MEETING MINUTES
PLAN COMMISSION
Wednesday, July 23, 2014
7:00 P.M.
Evanston Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, Council Chambers

Members Present: Scott Peters (Chair), Jim Ford, Terri Dubin, Carol Goddard, Lenny Asaro, Richard Shure, Andrew Pigozzi, Colby Lewis

Members Absent: Kwesi Steele

Associate Members Present: None

Associate Members Absent: Seth Freeman, Stuart Opdycke, David Galloway

Staff Present: Damir Latinovic, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner
Lorrie Pearson, Planning and Zoning Administrator
Michelle Masoncup, Deputy City Attorney

Presiding Member: Scott Peters, Chairman

1. CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Peters called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M and explained the general meeting procedure, schedule, agenda items, time limits on public testimony and opportunities for cross examination of witnesses. Chairman Peters concluded the opening statement by saying that the Plan Commission forwards a recommendation to the City Council which makes the final determination on any matters discussed by the Plan Commission.

As requested by staff, Chairman Peters read aloud recommended changes to Plan Commission Rules and Procedures. Commissioners were asked to send comments on these recommended changes to staff. Staff will bring revised Procedures to the Commission for adoption at a future meeting.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: June 11, 2014
Commissioner Goddard made a motion to approve the minutes as prepared. Commissioner Ford seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken and the minutes were approved by voice call 4-0. Commissioner Lewis and Commissioner Shure abstained.

At this time Commissioners Asaro and Pigozzi joined the meeting.

3. NEW BUSINESS
A. PLANNED DEVELOPMENT
2454 Oakton Street—Sports Dome
Randall T. Mayne and William Kindra of 2424 W. Oakton Series, Mission Properties, LLC, developer of the proposed project, has applied for a Special Use for a Planned Development in the C-1 Commercial District (Zoning Code 6-10) to construct an approximately 68,000-square foot and 60-ft. high sports dome structure. The proposal would include 76 open parking spaces. The applicant seeks Site Development Allowances for the maximum building height, setback for the open parking spaces, number of parking spaces provided, the dimension of parking stalls and parking module width and the number of loading docks. In addition, the applicant may seek and the Plan Commission may consider additional Site Development Allowances as may be necessary or desirable for the proposed development. The Plan Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council, the final determining body for this proposal.

Mr. Damir Latinovic, Neighborhood and Land Use Planner summarized the staff’s memo. He concluded by saying the proposal is consistent with the General Comprehensive Plan and meets all standards for approval of Planned Developments. As such, Staff recommends approval to the Planning and Development Committee with the conditions outlined in Staff’s memo.

Mr. Latinovic invited questions. With no questions from the Commission, Chairman Peters invited the applicant to make a presentation.

Andrew Werth, attorney with the Central Law Group, introduced the team—Randall Mayne and William Kindra, the developers and operators; Larry Okrent with Okrent Associates, the zoning and planning consultant; Matt Mejia and David Green are the president and project manager respectively from Yeadon Fabric Domes, the manufacturers of the dome; Eric Russell of KLOA, the traffic consultant, Phil Grosche the architect from JLA; and Rob Bielaski of SpaceCo Engineers, civil engineer.

All speakers were sworn in. Randy Mayne, 321 Lake St., began the presentation. He is the vice Chairman of the Parks and Rec. Board. In 2008 he founded the Evanston Youth Lacrosse Association. Bill Kindra has lived in Chicago for 25 years and has also been very active in youth sports.

The structure is column free. Preschool aged children and adults will also use the facility. The fields could be used for a variety of activities, including softball, baseball, tennis, badminton, golf, aerobics and fitness classes. Hours of operation would ideally meet the demand for activities.

Larry Okrent of 122 S. Michigan Avenue has been an Evanston resident since 1966 and provided the history of the area.

Mr. Mayne returned to talk more about the site plan and the surroundings of the site. He also presented the floor plan, showing the three-field configuration and a typical interior view. Cables will hold the structure down. Mr. Mayne showed the parking plan. He added that four spots will be rented from the Subway/Dunkin Donuts/Shell parking lot where signs would be installed to mark them for Sports Dome use. He also stated there is a verbal agreement with GFS to use ten of their spots during peak times. The spots are not
specified. A parking tag for the vehicles would be used to notify GFS that Sports Dome customers or staff are using the spaces. These spots would likely be used by coaches or others with whom Sports Dome can more easily communicate.

Mr. Okrent returned to discuss the five development allowances. The 76 on-site spaces, plus the 14 off-site spaces total 90 spaces. Based on the traffic and parking study by KLOA, this would be sufficient. The second allowance deals with the length of parking stalls. Some parking stalls are only 17 feet deep rather than the 18 required feet. Mr. Mayne explained the reason for this. The spots with a 17 foot length will allow cars to overhang.

Chairman Peters noted that the 20 minute mark had approached. He asked that when the Board addresses comments to the rules committee through Mr. Latinovic, that they comment on the 20 minute timing. Chairman Peters allowed the presentation to be extended for an additional 15 minutes.

Mr. Okrent summarized the other development allowances.

Mr. Okrent concluded by listing the public benefits of the project:

- Seasonal complement to James Park
- Remediation of contaminated 2.62-acre site
- Weed-filled lot to be fully improved and partially landscaped
- Development of long-vacant marginal site
- Strengthens local tax base, provides jobs
- Efficient building materials and mechanical systems
- Westward extension of Oakton sidewalk
- Improvements to Oakton Street traffic signal
- Discounted member fees to all Evanston residents
- Need-based scholarships for youth and adults
- Consideration of Divvy bike sharing on site, along with planned bike parking

Chairman Peters invited questions from Commission members and the public. Commissioner Shure asked about the sidewalk and bike riding on the south side of Oakton. Mr. Okrent replied that the sidewalk continues until the stoplight intersection and connects to the canal path.

Commissioner Goddard asked about the status of the IEPA report of the site. Mr. Mayne replied that they have submitted their proposal and are expecting a reply in the next 30 to 45 days.

Commissioner Lewis asked what type of contamination is involved at the site. Mr. Mayne answered the level of contamination is very minimal. Commissioner Lewis asked about the required remediation for Gordon Food Store when they opened. Mr. Mayne replied, from what he knows, GFS tested and did a phase I but chose not to fully remediate and does not have a NFR.

Commissioner Lewis asked if the parking spaces to be leased from other businesses are in excess to what is required. Mr. Latinovic answered that the other businesses are well
above what is required for them and will continue to meet parking requirements with the shared parking agreements.

Commissioner Lewis also asked about alternate uses to the large space. Mr. Mayne replied that other uses are conceivable but it would be restricted by parking supply.

Commissioner Shure asked Mr. Latinovic about other permitted uses. He responded that PD approval would allow only the recreational use. Any other use would be a concern and would have to be processed as an amendment to the Planned Development.

Commissioner Shure commented that in the event of lack of parking availability on site, people may park at Home Depot and walk over. Mr. Mayne added that there are three City spots on Oakton Street. He noted that a sign will likely be posted in the lobby asking customers not to park in spaces for neighboring businesses.

Commissioner Shure asked about the number of employees. Mr. Mayne answered that there will likely be no more than ten direct Sports Dome employees. He added that during clinics there may be temporary employees and that the clients may also bring their own employees, such as coaches.

Commissioner Shure asked Matt Mejia, the manufacturer, about the energy source to keep the dome up, pressure, and materials used. He confirmed that it will run off of the energy grid, and have a backup natural gas powered direct drive motor that is connected by clutch to a fan. In the event of a power failure, the natural gas motor will be started. Commissioner Shure also asked about the weight of snow. Mr. Mejia replied that the dome is designed to hold a certain amount of snow and the removal is done primarily through shedding. A snow sensor will increase pressure and heat to melt the bottom layer and allow the snow to slide off.

Commissioner Lewis returned to the discussion on uses. He asked if music concerts or markets would be allowed. Mr. Latinovic replied that only recreational uses would be allowed. Chairman Peters added that if use is a concern, a condition may be added that only uses presented in the testimony be allowed.

Commissioner Lewis asked about the walkway around the building. Mr. Kindra replied that the Fire Prevention Department requires it to be a hard surface. The width is eight feet all around. Mr. Latinovic clarified it must meet building code requirements for emergency exit doors. Commissioner Lewis asked if it would be possible to move the building over a foot or two to make the 17 foot parking stall length compliant. Mr. Kindra replied that the biggest consideration for setbacks was for snow removal vehicles.

Commissioner Lewis commented about the parking lot circulation. He noted that parking goes from perpendicular parking to parallel. Mr. Russell replied that the reasoning for this configuration was to maximize the number of parking spaces.

Commissioner Asaro noted that IEPA will make the final determination on the site contamination and remediation measures. A No Further Remediation is not required. Mr. Mayne responded that given the clientele expected for this site, they will do the NFR voluntarily even if not required. Commissioner Asaro commented that it might be a good idea to have a designated drop off and pick up area so that it is clear that the area is not
for spectators and to help the parking situation. Mr. Mayne stated that they do have a spot for drop off and pick up that was not as apparent on this site plan.

Chairman Peters invited comments from the general public.

Howard Grimms from Howard’s Tennis noted his interest in teaching tennis at the facility should the owners become interested in offering tennis in the future.

In closing, Mr. Mayne commented on the need for this type of facility in the community. He added that they will actively encourage facility users to carpool. Mr. Kindra noted that they hope this facility will help keep Evanston residents in Evanston.

Commissioner Ford made a motion to approve the project as presented with the condition that the facility be used for sports oriented recreational activities only. He also included the following conditions as outlined in Staff’s Memo:

1. The proposed planned development for the Sports Dome at 2454 Oakton Street shall substantially conform to the plans and documents attached to this report.
2. The facility must be closed for a period of 48 hours twice per year for Fire Safety inspection.
3. Exterior lights must be installed on the north, south and east side to illuminate the concrete walkway around the building.
4. The applicant must construct the sidewalk extension on the north side of Oakton Street near the access drive entrance into the site.
5. After the facility is open, the applicant will conduct a traffic count analysis and complete upgrades to the traffic signal timing at Oakton Street and access drive into the shopping center.
6. The applicant must schedule successive use of the same field with a time gap of minimum 30 minutes during December, January, February and March to provide adequate time and space for participant turnover and on-site pick up/drop off. The starting times of games may be adjusted upon review and approval by the Director of Community Development.
7. A minimum of 12 reverse U-shape bike parking facilities must be installed.
8. The proposed fence around the mechanical equipment area must have a maximum height of six feet.
9. If a public parking lot is constructed on the west end of James Park in the future, the applicant must enter into an agreement with the City of Evanston for the use of said parking lot and should pursue access easement rights with Pace to install a pedestrian crosswalk over the Pace access driveway in-line with the proposed walkway on the north side of the building.

Chairman Peters read the relevant standards for approval of planned developments and confirmed the project meets all standards.

Commissioner Shure seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken and a motion was approved by voice call 8-0.

4. ADJOURNMENT
There being no further discussion, Commissioner Shure made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Commissioner Goddard seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Damir Latinovic
Neighborhood and Land Use Planner
Community Development Department