MINUTES - Approved

1. OPENING SESSION

Mr. Hovey called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

   a. Present: Katie Alexander, Marta Cerna, Farhan Bhatti, Monte Jackson, Josh Hovey
   b. Absent: John Ruge, Gary Manns, Tony Cox
   c. Staff: Sue Stachowiak, Andy Fedewa

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

   The Board approved the agenda by unanimous consent.

3. COMMUNICATIONS – None

4. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE – None

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS


   b. SLU-3-2020: 610 N Capitol Avenue (PID # 33-01-01-16-201-007), Special Land Use Permit to construct a new parking deck.

   The Planning Board decided to hear the cases together because they are all related to one another.

Ms. Stachowiak stated Z-1-2020 is a request to rezone the 1.4 acre parcel of land located at the south side of W Shiawassee Street between Seymour Avenue and N Capitol Ave from “DM-4” Residential and “E-1” Apartment Shop Districts to “G-1” Business district and that SLU-2-2020 is for a special land use permit to construct a new five level parking deck. Parking facilities are permitted as a sole use in the “G-1” district, if a special land use permit is approved by the City Council, following a review and recommendation by the Lansing Planning Board. Currently the plans do not call for retail/business use on the ground level of the proposed ramp, but the floor height is tall enough to be retrofitted for retail/business use. Ms. Stachowiak stated the Design Lansing Master Plan calls for the removal of surface parking in the Downtown core, which this project would do. This site is currently bordered by other “G-1” parcels so it would not be a spot re-zoning. SLU-3-2020 is a request for a special land use permit to construct a new three level parking deck on the site currently known as the Gannon Parking Ramp along N Grand Ave.
Mr. Hovey questioned why the parcel has two zoning classifications. Ms. Stachowiak replied she did not have an answer for that as these designations were done before she became Zoning Administrator.

Dr. Brent Knight, Lansing Community College (LCC) President, spoke on the College’s application and stated that the Gannon Parking Ramp is at the end of its lifecycle. To ensure the safety of students and visitors the ramp will be demolished and replaced with a new ramp with costs up to $51 million. LCC is proposing to build a new ramp at N Capitol Ave. and Shiawassee St. on what is referred to as Lot 23, to absorb the parking needs as the Gannon Ramp is rebuilt. Dr. Knight said that LCC does offer free bus passes, but they are not widely used as many students prefer to drive into campus. Dr. Knight stated LCC currently leases parking spaces at a variety of locations in the area so these ramps are a way to centralize parking and increase student safety. The Lot 23 ramp will be designed to look more like a brick building and not a parking garage. Greenery and plant life, such as vines, will be a central component of the design and the south elevation will be a solid wall so the adjacent apartments will not be disturbed by automobile lights and noise.

Tim Martz, LCC Director of Facilities, presented an overview of the site conditions and visual renderings of the proposed ramps. Mr. Martz declared that LCC does not want to build surface lots and these ramps are a way to discontinue surface lot use in other locations. Additionally, the ramp is designed to mitigate light and noise pollution on all sides of the ramp. LCC previously conferred with the City Engineering Division about the proposed two-way street conversions when designing ingress and egress of the ramp. The main entrance will be from Seymour Avenue with exits on Seymour and N Capitol due to potential conflicts with the City’s North Capitol Parking Ramp.

Mr. Hovey questioned the discussion about first floor retail/business use. Ms. Stachowiak and Dr. Knight replied that although it is not proposed now, LCC is open to future possibilities as they observe ramp use and market conditions.

Mr. Jackson asked how many parking spaces would be lost if the ramp incorporated first floor business use. Mr. Martz answered there would be a reduction of around 50 spaces.

Ms. Alexander asked if LCC will lease excess parking spaces to nearby businesses or guests in the proposed ramps. Dr. Knight answered Gannon is open to guests but the Lot 23 ramp is for students, however they would be open to the idea in the future.

Bob Johnson, 800 Shiawassee St. spoke in opposition of the request and spoke on the intention of Design Lansing Master Plan in regards to residential and mixed-use development downtown. He stated that the City’s North Capitol Parking Ramp has struggled to find consistent business tenants on its lower level and predicted this new ramp would not get retail/businesses either.
Todd Culver questioned how street parking on the blocks around the ramp would be affected and spoke in opposition.

Kathleen Calati, 313 Seymour Ave., spoke in opposition and stated she hoped downtown would be for residents, not more cars. Ms. Calati said that LCC incentivizes all the driving and parking by offering students free parking.

Jane, 317 Seymour Ave., spoke in opposition, stated that Seymour Avenue is more of a residential street downtown, and a parking ramp does not bring more residents to the area.

Linda Peckham, 311 Seymour Ave., spoke in opposition and stated a new parking ramp would detract from pedestrian efforts and the historic character of downtown. Ms. Peckham stated that LCC did not consult with neighbors about this project or the design.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Mr. Hovey closed the public hearing.

6. RECESS – Not taken

7. BUSINESS
   A. Consent Items
      (1) Minutes for approval: February 4, 2020
         Without objection, February 4, 2020 minutes were approved.
   B. Old Business – None
   C. New Business –

   Z-1-2020 & SLU-2-2020: 300 Block of N. Capitol Avenue (PID # 33-01-01-16-177-002), rezoning from “DM-4” Residential and “E-1” Apartment Shop Districts to “G-1” Business district, and Special Land Use Permit to construct a new parking deck.

   Ms. Cerna said she wished LCC had reached out to neighbors in the area and questioned why the school did not seek input from people in the area.

   Dr. Bhatti reviewed the features mitigating light, noise, and exhaust nuisances.

   Mr. Jackson asked if the Seymour Ave. elevation was open construction. Dr. Knight said as of now the levels on that side of the ramp are open but they could explore the use of louvers to shield the openings.

   Dr. Bhatti mentioned louvers used on a Sparrow Hospital parking ramp and stated that the proposed design is very similar to a ramp on Michigan State University’s campus, which when he walks by he barely notices it is a parking structure and not a regular building.

   Mr. Hovey asked what happened to the discussion about LCC purchasing the City’s North Capitol Parking Ramp. Mr. Knight answered there were two city council votes
in 2008 and neither passed. He added that the age of the ramp is a concern to LCC as well since it is of a similar age as the Gannon Ramp.

The Planning Board allowed Bob Johnson to speak on the matter of the City owned ramp because he was the Director of Planning and Neighborhood Development at the time.

Dr. Bhatti asked if it is better to have a ramp or students taking up on-street parking in the surrounding neighborhoods. He commended the design of the proposed ramp.

Dr. Knight stated he does not believe it is good for the neighborhoods if LCC students monopolize their street parking.

Mr. Hovey remarked that the “impact on vehicular and pedestrian traffic” statement is the staff report is too brief and requested more analysis.

The Board and Dr. Knight discussed LCC class times at night and evening lighting at surface lots currently used. Dr. Knight pledged to minimize light pollution in their designs.

Ms. Alexander made a motion, seconded by Ms. Cerna, to postpone Z-1-2020 & SLU-2-2020: 300 Block of N. Capitol Avenue (PID # 33-01-01-16-177-002), rezoning from “DM-4” Residential and “E-1” Apartment Shop Districts to “G-1” Business district, and Special Land Use Permit to construct a new parking deck, and requested more information about street parking design for Seymour Avenue, a more detailed analysis of the impact on vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the staff report, details on parking ramp light mitigation, an answer to why use of the City-owned North Capitol Ramp is not feasible, and an answer to why the City Engineering Division does not support Shiawassee Street serving as the proposed ramp’s main entrance. On a roll call vote, the motion carried 4-1, Mr. Hovey cast the dissenting vote.

SLU-3-2020: 610 N Capitol Avenue (PID # 33-01-01-16-201-007), Special Land Use Perm to construct a new parking deck.

Ms. Alexander made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to approve SLU-3-2020: 610 N Capitol Avenue (PID # 33-01-01-16-201-007), Special Land Use Permit to construct a new parking deck. On a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously (5-0)

8. REPORT FROM PLANNING MANAGER

Andy Fedewa gave a brief overview of the Design Lansing Master Plan Goals and Objectives Matrix, detailing the progress made on each objective stated in the master plan. Mr. Fedewa encouraged board members to review the matrix closely as the Board will conduct a review and possible update to the master plan in
accordance to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, once the Form-Based Code process is completed.

9. **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON** – None

10. **COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

    Mr. Hovey and Dr. Bhatti informed the Board that they will both be unable to attend the next regularly scheduled meeting April 7, 2020 and that they could attend a rescheduled meeting date in April.

11. **PENDING ITEMS: FUTURE ACTION REQUIRED** - None

12. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.