

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO  
PLAN COMMISSION MEETING  
Monday, March 21, 2022

BOARD MEMBERS:

Valeriano Gomez, President  
William Allen, Vice-President  
Lilia Ramos, Secretary  
Joanne Moricz, Commissioner  
Chanthini Fowler, Commissioner  
Douglas Sloss, Commissioner  
Grayling Gordon, Commissioner  
Lydia Lopez, Commissioner  
Stacy Winfield, Commissioner

STAFF:

Ateria Allen, Secretary  
Joseph Allegretti  
Douglas Powers

Reported for Fissinger & Associates, Ltd.

By: Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR RPR

Call to Order: 4:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Present in Chambers: William Allen,  
Chanthini Fowler, Lilia Ramos

Present Via Telephone Confererence: Joanne  
Moricz, Douglas Sloss, Stacy Winfield, Lydia  
Lopez, Grayling Gordon

STAFF - Present in Chambers: Ateria Allen,  
Joseph Allegretti, Douglas Powers

MR. ALLEN: I will be conducting the  
meeting tonight. Mr. Gomez is on vacation, and we do  
have a quorum.

First on the agenda, we have  
approval of minutes of the regular meeting, Monday,  
March 7, 2022. Entertain a motion to approve as  
written.

MS. RAMOS: So moved.

MS. FOWLER: Second.

MR. ALLEN: Roll call.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None  
Opposed: None

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MR. ALLEN: Motion carries.  
Moving on, New Business, City

Planner's Report.

MR. POWERS: Thank you, Commissioners.  
So the first item on the agenda, Michigan City Black  
Bull LLC, 5204 Indianapolis Boulevard. This proposal  
was submitted before the Technical Review Committee and  
it was deemed to be technically correct at the last  
Technical Review meeting, which was last Wednesday.

This is an existing structure.  
There are no proposed improvements to the exterior of  
the structure, just remodeling within it, and it's  
intended to be a warehouse for fireworks. And I do  
believe we have some of the petitioner's representatives  
here too if you have any questions for me or for them  
about this property.

MR. ALLEN: Are there any questions from  
the Commissioners? (None) Okay. Hearing none, you are  
just asking for approval of plans?

MR. POWERS: Yes, this petitioner is  
requesting approval of plans.

MR. ALLEN: Okay. Entertain a motion.

MR. SLOSS: So moved.

MS. WINFIELD: Second.

MR. ALLEN: Roll call.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": Allen, Moricz, Fowler,  
Sloss, Gordon, Lopez, Winfield Abstain: Ramos  
Opposed: None

MR. ALLEN: Motion carries.

MR. POWERS: So the next item we have on  
agenda is for Mars Trucking Inc.. This is located at  
1501 East Chicago Avenue. This petition was submitted  
and it was deemed to be technically correct, excluding,  
it does not meet the landscaping requirements provided  
within the zoning ordinance. However, the property has  
already all previously been paved and therefore the  
Planning Commission does have the ability to approve the  
plans that don't meet all the requirements if they so  
choose.

However, the petitioner for this

1 application is here as well, and they may have some  
2 additional insight to the proposed fencing or buffering  
3 if you have questions about that or anything else for  
4 this petition.

5 MR. ALLEN: So you mention there is some  
6 requirements?

7 MR. POWERS: Our zoning ordinance does  
8 have landscaping requirement for industrial use that  
9 abut residential properties. If you look at the site  
10 plan of where this property is located, which is 83 A 3,  
11 on the south side of that public alley are residential  
12 properties. So there is always the possible nuisance  
13 when industrial uses are in close proximity to  
14 residential properties. So our ordinance has  
15 landscaping requirements, whether that is through  
16 fencing or through trees and various other items are  
17 listed there as well, even details of possible species  
18 and stuff that could be utilized.

19 MS. WINFIELD: Okay, did I just hear him  
20 say that they do not have to meet the requirement?

21 MR. POWERS: No, I said that is something  
22 that is up to the Planning Commission. That the  
23 Planning Commission can approve plans that meet all  
24 technical requirements or they can, provided  
25 circumstances, they may choose to approve them without  
meeting all those requirements. That's why this is  
being presented to you today. And the petitioner is  
here, so if they need to implement landscaping, a  
buffering requirement in order to protect the potential  
residences from the possibility of nuisances, that can  
be addressed at this meeting.

MS. WINFIELD: I do agree they need to  
meet all requirements with the residential area being  
right there. I don't know how anyone else feels, but I  
do feel that they do need to meet the requirement. I  
don't know what the requirements are, is that something  
that you are going to give us? Are we voting on this or  
just introducing this to us?

MR. POWERS: So that's where the question  
arises. It depends on how the Planning Commission views  
their proposal. That the petition could be submitted  
and approved as is, or if we are wanting to see the  
landscaping requirements, the fence that they are

1 proposing for this site, as it is not identified on the  
2 site plan, we can get that information and then have  
3 that presented to the Planning Commission at the next  
4 meeting, if you chose to table this request pending  
5 those supporting documents.

6 MR. ALLEN: I think that might be best to  
7 get the requirements.

8 MR. POWERS: Would you like to hear from  
9 the petitioner?

10 MR. ALLEN: Sure. Please state your name  
11 for the record.

12 MR. ARALLANO: Saul Arallano, I am the  
13 owner of Mars Trucking, at 1501 East Chicago Avenue, in  
14 East Chicago. And the requirements, I was aware of  
15 that, doing the landscaping on the alley. But there is  
16 the problem because the electrical wires goes on top.  
17 So my fence already is eight-foot on the alley. And,  
18 yes, I can put some landscaping there, no problem. Not  
19 going to go too high because of the electrical wires.

20 MR. ALLEN: Now correct me if I'm wrong,  
21 eight feet I think would be the minimum requirements for  
22 fencing in the rear?

23 MR. POWERS: Eight foot would be the  
24 highest they could build a fence. The reason that this  
25 was mentioned was that this was submitted to the  
26 Technical Review Committee last week and the site plans  
27 did not show a fence or anything onsite. So that may be  
28 deemed by the Planning Commission as appropriate or if  
29 other landscaping is required, that could be added too.

30 MR. ALLEN: Okay. So eight-foot fence,  
31 and then I guess landscape wise, that's something that  
32 we can just --

33 MR. POWERS: If that's something the Plan  
34 Commission requires. As he just mentioned, there is an  
35 existing fence. It's not shown on the site plan, but  
36 there is an existing fence and he's proposing  
37 landscaping.

38 Commissioner Winfield, do you have  
39 any questions about that?

40 MS. WINFIELD: I feel that they should

1 meet the requirement and there should be landscaping due  
2 to the beautification we are doing in the City, and for  
3 it to go up without it, it's not really making sense to  
4 me. I mean they need to meet all requirements. As far  
5 as the Fire Department, did they pass inspection on  
6 everything?

7 MR. POWERS: This hasn't been inspected  
8 by the Fire Department as of yet. This is for the  
9 development plans. Once the building is constructed is  
10 when the Fire Department would do their inspection, to  
11 determine the necessary fire sprinklers and so forth  
12 that were presented in the certificate of design release  
13 that have been installed.

14 MS. RAMOS: So if he has that existing  
15 fence and we go ahead and approve pending landscaping,  
16 that meets the requirements; would that be sufficient?

17 MR. POWERS: That would meet the  
18 requirements pending the type of landscaping and the  
19 type of fence that we could, you know, request of them.  
20 Or if we wanted to approve this pending landscaping and  
21 the fence being installed, I could, you know, send this  
22 back to him and get those added to the petition  
23 approving it with those pending modifications so the  
24 petitioner could start requesting permits, knowing that  
25 this has to come back to the Planning Commission for the  
modified drawings so we can have the final plat to be  
added to the record.

MS. RAMOS: Or we could table it to the  
next meeting once he brings the final plans, either or.

MR. POWERS: So if you are satisfied  
with, you know, the comments that he has made, you know,  
I would recommend approving it pending receiving the  
final documents, that way it doesn't delay him in being  
able to get permits issued and knowing that the final  
approval is pending. This isn't going to be constructed  
within that period of time.

So our next meeting will be two  
weeks from today and you can virtually request that and  
I could sign off on the documents if they meet the  
requirements that you are suggesting, like having the  
eight-foot fence being listed on there, as well as  
landscape buffering. I could sign these for the Plan  
Commission if that was all right as well.

1 MR. ALLEN: Again, this came before Tech  
2 Review?

3 MR. POWERS: It was in front of Technical  
4 Review Committee that everything was deemed technically  
5 correct. The only comment that was made is that the  
6 petitioner knows he still has to get some design  
7 drawings submitted to the Building Department before he  
8 can get all permits issued.

9 MR. ALLEN: Are there any other questions  
10 or comments from the Commissioners? (None) Do we have  
11 a motion to approve the plans pending the fence and  
12 landscaping to be added?

13 MS. RAMOS: So moved.

14 MS. FOWLER: Second.

15 MR. ALLEN: Roll call.

16 Roll Call: "All in Favor": Allen, Ramos, Moricz,  
17 Fowler, Sloss, Gordon, Lopez Abstain: None  
18 Opposed: Winfield

19 MR. ALLEN: Motion carries.

20 MR. POWERS: So the next item on agenda  
21 is Gillis Laundromat, at 3808 Main Street. So this item  
22 in front of you actually is for informational purposes  
23 as it is located within the C-3 North Harbor Business  
24 District and the C-3 District does not require  
25 development plan approval from the Planning Commission.  
So I wanted to present this to the Planning Commission.  
If there are any questions, comments, or concerns about  
this, I'll be more than happy to answer them.

MR. ALLEN: So this is for the new  
laundromat and game room?

MR. POWERS: That's correct. So this  
would require no motion or anything to be made, just if  
you have any questions, I am more than happy to answer  
them.

MR. ALLEN: Any comments or questions  
from the Commissioners?

MS. RAMOS: When will this project be

1 completed?

2 MR. POWERS: So this should be very soon.  
3 I would not be surprised if it was open by the beginning  
4 of April.

5 MR. ALLEN: Any other questions or  
6 comments? (None) Thank you, Mr. Powers.

7 Moving on to Old Business. There is  
8 no old business. Any commissioner comments? (None)  
9 Are there any public comments? (None)

10 Our next meeting is Monday, April 4,  
11 2022, at 4:30 p.m. Entertain motion to adjourn.

12 MS. RAMOS: So moved.

13 MS. FOWLER: Second.

14 MR. ALLEN: Roll call.

15 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None  
16 Opposed: None


17 MR. ALLEN: Motion carries. Meeting  
18 adjourned.

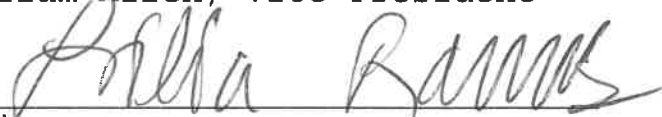
19 \*\*\* Meeting adjourned \*\*\*  
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Approval of the Meeting Minutes of Monday  
March 21, 2022

Approved and signed \_\_\_\_\_


  
Valeriano Gomez, President


  
William Allen, Vice-President

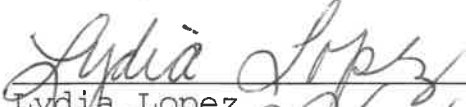
  
Lilia Ramos, Secretary


  
Joanne Moricz, Commissioner

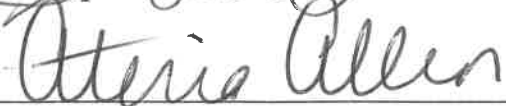
  
Chanthini Fowler

  
Douglas Sloss

  
Grayling Gordon

  
Lydia Lopez

  
Stacy Winfield

  
Ateria Allen, Recording Secretary



C E R T I F I C A T E

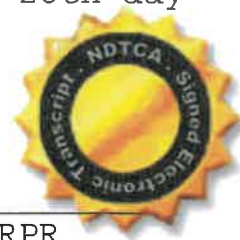
I, Peggy S. LaLonde, a competent and duly qualified court reporter, do hereby certify that I did report in machine shorthand the foregoing proceedings and that my shorthand notes so taken at said time and place were thereafter reduced to typewriting under my personal direction.

I further certify that the foregoing typewritten transcript constitutes minutes of the said proceedings taken at said time and place, so ordered to be transcribed.

Dated at Munster, Indiana, this 28th day of March, 2022.

*Peggy S. LaLonde*

Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR



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