

City of West Branch Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
July 22, 2025
West Branch City Council Chambers, 110 North Poplar Street

Vice Chair Ryan Bowers called the (Special) Planning & Zoning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commission members present: John Fuller, Ryan Bowers, Matt Van Scoyoc, Brad Bower, Matt Van Scoyoc, Madison Conley, Ryan Foley

Council members present: Mayor Laughlin, Mike Horihan, Jerry Sexton

Absent: None

City Staff present: City Administrator, Adam Kofoed, Zoning Administrator, Terry Goerd, City Engineer, Dave Schechinger, Fire Chief Kevin Stoolman.

APPROVE AGENDA/CONSENT AGENDA/MOVE TO ACTION.

Motion by Bowers, second by Bower. Motion carried on a voice vote.

PUBLIC HEARING/NON-CONSENT AGENDA

a. Review and Approve the Final Plat for Meadows Part 6.

Engineer Schechinger explained developers are wishing to sell the southern lots and a punch list with an escrow payment would be required. Outlot will be maintained by the city. Fuller asked about the two lots facing Cedar Johnson. Schechinger explained there are two lots which are less than ideal but there are two buildable lots at that corner. A discussion occurred between the audience indicating these two lots were intended to be single family.

Motion by Bowers second by Conley. Motion passed 6-1.

b. Review and Approve Site Plan for Heritage Hill Subdivision, Part 2, Lot 1/Move to Action

Jon Marner from MMS Consultants introduced the site plan on behalf of BBCO, LLC. Fuller asked about parking spaces under the PUD ordinance. Kofoed stated some flexibility is allowed under the designation. Marner said there are 1.5 parking spots per unit. Bowers asked about on street parking and Marker felt there might be some flexibility. Bowers asked about sidewalk connectivity where there is not a connection on the east side of the building due to a light pole. Board felt city should have the pole moved and developer connect the sidewalk.

Janeen Miller owner of adjacent property feels their easements will not be protected under the current plan and there will be shrubs and landscaping in the way. There property was bought in 1981 and there was no objection to an adverse possession until BBCO bought the adjoining properties. Janeen stated they are putting a temporary injunction on the building through their attorney. Marner, there is no plans there is no removal of the property shown in the most current plans. Developer claims they are following the easements in which they have purchased and have

Steve Miller owner of adjacent property spoke opposed of the site plan. Presented the board with a document on the easement of their property. Bowers and Conley discussed easement issues being resolved. Marner from MMS pointed where the easement is in recorded 1976 purchase agreements.

Erica Benjamin spoke opposed to the project as she preferred the original drawings where commercial building was “L” shaped on the corner and had full public commercial property. Developer, Blaine Thomas said they are following means and bounds by law.

Sally Peck resident spoke opposed to the project. Peck felt the project has changed since the original planned unit development ordinance and original preliminary plat.

Kevin Stoolman, Fire Chief expressed concerns with fire truck access and the need for a ladder truck in the future with more three-story buildings being constructed in town. Stoolman feels planned unit development ordinances make it difficult for the fire department to combat fires in such tight spaces. BBCO developer Thomas stated all of the buildings in Parkside are sprinkled.

Jessi Simon spoke on behalf of the Main Street Design Committee’s comments. Here were their comments:

- Roofline design should include parapets.
- Building height is acceptable due to long-term benefits of increased downtown housing
- Front ground floor design should be commercial and the current request is not in compliance.
- Needs a true commercial use on the ground floor as a resident only gym does not fulfill a public commercial space.
- No dedicated parking identified for commercial use.

The board agreed to the following stipulations:

1. Dedicated on street parking in front of the commercial building.
2. Roofline design should include parapets.
3. Paving for Miller’s easement should be identified.
4. The front building commercial building should be all dedicated to commercial.
5. Needs a true commercial use on the ground floor as a resident only gym does not fulfill a public commercial space.
6. Lack of a contiguous sidewalk on the east end of the property needs addressed.
7. Site plan must show fire truck access.
8. Civil issues should be resolved.

Motion to table by Fuller, second by Foley. Motion tabled 7-0.

The following conditions

c. Review Site Plan for Parkside Reimagined Phase I.

Marner from MMS introduced the conceptual plan. It’s a 12-plex mix with nine row house buildings similar to Heritage Hill. All buildings are required to be sprinkled and a mix of two and one bedrooms. There are two commercial properties and developers plan to donate the hotel commercial lot to the city.

Commissioner Walsh asked about the mix of rental versus ownership. Most, if not all, will be rental. Kofoed explained this year only one single family house permit has been submitted. Chair Fuller asked if city council was interested in hotel. Mayor Laughlin agreed. Bowers inquired about public and private streets which Marner suggested there is openness. Bowers suggested access to hotel and commercial be at public standards.

Conley discussed open space. Developers agreed Outlot A could be gifted as open space. Kofoed advocated on Fire Chief Stoolman’s request there are assurances fire vehicles can access the

properties. Schechinger spoke with Stoolman regarding the south east corner and entrances must be tested before final approval. Schechinger mentioned there aren't easements for extra parking. Kofoed asked the board based on the complication of the development and not everything will be accomplished would they prefer staff advocate for open space or parking. The board felt open space was a higher priority.

Board motioned to approve the conceptual plan with condition fire trucks have access, outlot a is dedicated to open space. Motion by Fuller second by Bowers. Motion passes 7-0.

d. Review and Approve Final Site Plan for Brown's West Branch expansion at 205 Tidewater Drive

Motioned to table to allow developer to show revised vegetation plan with more trees around the basin by Bowers, second by Conley Motion tabled 7-0.

Adjourn

Motion by Bower, second by Bowers to adjourn the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. Motion carried on a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Submitted by:

Adam Kofoed

City Administrator