Business District, Uptown-Core Sub-District, at 1 South Prospect Avenue.

Vote on the motion as follows:

AYES	0	None
NAYS	7	Commissioners Arrigoni, Arigionis, Bennett, Coogan, Giannetti, Mills, Zamaites
ABSTAIN	0	None
ABSENT	2	Commissioners Baldi, Hanlon

The motion passed.

Mr. Branham stated the recommendation would be provided to City Council. Commissioner Argionis indicated denials could be overturned with super majority vote.

IV. OTHER ITEMS-None

V. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT- None

VI. ZONING ORDINANCE PROVISIONS

Commissioner Argionis inquired about information from last month's meeting.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Barclay commented on the history of the Pickwick Theater Building.

Ms. Langan stated she was excited about making updates to the Comprehensive Plan. She stated it will also be beneficial to the Zoning Board of Appeals members as well.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Commissioner Mills seconded by Commissioner Bennett, the Commission AGREED to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved by voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.