

CITY OF HUDSONVILLE
Planning Commission Minutes

July 17th, 2024

Approved August 21, 2024

6365 Balsam Drive – LaCati Group LLC – Master Plan Map Amendment

Chairman VanDenBerg called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Altman, Bendert, Dotson, Kamp, Northrup, Schmuker, Staal, VanDenBerg, Van Der Laan

Absent:

Staff Present: Steffens, Strikwerda

PUBLIC COMMENTS (Non-agenda items)

1. A motion was made by Altman, with support by Bendert, to approve the minutes of the June 19th, 2024, Planning Commission Meeting.

Yeas 9, Nays 0

2. **6365 Balsam Drive – LaCati Group LLC – Master Plan Map Amendment**

Chairman VanDenBerg opened the public hearing.

Chad Cassidy of LaCati Group presented the request. He responded to the public comment as follows:

- This is the first step in the process. Everyone will have a chance to discuss this again. The site plan has not been created yet. The height is the same between A and B. The flexibility of B allows for different styles of building and would make the site more attractive in the long run. This would be a great project for the city. If he owned one of the condominiums, he would rather see residential than a car wash, bar or banquet center, which is permitted in neighborhood commercial, the current zoning. Something will be developed on this property, if someone came in with a site plan that is permitted in the current zoning that is what they would be stuck with.

Public Comment

- Scott Johnson, 2973 Nuthatch Ln.
 - This use is not compatible with the properties to the north or south. They do not match the type of housing as those are condos. Do a new traffic study when the units in Elmwood Lake and Balsam Meadows are completed. The traffic on Balsam Drive seems to be higher than 12,000 vehicles per day that is shown. Urge the Commission to deny request, or table for a year until the existing apartments are

full to determine the traffic load on Balsam Drive.

- Jack Engelsman, 2983 Edgestone Drive, Stoney Creek Condominiums.
 - Has anyone submitted an application for this? If the developer has applied for condos or single family that would simplify the process. Is there a way that it can have a condition for a maximum density via the city or planning commission? Are there other opportunities to have a chance to comment on this project? Yes, there will be a zoning ordinance map amendment and a development project. The applicant does not have a site plan prepared at this time.
 - High density does not make sense in this area, due to the tax base. Based on the traffic on Balsam Drive, Family Fare, the Impact Dynamic Training Building, Port Sheldon Sports Complex, the city's liability runs very high for a lawsuit due to traffic. From the traffic light at 32nd he has been backed up to signatures coffee. 32nd Avenue being down to three lanes has created an issue and it was caused by the city itself. The design of 32nd Avenue should have been done differently. The culture of Hudsonville, crime factors, there is no dedicated police force, these are issues coming from apartments. A police officer asked why he was not carrying a concealed weapon when he was pulled over once, the officer said they needed help. The commission wants more apartments for the sake of money.
 - Width of the entry/exit into the property. Have the developer pay for Balsam Drive to be 5 lanes. The driveway isn't compliant with current zone standards.
- Al Frankfort, 6273 Summer Drive.
 - He remembers when Oak Tree was proposed, and the idea was for two story maximum buildings at the time. This high-density district would allow for 35' tall which is three stories. Is this project going to have the same vision as Elmwood Lake Apartments? That is not a good project. The vision needs to be shown and then the zoning needs to take place. He is in favor of the property being developed; it is just how it would be developed. There needs to be a site plan in place before zoning is changed.
- Greg Flood, 2953 Nuthatch Ln.
 - The traffic is cars on Balsam Drive, not people pulling in and out of neighborhoods. A car coming south trying to turn left blocks the traffic from moving out of the developments off Balsam Drive. If there are 100 units that could cause a lot of backups and accidents. Father lived in Sue St Marie, had a great view, property to the north couldn't be built on because it was too small, but someone was friends with the city, got the property developed and covered their view. The house then had foundation issues because of the way it was built and ruined his view forever. That was the wrong thing to do and this also doesn't seem right.
 - How close will the buildings in this project be? 30' is the minimum side setback for HDR-B.
 - How many people have been contacted about this meeting? Approximately 86.
 - At the high school it goes from 2 lanes and needs additional signage to help with the flow of traffic.
- Juile Scislowicz, 2933 Nuthatch Ln.
 - The second family to purchase land in the Balsam Meadows. They were told that nothing could be built on this property. How would the commission feel if there was a three-story building overlooking their homes? Opposed to the development,

wants to see it denied or at least tabled to consider these comments.

- Curtis Barnes, 2926 Stoney Creek Ct, Stoney Creek Condominiums.
 - Would rather have another group of condos to look at than a bar or restaurant which is permitted now. Doesn't understand how to make this decision now, need to table this to determine the uses that are permitted there.
 - Questions about how the assessor would determine that the property values would stay the same. Told by a realtor friend that their property value would decrease and there would be less interest in buying his property if this was developed.
- Steve Frody, 6465 Balsam Drive.
 - Willing to talk about his property between the farmhouse and the city 2 shore offices being a spot for development to go.
- Deb Scholten 2966 Edgestone Drive. Stoney Creek Condominiums.
 - Why would you consider a high-density development sandwiched between residential developments? It should stay to a similar design that matches what is to the north and south. It is a beautiful property. It shouldn't be rezoned to higher density.
- Jean Johnson 2973 Nuthatch Ln.
 - Just moved to Hudsonville. We can't control the outside traffic, we can control the traffic that is happening in the city. We count 70 unoccupied units that would be using Balsam Drive that is already part of the city. This project should be on hold until next year to reassess at that time when Balsam Meadows and Elmwood Lake Apartments are fully populated.
 - Nothing commercial has been built because of the lack of frontage.

The staff report was presented.

LaCati Group LLC is looking to do a map amendment for the Master Plan from Neighborhood Commercial (NC) to High Density Residential – B (HDR-B).

The applicant would like to have high density residential options for development. We look at this master plan amendment separate from any development plans the applicant may have, as they would be allowed to develop the property based on any of the uses permitted in that future land use district, and eventually the zone district if they proceed forward to a zoning ordinance amendment.

The following discussion took place with Commissioners:

- Zoning.
 - The zoning for the stoney creek condos? The zoning in Georgetown township is HDR, that is their highest zone district. If that development was in the city, it would be HDR-A due to the number of units attached capping out at 6 instead of 12.
 - What is the greatest number of units that could fit on this site?
 - We wouldn't be able to determine that without a development plan. There is no density maximum based on acreage. Density ends up being regulated based on unit size and building setback from each other and the property lines.

- What is permitted on this site now under Neighborhood Commercial? Many uses, hotel, restaurant, banquet center, bar, etc. Some of these uses could possibly cause more of a traffic issue than the uses in the HDR-B Zone District.
- If Stoney Creek Condos were redeveloped that could be apartments too because of the zone district HDR in Georgetown. Even if this property did end up being built as condos.
- Traffic.
 - How does the city arrive to the traffic counts on Balsam Meadows?
 - The rubber strips are placed on the road and the count is done for a few days. This is done via GVMC as we are a member.
 - The applicant can be asked to provide a traffic study when the development phase is upon us.
 - Traffic is considered when development projects come up within the city limits, but also traffic that comes through our city from quickly developing communities that surround us is out of our control. The traffic on 32nd Avenue and Balsam Drive is not just Hudsonville traffic; it is a main artery for neighboring communities as well. They contribute to that traffic flow.
 - The improvements made to that corridor in the last few years have helped to deal with the traffic. When Balsam Drive backs up very far, it is due to a train. It takes time to filter back out and become normal. We cannot tell the train when to run. So that is a barrier that we have had to handle regardless.
 - There was a severing effect on the neighborhoods to the east when 32nd Avenue existed as 4 lanes. It is now easier/realistic to cross 32nd Avenue as a pedestrian when it wasn't before.
 - Safety was brought up due to traffic. In a 2020 traffic study a 5-year count of crashes was provided to the City Commission 224 incidents took place along that stretch of 32nd Avenue and Balsam Drive, 42 involved serious injury. Now looking at the traffic incidents, we are in the single digits of issues since the road diet. This road is now safer. There are challenges with the railroad, not factoring in development. But this is keeping those on the road safer.
 - Hulst Jepsen Office would see cars trying to pass each other going north when that section of Balsam Drive was two lanes. They have seen a safer left turn in and out of the plaza they are in and a less dangerous speed. It is an issue with trains and that backup, but it is worth the safety.
- Height.
 - In HDR-A what is the height? 35' is allowed in all residential districts.
- Approval Process.
 - What is the process for this developer? The Master Plan Amendment is the first step in the process, then Zoning Ordinance Amendment, then development application. The act of not having a site plan during the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance Amendments is followed by other professional planners and has been recommended by attorneys.
 - Tabling will just delay the rest of the process.
 - If this property is looked at with the Master Plan process that is taking place within the next year, then that gives more time to decide the future of this property.

- This is a master plan map amendment. We have a master plan that we are working to edit in around 12 months, and this change is being presented and discussed before that because an application was submitted.
- We have approved a lot of apartments and multifamily in the last few years, going through the master plan process it is a question of do we want more apartments in Hudsonville?
- This could still be condos; it doesn't have to be apartments. We will be looking at buffering and many other facets of development if this project gets to that stage.
- Everyone sitting up on the board is a volunteer besides the mayor and the city commissioner who make 5-6k. The board is not crooked, they serve because they care, not for personal agendas.
- Housing.
 - The county is short 8,000 housing units. When there is an opportunity to increase density based on the Master Plan, there is favored to make sure it is tenable to try to make Hudsonville a community that everyone can live in. At some point the city will run out of land to build apartments or will stop doing that, so when they are built, it needs to be done well.
 - Developers are looking at data, condominiums and home ownership, these types of units are harder to build by affordability and for insurance purposes. Anything we do, we want to do well. The struggle is regionally is that they cannot afford to build due to infrastructure costs. We try to provide incentives to help with development. We can only go out in the city limits; we cannot control what goes on in Georgetown and Jamestown. We can only maximize the property we have. This is part of a much larger conversation.

Chairman VanDenBerg closed the public hearing.

A motion was made by Bendert, with support by Kamp, to approve the following resolution to amend the master plan:

RESOLUTION
Adopting the Imagine Hudsonville 2030 Future Land Use Map Amendment

WHEREAS, the procedures as outlined in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008, as amended, were followed for preparing and adopting a master plan amendment;

WHEREAS, the process for input as presented in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008, as amended, were followed for preparing and adopting a master plan amendment;

WHEREAS, the Hudsonville City Commission and Planning Commission were provided an opportunity to thoroughly review and comment on the plan;

WHEREAS, the City of Hudsonville City Commission authorized the Hudsonville Planning Commission to be the authorizing agency for Hudsonville's Master Plan on November 11, 2014; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on July 17, 2024 to seek public comments regarding the Future Land Use Map amendment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hudsonville Planning Commission hereby adopts the Imagine Hudsonville 2030 Future Land Use Map Amendment presented at this meeting, to be a guide for future development and land use decisions in the City of Hudsonville, as amended.

Yeas 7, Nays 2 (Staal, VanDenBerg)

3. Discussion

- Master Plan Workshop
- 32nd/New Holland
- Cedar Crest Building
- Ottawa ISD Variance Application

4. Adjournment

A motion was made by Northrup, with support by Dotson, to adjourn at 8:51 pm.

Yeas 9, Nays 0

Respectfully Submitted,
Sarah Steffens

Deputy Planning & Zoning Director