

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COMMISSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS

Regular Meeting Held April 8, 2024

Mayor Favale called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at the East Grand Rapids Community Center and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Commissioners Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, Wessely and Mayor Favale.

Absent: Commissioners Burdick and Schulz.

Also Present: City Manager Charles; Deputy City Manager La Fave; City Attorney Huff; Parks and Recreation Director Melville; Public Safety Captain Ric Buikema; Zoning Administrator Gianotti; City Clerk Parmenter.

2024-58. The agenda was approved.

2024-59. Public comment: None.

2024-60. Mayor and City Commission comments, including committee liaison reports.

Commissioner Wessely spoke briefly about the eclipse.

Mayor Favale welcomed everyone back from spring break.

City manager Charles noted that the budget books would come out tomorrow.

2024-61. Kent District Library Community Report.

Karla Moyer-Hotz, Board of Directors, reviewed the report.

Jennifer DeVault, Director of Library Operations, reviewed the services offered and awards that have been received.

Scott Ninemeier, Library Manager, noted that 60% of households have library cards.

2024-62. Consider introduction of a conditional rezoning request at 469 Greenwood Ave. SE/505 Lakeside Dr. SE from R-3 Single Family Residential to C-1 Commercial (conditional).

Zoning Administrator Gianotti reviewed the request.

Commissioner Schwartz questioned the rules for signage. Zoning Administrator Gianotti stated the C-1 regulations would apply.

Commissioner Groff-Blaszak asked if additional variances would have to go to the ZBA. City Attorney Huff said that the building would be grandfathered in.

Tim Dudley, Attorney for Ms. Stein, clarified that there are five parking spaces at the address and that the proposed zoning map should not be relevant in this decision. He also noted that it would only be able to be used for specific businesses in the future.

Katie Stein, owner of the property, spoke about aspects of the house that have history in East and stated that this was not the first home she has redone.

Anthony Maurer, 421 Lakeside Dr., is against the commercial rezoning. It takes housing away and this was not the best use for the property.

Theodora Walschots, 427 Lakeside Dr., wants the integrity of the neighborhood kept and is against the rezoning.

Wendy Scott, 435 Lakeside Dr., is opposed to rezoning and noted that property is surrounded by owner occupied residences and also has concerns about traffic.

Diane Lange, 2150 Lansing, opposed the zoning change because East needs more housing.

Francis Maurer, 421 Lakeside Dr., is against the rezoning.

Stephanie O’Laughlin, 323 Gracewood Dr., said that it is unfair to say that realtors and construction workers are more unsafe. The current zoning makes it a free-for-all with hours a retail store could be open. Ms. Stein has put restrictions in place to prevent that. She is in favor of the request.

Scott Damon, 625 Bridge NW, is against the rezoning.

Paul LeBlanc, City Planner, stated that any rezoning can be challenged and also limits the use of the property with standards set by the applicant. The parking requirements have to meet the standards for square footage and employee count. Three-story structure is not possible unless someone could add a third story on the current building.

2024-062-A. Wessely-Hunter. To accept an introduction of a conditional rezoning request at 469 Greenwood Ave. SE/505 Lakeside Dr. SE from R-3 Single Family Residential to C-1 Commercial (conditional).

Commissioner Schwartz is not sure if the proposed request meets the standards and has reservations about signage. She is opposed to the rezoning.

Mayor Favale is concerned about what comes after the real estate office and does not feel that it meets standard A. She also has concerns about signage. Commissioner Wessely questioned why the request was in front of the Commission rather than the ZBA. City Manager Charles said that the applicant chose this approach rather than a zoning variance from the ZBA.

City Attorney Huff stated that this can't meet the standards for a zoning variance.

Commissioner Wessely did note that it passed through the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Groff-Blaszak does not think that it meets standard A and that it is taking away housing which does not align with the Master Plan.

Commissioner Hunter has no huge concerns with the request.

Kate Stein stated that they are only hearing negative from one Planning Commission member.

Mayor Favale stated that they have reviewed the notes from the Planning Commission meeting.

City Attorney Huff stated that the applicant can revise the conditions.

Yeas: Wessely – 1

Nays: Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz and Favale – 4

Motion failed.

- 2024-63. Consider approval of the proposed City operated Farmers Market and the associated seasonal part-time Farmer's Market Manager position.

Parks and Recreation Director Melville reviewed the request.

- 2024-063-A. Schwartz-Groff-Blaszak. To approve the proposed City operated Farmers Market and the associated seasonal part-time Farmer's Market Manager position.

Yeas: Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, Wessely and Favale – 5

Nays: None.

- 2024-64. Consider extending the t-shirt printing services agreement with Source One Digital/Trophy House for fiscal year 2024-2025 in the amount of \$58,041.83.

Parks and Recreation Director Melville reviewed the request.

- 2024-064-A. Hunter-Wessely. To approve extending the t-shirt printing services agreement with Source One Digital/Trophy House for fiscal year 2024-2025 in the amount of \$58,041.83.

Yeas: Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, Wessely and Favale – 5
Nays: None.

- 2024-65. Consider accepting the TMF LSLR grant from EGLE in the amount up to \$536,440 and authorize city staff to execute requirements of the grant.

Deputy City Manager La Fave reviewed the grant information.

- 2024-065-A. Schwartz-Wessely. To approve the TMF LSLR grant from EGLE in the amount up to \$536,440 and authorize city staff to execute requirements of the grant.

Yeas: Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, Wessely and Favale – 5
Nays: None.

- 2024-66. Consider approving a resolution placing the street & sidewalk millage renewal on the August 6, 2024 ballot at 2.0 mills for a ten-year period.

City Manager Charles reviewed the millage information.

Commissioner Hunter questioned if the money coming in grew each year even with the rollback. City Manager Charles stated that it did but not as much.

Mayor Favale said that she is struggling with the language in the first line. She also wondered if it was possible to explain that we were going for the 2.0 mills because of the rollback.

Commissioner Wessely said the we should put how much was lost due to the rollback.

- 2024-67. Wessely-Schwartz. To approve the consent agenda as follows:

2024-067-A. Minutes of the regular meeting held March 18, 2024.

2024-067-B. Disbursement of funds: payroll disbursements of \$ 308,992.05; county and school disbursements of \$0, and total remaining disbursements of \$722,537.25.

2024-067-C. Parks and Recreation Commission meeting minutes from the February 26, 2024 meeting.

Yeas: Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, Wessely and Favale – 5
Nays: None.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m., subject to the call of the Mayor until April 23, 2024.

Lori A Parmenter, City Clerk