

**The City of Lake Forest**  
**Plan Commission**  
**Proceedings of the November 14, 2019 Meeting**

A meeting of the Lake Forest Plan Commission was held on Thursday, November 14, 2019, at 6:30 p.m., at City Hall, 220 E. Deerpath, Lake Forest, Illinois.

Commission members present: Chairman Kehr and Commissioners Michael Freeman, John Dixon, Jamie Moorhead and Stephen Douglass

Commissioners absent: Commissioners Susan Athenson and Monica Artmann Ruggles

Staff present: Catherine Czerniak, Director of Community Development

**1. Introduction of Commissioners and staff and review of meeting procedures.**

Chairman Kehr asked the members of the Commission and staff to introduce themselves and reviewed the meeting procedures followed by the Commission.

**2. Consideration of the minutes of the September 11, 2019 and September 24, 2019 Plan Commission meetings.**

The minutes of the September 11, 2019 meeting were approved with corrections as requested by Chairman Kehr.

The minutes of the September 24, 2019 meeting were approved with corrections as requested by Chairman Kehr.

**3. Public Hearing and Action: Consideration of a request for a Special Use Permit to allow relocation of the Coldwell Banker Real Estate Office within the Central Business District to 675 Forest Avenue.**

**Property Owner: STRS L# ACO2, LLC**

**Applicant: Coldwell Banker**

**Representative: Anne Lee**

Chairman Kehr introduced the agenda item and asked the Commission to declare any conflicts of interest or Ex Parte contacts. Hearing none, she swore in all those intending to speak on this agenda item and invited a presentation by the petitioner.

Ms. Lee introduced the agenda item. She stated that Coldwell Banker is located at 225 Deerpath in a 4,000 square foot office and no longer needs a large office because the real estate business has changed as a result of mobile technology. She stated a preference to maintain an office in Lake Forest. She stated that the smaller space at 676 Forest is near the current office and has available parking and visibility. She noted that a Special Use Permit was also required and approved for the current location. She stated that the office is expected to be staffed by two

people full time and those employees will park in spaces designated for employee parking in the City lots. She stated that the agents will come and go periodically and are normally in the office for only short periods of time. She stated that there will be a small conference room for about six people. She stated that large closings or other events are not planned at this location. She stated that the office will primarily be a location from which to showcase Lake Forest homes and will provide support services to agents who work remotely.

Ms. Czerniak confirmed that real estate offices require approval through the special use process in all of the City's business districts. She reiterated that Coldwell Banker is already located in the Central Business District and desires to move to a smaller space, near the current location. She noted that a representative of the owners of the building is in attendance and informed staff that locating the real estate office in the space on Forest Avenue is preferred over locating this non-retail use in a space with frontage on Market Square. She stated that if the proposed signage conforms to the standards in the Code, it will be approved administratively, if exceptions are requested, the signage will be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission. She stated that findings in support of the petition are provided in the staff report.

In response to comments from Commissioner Moorhead, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that Special Use Permits are site and business specific. She stated that the special use criteria require that the storefront not be altered in such a way that it would not be inviting or functional as a retail space in the future.

In response to questions from Chairman Kehr, Ms. Lee noted that currently, agents use short term parking on the street and in the public parking lots. She stated that full time staff park in spaces designated for employee parking.

Hearing no further questions from the Commission, Chairman Kehr invited comments from the public. Hearing none, she invited final comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Douglass stated that the use and signage appears appropriate for the proposed location. He stated support for the petition.

Commissioner Moorhead stated that the petition satisfies the criteria for a special use permit.

Hearing no further comments from the Commission, Chairman Kehr invited a motion.

Commissioner Dixon made a motion to recommend approval of a Special Use Permit to authorize the Coldwell Banker Real Estate office to relocate to 675 Forest Avenue based on the findings detailed in the staff report and subject to the following conditions.

1. All employees and sales associates shall park in public employee parking lots in spaces designated for employees. Public on street parking spaces and short duration parking spaces in the lots shall be used by customers and clients only. The office manager shall institute policies to enforce this condition.
2. Jockeying of cars in on street or short term parking spaces shall be considered a violation of this Special Use Permit.
3. No exterior or interior alterations shall occur which limit or detract from the ability to use the space for retail or restaurant uses in the future.
4. The “store front” windows shall remain open to allow views into the space for the purpose of providing a pedestrian friendly streetscape.
5. All signage shall be in conformance with the applicable Code provisions or approvals as may be granted by the City’s Historic Preservation Commission.
6. All use of the space shall be in conformance with applicable Code requirements for properties within the R-4 District and this Special Use Permit.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Freeman and was approved by a vote of 5 to 0

- 4. Public Hearing and Action: Continued consideration of a request for approval of Phase 3 of the McKinley Road Redevelopment. Approval of the overall site plan, a plat of consolidation and related approvals. Two buildings are proposed as the final phase of the development, a multi-unit building on the south portion of the site and a duplex (two-unit) building on the north portion of the property.**  
**Property Owner: The City of Lake Forest**  
**Contract Purchaser: 361 Westminster LLC (50% Peter Witmer and 50% Todd Altounian)**  
**Presented by: Peter Witmer, architect**

Chairman Kehr introduced the agenda item and asked the Commission to declare any conflicts of interest or Ex Parte contacts. Hearing none, she swore in all those intending to speak and invited a presentation by the petitioner.

Mr. Witmer stated that in response to comments heard at the September meeting, and comments received since that meeting, the plans were revised. He reviewed the plan as presented at the September meeting which reflected two buildings, a duplex and a condominium building. He summarized the comments heard in response to that plan noting that concerns were raised about the mass and height of the buildings, the separation between the two buildings, the amount of open space on the site and the impact of the duplex building and driveway ramp on the Westminster streetscape. He explained that after the September meeting, he

studied the duplex and determined that making it smaller in the same location would not change the streetscape appearance much. He stated that he reviewed earlier plans that located the driveway to the underground garage between the two buildings but noted that to make a driveway functional in that location the duplex building must be pushed closer to the Westminster streetscape. He noted that he also studied increasing the separation distance between the two buildings from 15 feet to 30 feet but again, the duplex was pushed to the north, closer to the streetscape. He stated that based on the input he heard at the September meeting, he realized that the separation between the two buildings was not really visible except when standing directly in front of the gap. He acknowledged that the two buildings, from the streetscape, appeared as a wall of building. He noted that he also realized that the concept of a building, the duplex, in front of the condominium building, was awkward. He determined that more open space and a larger setback from Westminster could be a better solution. He reviewed the approved Master Plan and graphically illustrated the shift in the phase three building that occurred as a result of the expanded open space on the south. He presented a revised site plan noting that the condominium building is elongated and the duplex building removed from the plan. He explained that the current proposal is a single building, set back further from Westminster than the duplex was, and stepped back in massing from a one story element to a three story mass as the building moves away from the streetscape. He stated that a terrace to provide outdoor space for the first floor unit extends over the relocated driveway eliminating any views of the garage door from off of the site. He stated that at the time of a drop in session held for the closest neighbors, the current concept was still under development and the terrace was not yet envisioned over the driveway ramp. He reviewed the open space now proposed both at the north and south ends of the phase three site. He noted that the driveway entrance is now proposed off of the alley, away from the Westminster streetscape. He explained that based on the Council approvals, up to 14 units are permitted in the third phase of the project. He stated that the parking study was completed based on 30 units anticipated overall. He noted that as currently proposed, there will be 26 units in the overall development with six market rate units and one affordable unit in the third phase. He stated that he understands that the concerns of the neighbors and Commission may be less related to the number of units and more related to the massing of the buildings. He stated however as the developer, he has to care about both the number of units and the massing to achieve the quality necessary to make the project viable. He noted that keeping the number of units down does matter in terms of reduced potential for traffic below that which was anticipated from the approved 30 units. He stated that the overall development exceeds the required number of parking spaces. He reviewed the floor plans noting that the condominium building footprint is 8,000 square feet and results in a reduction of the footprint from the previous plan, by 22 percent. He noted that two units are proposed on the first and third floors and three units on the second floor. He stated that after study, he realizes both a duplex and condominium building do not fit on the site. He reviewed the entrance to the underground garage as currently proposed noting that the ramp is now located off of the alley and the garage door

is located under a terrace for a first floor unit and is not visible from off of the site. He stated that to make the project successful, underground parking is required. He stated that a two story condominium building, with underground parking and an elevator, is not economically viable. He stated that he is not aware of any two story condominium buildings that have been built in Lake Forest. He stated that even if he received the land for free, the economics of a two story condominium building would be difficult in order to produce the quality expected. He stated that the units in the development have sold because they provide a product that people want; one floor living, elevators, underground parking and high quality finishes. He reviewed the setbacks of the various building elements noting that the two story element is set back 96 feet from the north property line and the single story screened porch element is set back 85 feet. He stated that the at grade terrace, over the garage entrance, is setback 61 feet from the north property line. He reviewed the floor plans; the underground garage, the first floor with two units, second floor with three units and third floor with two units. He again noted that the third floor mass is stepped back from the north façade of the building. He stated that the buildings are set back 15 feet from the east property line. He reviewed the distances between the proposed buildings and various neighboring structures on the properties located to the east. He presented a streetscape image of all three buildings as viewed from McKinley Road noting the relationship of the architectural elements, including the porches of the third building, to the buildings in the first and second phases. He stated that in response to recent comments from the Commission and the public, he and Mr. Altounian stepped back and re-evaluated each phase of the project. He stated that in their opinion, the overall project makes sense and the cooperation with the City, Library and Church has made the project better. He noted that they have put years into working on the project and getting input from various parties and have expended significant dollars on the project. He stated that the residents who live in the first building love being there. He stated that the project involves more than just constructing buildings explaining that the development is creating a sense of place with meaningful open space for the residents of the development, users of the Library and pedestrians. He stated that after the last Plan Commission meeting, he reviewed the comments that were offered and concluded that eliminating the duplex and the building mass near the Westminster streetscape makes sense. He noted that providing open space on the streetscape, as the street transitions from the higher density development to the west, to single family development to the east, fits the character of the community. He noted that the parapet wall at the northeast corner of the building is 40 feet in height noting that the grade steps down about three feet from the southwest corner of the building where the height of the parapet wall is 37'6". He presented an illustration of the height of the proposed building in comparison to other buildings in the area. He presented sketches of the phase three building as now proposed from different perspectives noting the areas where Mariani is proposing landscaping. He stated that since the last meeting, the elevations of the building were refined to more fully to evoke a row house concept with the various elements appear as individual houses. He pointed out the multiple entrances noting that the building as currently configured allows for direct entrances into the first floor units and separate

entrances into the stairwells and lobby. He pointed out the taller scaled components of the building which relate to the first building and reviewed how the massing steps down to a two story mass with a mansard roof, and then a one story element as the building approaches Westminster. He stated that the exterior materials will be the same as those used on the first two buildings, brick and limestone, with a shingle roof. He reviewed the location of the ramp to the garage noting that landscaping is proposed to screen the ramp from the streetscape and brick walls will provide privacy for the terrace and the outdoor space above. He stated that the ramp, garage door and the outdoor areas are well screened from Westminster. He reviewed the design rationale for providing open space on Westminster instead of the previously proposed duplex building. He used the model to highlight the step down of buildings from McKinley Road to the east and commented on the streetscape views from various perspectives. He added that by eliminating the duplex, views from the 333 Westminster building and the condominium building in the first phase of the development are preserved. He noted that the open space along the Westminster frontage also benefits the single family home to the east, the home located across the alley to the west, and the homes on the north side of Westminster. He also used the model to illustrate the scale of the proposed phase three building in comparison to buildings around it and compared the massing proposed at the last meeting to the reduced massing as now proposed. He acknowledged that in exchange for the elimination of the duplex along the Westminster streetscape, the condominium building in the third phase increased in length by 50 feet. He stated that in his opinion, open space along Westminster is a better solution than a duplex. He also expressed concern about a duplex being located in the foreground of the condominium building creating the appearance of too much on the site. He explained that the height of the condominium building is driven by buyers' demands for nine foot ceilings and concrete floors for sound attenuation. He again noted the change in grade over the site of about five feet from the southwest to the northeast corner. He reviewed the elevations presented at the last meeting and highlighted the changes now proposed. He stated a willingness to work with the neighboring property owner to the east to evaluate existing trees and determine how best to provide a landscape buffer. He noted that the plat of consolidation is presented for the purpose of creating a single parcel for the third phase of the development as was done for the first phase so that one PIN number is assigned.

Ms. Czerniak briefly reviewed the history of the discussions about redevelopment of the area. She stated that the City owns the 361 Westminster property and in the late 1990's, leased the former Masonic Temple to the Historical Society for what was intended to be a temporary location. She explained that the building was originally constructed as an outbuilding to a nearby residence and was not constructed as a public building or museum. She stated that City staff maintained the building to the extent possible however, there were ongoing leaks, issues with the HVAC and structural issues including that fact that the west masonry wall was buckling. She stated that the Historical Society considered many options including renovating and reconstructing the existing building, adding on to the building and constructing a

new building on the site before deciding to relocate to the former Church at the corner of Deerpath and Washington Road. She explained that once the City Council understood that the Historical Society was leaving the site, a decision was made to work with the developer to encourage incorporation of the City parcel, first the south half and later the north half, into the redevelopment of the area. She noted that as part of that discussion, the Council determined that a portion of the redevelopment site should be transferred back to the City to provide for some additional parking spaces for the Library, on a flat area, and that green space should be incorporated into the development in the area to the north of the Library. She noted that the three office buildings previously located along McKinley Road did not offer high quality office space. She stated that the opportunity for the three office parcels and the City parcel to be redeveloped cohesively was seen as a way to achieve the goals of bringing more residential units into the area surrounding the Central Business District and relocating offices to the west side of the tracks. She noted that the Council recognized that increased density near the Central Business District is critical to support businesses and restaurants. She added that the Council recognized that having the opportunity to plan the area as a whole, rather than allow it to redevelop incrementally over time, is consistent with the City's long tradition of careful planning. She explained that to facilitate a comprehensive redevelopment plan for the area, the Council entered into a Purchase/Sale Agreement with the developer for the City property. She noted that the Agreement required the developer to bear the cost of demolishing the former Historical Society building and allowed up to 14 units to be constructed on the City property. She stated that to guide the development, a Master Plan was approved and development parameters were put in place as recommended by the Plan Commission. She clarified that the Master Plan was not intended to identify specific building footprints, but instead, intended to guide the review of plans for each phase as they developed and evolved. She noted that as a result of cooperation between representatives of the Church of the Covenants and the developer, a portion of property owned by the Church was included in the second phase of the development, allowing the second condominium building to replicate the width of the first building along the McKinley Road streetscape. She recalled that in the Commission's discussion of the second phase of the project, expansion of the green space to the east, on to the southernmost portion of the phase three parcel, was discussed and encouraged to provide a meaningful green space as contemplated in the Master Plan. She reviewed that in September, 2019, the Plan Commission reviewed a plan for the third phase of the development. She noted that the Commission's discussion focused on the massing of the proposed duplex building, the proximity of the duplex to the Westminster streetscape, the massing of the condominium building, the location of the ramp to the parking garage and the visibility of the garage door from Westminster. She acknowledged that some neighbors have expressed frustration that the plan keeps changing she explained that the plan continues to evolve in response to input from the public and the Commission. She acknowledged that through the public process, plans often change and although everyone is never completely satisfied, the process results in a better end product. She stated that based on the staff review, the plan as now

presented for the third phase generally conforms to the Master Plan. She noted that the plan proposes residential units, in a multi-family building, provides green space and steps down from the larger buildings to the west. She confirmed that the site is located within the Local Historic District and stated that the Historic Preservation Commission will review the design aspects of the building, landscaping and hardscape. She stated that if the Commission determines that the plan as now presented is generally in conformance with the Master Plan and the Redevelopment Parameters, a recommendation to the City Council in support of the plan would be appropriate. She stated that the proposed lot consolidation is a procedural matter for the purpose of creating a single parcel, with a single Property Identification Number, as occurred in the first phase of the project. She stated that the consolidation does not alter what can be built on the site.

In response to questions from Commissioner Douglass, Mr. Witmer explained that locating the ramp to the garage in the middle of the building takes up more space and would reduce the number of parking spaces. He added that with the garage entrance in the middle of the building, two ramps, at different grades, would be required, one to enter the north portion of the garage and one to enter the south portion of the garage. He stated that locating the garage entrance ramp at the south end of the building will eliminate the green space. He stated that the location as proposed, with the ramp off the alley entering the north end of the building is the most workable solution, takes advantage of the change in grade, and serves to push the building mass back from Westminster.

In response to questions from Commissioner Dixon, Mr. Witmer reviewed the relationship of the proposed condominium building to the house to the east noting that there is 91 feet between the condominium building and the residence at 385 Westminster. He stated that the residence at 385 Westminster is set back 80 feet from the north property line and the one story porch of the proposed condominium building is setback 85 feet from the north property line. He stated that the residence to the west is setback 35 feet from the north property line and will look out to green space to the north of the condominium building. He added that arborvitae screen the house to the west from the alley.

In response to questions from Commissioner Moorhead, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that as part of the Plan Commission's discussion of phase two, the Commission requested the expansion of the green space to the east in response to the changes to the phase two building.

In response to questions from Commissioner Moorhead, Mr. Witmer reviewed the change that occurred in the green space as a result of the modifications made to the phase two building after property was acquired from the Church. He noted that the green space was expanded east, on to the south 49 feet of the phase three parcel and as a result, the phase three building shifted to the north 20 to 30 feet. He reviewed the green space as reflected on the Master Plan in comparison to what is now proposed.

In response to questions from Commissioner Moorhead, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that the properties in the first two phases are zoned O-1 and the City owned property is zoned GR-3. She confirmed that the property is in the Local Historic District and a request for a height variance from the 35 foot limit will need to be considered by the Historic Preservation Commission. She stated that as currently proposed, the height of the building ranges from 42'8" at the southwest corner, to 37'6" at the northeast corner due to the grade change on the property.

In response to questions from Commissioner Moorhead, Mr. Witmer stated that a two story building was considered but noted that two story walkup units are not what buyers want. He stated that based on the sales and interest, the unit type as proposed with one floor living, underground parking and elevators, is filling a gap in the local housing market.

Chairman Kehr recalled that in November, 2016, the Commission talked about the possibility of town homes on the phase three parcel but ultimately acknowledged that the development would likely be one large building with the possibility of a duplex as a separate building.

In response to questions from Commissioner Moorhead, Mr. Witmer stated that he believes that the proposed building serves as an appropriate and harmonious transition between the larger buildings to the west, and the single family homes to the east. He noted the relationships between condominium buildings located elsewhere in the community and the nearby single family homes such as the condominium buildings on Oakwood Avenue and the homes on Vine Avenue, and Regents Road and the homes on Atteridge Road. He stated that the buildings in the third phase as currently proposed step down from the height and massing of the buildings in the earlier phases and from the 333 Westminster building. He stated that the phase three building is configured as a two story building with a roof form in which the third floor is located. He stated that the building does not have a 40 foot straight wall. He noted that the building is stepped back from the Westminster streetscape and lower building elements are located at the north end to relate to the single family homes. He added that the outdoor spaces are located away from the single family homes to the east. In response to questions about the Traffic Study that was completed during the early phases of the project, he stated that the study was not updated based on the 2017 reference document. He stated that the study was based on an estimate of 30 residential units. As now proposed, at full build out, the density will be less than 30 units. He added that the Traffic Study recognized that residential development will generate significantly less traffic than if the area was redeveloped with office uses as permitted by the Code. He stated that if the development as now proposed significantly differed from the development anticipated in the Study, a reevaluation would have been done.

Commissioner Freeman noted that he reviewed the earlier Plan Commission meetings to verify that his recollection of the history of the project is accurate. He stated that the south elevation does a nice job of interfacing with the green space

in that area. He added that the green space provides the opportunity for use by Library patrons in the future as originally intended. He expressed an interest in seeing the north end of the site explored further to improve the interface with the residential neighborhood. He commented that in early discussions there was an acknowledgement that phase three could be one or two buildings and commented that the current plan, which eliminates the second building and pushes the development away from Westminster, is helpful. He questioned whether the north end of the building could become a two story version of the south end of the building. He suggested that consideration be given to making the building appear less square and to achieving a roof form that relates better to the neighborhood. He asked whether an open porch or other residentially scaled element could be used and whether the garage entrance ramp could be pulled further under the building. He stated that the location of the building further back from Westminster and the open space on the streetscape are strong positives of the current plan.

In response to questions from Commissioner Freeman, Mr. Witmer agreed that the building could be studied further in an effort to give the north facing elevation more of the appearance of a townhome or single family house and to minimize the appearance of mass and volume. He agreed that currently, the north end of the building appears bulky. He also agreed to further study how to more fully incorporate the ramp as part of the building and minimize its visibility. He explained that the success of the project is outdoor space adding that buyers want meaningful outdoor spaces. He stated that in his opinion, the ramp to the underground garage and adjoining walls are a clever approach to hiding the ramp from the streetscape and preserving open space along Westminster. He commented that the plan keeps improving as a result of the public discussions.

Commissioner Douglass suggested consideration of wrapping the one story element with a mansard roof to achieve more of a residential scale and appearance.

In response to questions from Commissioner Douglass, Mr. Witmer stated that the parapet wall is envisioned at about 12 inches. He stated that as currently planned, no HVAC units are planned on the roof.

In response to questions and comments from Chairman Kehr, Mr. Witmer stated that electric furnaces are proposed so there will be no flues on the roof, only limited vents for plumbing.

Chairman Kehr stated that in her opinion, the revised plan is a great improvement over the previous plan. She noted that at the last meeting, the Commissioners expressed concern about the duplex extending into the Westminster streetscape and the parking ramp coming off of Westminster. She noted that locating the parking ramp as part of the planned development, rather than on the Westminster streetscape, is an improvement. She stated that at the last meeting, there was interest in a pocket park, green space, on the Westminster streetscape. She stated that the plan now presented begins to address some of the earlier comments. She

observed that the building steps back from Westminster creating less of an imposition to the surrounding homes. She noted that in response to comments from some Commissioners, it appears that from an architectural perspective, the massing is broken up to a greater extent. She commented that the three story bay window elements appear to relate to the 333 building helping to integrate the building into the streetscape.

In response to questions from Chairman Kehr, Mr. Witmer reviewed the outdoor spaces proposed for the various units including terraces and a screened porch at the north end of the building. He stated that to minimize impacts on the neighbors to the east, the outdoor spaces are directed away from the neighbors and a solid parapet wall and landscaping are proposed to screen views of the outdoor areas. He confirmed that as now proposed, the ramp to the parking garage does not create conflicts with the existing parking spaces along the alley. He stated that he is considering narrowing the ramp noting that the ramp to the phase one building seems to be wider than necessary from a functional perspective. He reviewed the location of the entrance doors to the various units and described the portion of the building that creates the visual terminus at the east end of the east/west street. He confirmed that bicycle storage is provided in the underground garage and visitor parking is available along the street. He stated that the remaining overhead utility wires are located on the 333 Westminster property. He stated that there was an effort to include those wires in the work that occurred earlier, but that effort was not successful. He stated that the utilities can be relocated underground, at a cost.

In response to questions from Commissioner Kehr, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that the staff report and packet materials detail the required and proposed setbacks noting that on all sides, the proposed development exceeds the required setbacks.

Chairman Kehr noted that the only variance requested is for the building height adding that in earlier discussions, the potential for a height variance was anticipated due to the grade change over the site.

Hearing no further questions from the Commission, Chairman Kehr invited comments from the public.

Sally Downey, 475 E. Westminster, stated that she appreciated Commissioner Freeman's comments about the building design as it relates to Westminster. She stated that she became involved in discussions about phases three and four of the development over the summer due to potential impacts on the Westminster streetscape. She acknowledged that the first building was well done but expressed concern that the scope of the project keeps expanding and the plans keep changing. She stated that there is a disconnect between neighbors, the Commission, and the developers over the proposed uses and stated that there is general confusion. She noted that at the September meeting she discovered that the prior plans for the development were already obsolete noting that changes had occurred in the building design, with a connection proposed between the two

buildings, and the location of the ramp to the underground garage. She stated that the neighbors have not had time to respond. She stated that public notice is only provided to residents within a specific area around the development leaving many in the historic neighborhood uninformed. She stated that all of the neighbors who have chosen to live in the historic neighborhood will be impacted by the proposed development. She stated that she put together a list of email addresses for neighbors in the area and shares the information she receives with others. She stated that now, again, there is a new design. She noted that additional drawings and details are presented beyond those that were mailed as part of the notice or provided on the website. She stated that the neighbors are suspicious of what will come next. She stated that she respects the City processes and has had her own project reviewed through the process but noted concern that this process is different because the City is an active party in the deal. She noted that in 2016, the City engaged an outside consultant, The Lakota Group, to develop concepts for the area. She noted that concepts presented promoted walkability, safe access to the Library, minimizing curb cuts, focused on hardscape, spoke to the merits of underground parking and suggested that new buildings should be secondary to important surrounding buildings. She added that the consultant's study encouraged providing view corridors and high quality design. She pointed out that the discussion focused on the Library and the need to provide for parking, green space open to the public and architecture that was related to Market Square. She stated that in those discussions neither the neighbors, nor the fact that the property is located in the Historic District, were discussed. She stated that no mention was made of how the proposed large scale development might impact the neighbors. She stated that the City engaged in discussions with the Library, Church and the developers and was focused on removing a surplus property from the City's responsibility. She noted that Ms. Czerniak noted at a previous meeting that the City encouraged discussions between the developer and the Church and as a result, the phase two parcel became wider. She noted that at several meetings, there were comments from the Commission and the developer that the Westminster frontage was a suitable location for a single family residence or a duplex of about 3,000 square feet, set back 40 feet from the street, for consistency with the neighborhood. She noted that was the preferred plan. She noted concern about who will advocate for the neighbors. She stated that now, three years later, that concept is not incorporated into the plan. She expressed concern that the Historic Preservation Commission is being asked next week to consider the design aspects of the project however, the neighbors do not have clear information. She suggested that building elevations, mock-ups, drone footage and other means be used to illustrate the impact of the proposed development on the streetscape and on surrounding homes. She noted that the garage ramp location, the visibility of the garage door and elimination of the previously proposed duplex are all changes made since the September meeting. She asked the Commission to give the neighbors equal priority in considering the proposed development. She stated that the neighborhood is too important to make a mistake.

Steve Hurst, 485 E. Westminster, noted that he attended the September Commission meeting and agreed with the comments of Ms. Downey that the project is difficult because the City and the developer are both involved in the project. He noted that normally, the City is neutral in the review of development petitions. He noted concern for the closest neighbors, noting the location of the Donovans' house in relation to the proposed development. He stated that the grading is not yet reflected on the plan adding that the Donovan's house is at a much lower grade than the parcel proposed for development. He stated that the proposed building will impact the Donovans' property and others nearby due to a loss of privacy. He encouraged the Commission to look at the entire east elevation. He encouraged the Commission to balance all of the issues and interests and to be sure that everyone has the opportunity to participate. He expressed concern that staff is advocating for the project and is not a neutral party. He expressed concern about the proposed lot consolidation and changing rules. He questioned whether there is a different option for the property noting that the neighbors are not in favor of the project.

James Babowice, attorney representing the Donovans, stated that the Donovans are out of State and noted that Mr. Donovan submitted a letter to the Commission. He noted that the north parcel on Westminster was not part of the 2016 plan adding that based on the applicable zoning, the parcel can only be developed with a single family home or a duplex. He noted that he was not able to find an Ordinance approving a Special Use Permit for the development allowing something other than the permitted uses. He referenced the minutes from an earlier Plan Commission meeting noting that the Commission stated that careful attention should be given to appropriate buffering and transition to the adjacent land uses with setbacks increased beyond the minimum required. He stated that the Donovan's home, based on the current plan, is 28 feet from the proposed 42 foot high structure. He acknowledged that a 15 foot setback, rather than the required six foot setback is proposed, but noted that seven air conditioner condensers are proposed within that setback, right next to the Donovan's property. He noted the Donovan's concern about the loss of privacy and noise impacts and their requests for a shadow study and drainage study. He stated that the plat of consolidation is not an administrative matter noting that the public alley has not yet been vacated so the Commission is not yet in a position to make a determination on the proposal. He stated that to his knowledge, no valuation assessment has occurred relative to the impact of the proposed building mass on the Donovan's property and on other homes in the area. He questioned whether or not the proposed plan is in harmony with the City's Comprehensive Plan noting that the Plan talks about green space and instead, a massive structure is proposed. He stated that there are a number of items that should be addressed as an accommodation to the Donovans. He stated that it is his understanding that the developer talked with the neighbor to the south of the Donovans about potential screening, but not to the Donovans. He stated that the outdoor area on the Donovan's property, and their porch, should be given consideration consistent with past Plan Commission statements that careful

attention should be paid to creating an appropriate transition to and buffering of the single family homes to the east.

In response to questions from Commissioner Freeman, Mr. Witmer stated that in the current plan, the corner of the proposed condominium building is 28 feet from the corner of the Donovan's garage.

Chairman Kehr confirmed that the Commission received the Donovan's most recent correspondence and has received other correspondence from the Donovans in the past. She stated that it is her understanding that there have been communications between the Donovans and City staff, and the Donovans and the developer at points during this process.

Patrick Corsiglia, 418 E. Illinois Road, stated that he purchased two units in the first building and is the President of the Condominium Association. He stated that the residents of the first building love living there adding that most are Lake Forest residents who have raised children in the community and are connected to local, charitable organizations. He stated that many residents in the building have second homes elsewhere. He stated that if this housing option was not available, many of the residents would have left Lake Forest. He stated that instead, the development provides the desired housing product to allow them to age in place, in the community of which they have been a part. He stated that elevator access, single floor living and outdoor space are features that make the three story building desirable. He stated that residents in the building walk to restaurants and businesses in the Central Business District. He noted that when he purchased his unit, he understood that there would be green space along the south edge of the development. He stated that the plan does a good job of providing green space on both the north and south sides of the development and stated that the green space on the south end of the project should not be scaled back. He stated that three stories are necessary in order to provide the desired amenities.

Todd Curry, 360 E. Westminster, stated that his house was constructed in 1876. He stated that he bought his house two years ago and talked with Mr. Witmer before buying it to understand the plan for redevelopment of the area. He stated that he continues to be impressed by Mr. Witmer's architectural vision. He stated that when he bought his home, he had a view of the former Historical Society building and stated that he is glad that the building is gone. He stated that the building had outlived its useful life and the yard was unkempt. He stated however that the ongoing construction activity has been a bad experience for the neighborhood. He stated that he is disappointed that there has not been more communication. He stated that because the City owns the property, the City is in an awkward position. He stated that information about the plans and meetings has not been communicated to the neighbors. He stated that the earlier plan in which the garage door faced Westminster was wholly inappropriate for the historic neighborhood. He stated that the current plan does a good job of addressing that issue by increasing the setback distance and eliminating the view of the garage

door from the street. He stated that he is seeing this plan for the first time at the meeting. He reiterated that construction has taken a toll on the neighborhood noting that activity has started on the site at 6 a.m. and has occurred seven days a week at times. He stated concern about a building towering 42 feet over the Donovan's house. He encouraged the Commission to give the project more time and thought. He stated that the City should proactively enforce the construction hours rather than condone work in violation of the regulations.

Jeff Torosian, 401 E. Westminster, noted that he submitted a letter and also signed the letter circulated in the neighborhood. He stated that he reviewed the staff report and recommendation and found additional materials on the website. He stated that the process has been ongoing for three years and has been terrible. He stated that the notice of the drop in meeting held by the developer was poor. He noted that the Commission told the developer to reach out to the neighbors and find out what the neighborhood wants. He stated that at the drop in meeting, the developer presented a plan that differed from the plan presented at the September meeting, a revised plan that was prepared before hearing the neighbors' comments. He noted that three years ago, the City Council did not anticipate a condominium building on the Westminster streetscape. He noted that the Master Plan calls for a single family house or a duplex with a condominium building behind it, not a condominium building on Westminster. He stated that the plan presented in September proposed a duplex right up against the sidewalk along Westminster and the property lines, with a condominium building right behind it. He stated that calling the area shown in the plan along Westminster "green space" is an insult to the neighbors. He stated that space between the sidewalk and the building is a front yard adding that the worst side of the condominium building is facing Westminster with a garage door. He stated that the community does not want a condominium building on the Westminster streetscape.

Commissioner Kehr clarified that none of the Commissioners or staff have been pressured to support a particular plan. She stated that the focus is on finding a plan that will work best for the community over the long term. She noted that all of the Commissioners are volunteers. Hearing no further requests to speak from the public, she invited further questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Dixon noted that discussion of redevelopment of this area began in 2011 with the Cultural Corridor Task Force recommending that office uses should be relocated to the west side of the railroad tracks to allow for infill of the area with residential units. He stated that at that time, the properties in the area were in multiple ownerships. He noted that the City Council adopted a Master Plan to support redevelopment of the area with residential development over time. He noted that the Master Plan envisioned multiple buildings, a private road with a public access easement, and green space. He noted that the intention was that the development would occur in phases, over time. He stated that the Commission has considered the development on a number of occasions most recently focusing on the third phase of the development in June, September and now November of

this year. He stated that he understands that some have concerns that there has been scope creep and concern that the plans have changed over time. He stated that in his opinion, the changes have been geared toward trying to respond to input received at each of the meetings, from various parties. He acknowledged that some neighbors feel listened to and others do not. He noted that as explained by Mr. Witmer, the plan now presented reflects a 22 percent reduction in the building footprint in the third phase. He noted that in the September plan, there were two buildings, and now there is one. He agreed that further refinement of the building itself may be appropriate but noted that is not the purview of the Plan Commission and should be left to the Historic Preservation Commission.

In response to questions from Commissioner Douglass, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that the overall development site is within two different zoning districts, O-1, office, and GR-3, General Residence. She noted however that the Master Plan approved by the City Council designates the entire site for an integrated development, a planned development, as authorized by the Code. She explained that a planned development allows the permitted density to be distributed across the development site. She stated that a similar approach was used for redevelopment of the former City Municipal Services Facility site on Laurel and Western Avenues. She stated that the proposed lot consolidation will not change the development potential of the property. She reviewed that the Master plan sets a general direction for the overall development and is intended to serve as a guide. She stated that the Master Plan does not need to be changed noting that the final site plan will document the plan that is ultimately approved.

Commissioner Freeman noted the development parameters direct that phase three of the development should provide for an appropriate transition and buffering of the homes to the east. He stated that it is clear that the December, 2016 Master Plan was not intended to direct the exact shape, size or design of the buildings. He noted that the Master Plan only identified a long rectangle on the phase three property in the area south of where the building is proposed now. He noted that the overall development initially was comprised of numerous tax parcels that did not align with the various phases as the development was taking shape. He stated that he was surprised to see how consistent the development plan is with discussions about the area that occurred beginning in the 1990's. He stated that the development is evolving consistent with the long time vision but took many decades due to the various lots and ownerships. He acknowledged the importance of how the area is developing to the surrounding neighbors but noted that the development is important to the larger community.

In response to questions from Commissioner Moorhead, Ms. Czerniak stated that the phase three property remains in the historic district. She stated that when the Historic Preservation Commission considered the request for approval of the demolition of the former Historical Society building, changing the boundaries of the historic district was not considered. She stated that at the time the Master Plan was approved, the City Council directed that the development occur as an integrated

planned development. She confirmed that in the GR-3 zoning district, the permitted uses include single family homes, duplexes and a planned development.

In response to questions from Chairman Kehr, Mr. Witmer agreed to continue to consider opportunities to reduce the appearance of mass at the north end of the building. He stated that he is interested in pursuing the ideas offered by the Commissioners. He stated that he welcomes the various comments and as a result of the comments, the overall project has improved.

In response to questions from Chairman Kehr, Ms. Czerniak stated that the development is proposed as a planned development, not a special use. She stated that notice of the Plan Commission meeting was mailed out prior to each meeting to a mailing list that currently includes 103 addresses. She stated that the most recent meeting notice provided the date of both the Plan Commission meeting and the Historic Preservation Commission meeting. She explained that a vicinity map, site plan and an elevation are normally attached to the notice when it is mailed out, not the entire packet of information. She noted that because of the interest in this development, the City hosted an informal drop in session for those neighbors who have been most involved in the review of the project to date to allow the developer and neighbors to discuss the project. She acknowledged that the plans have evolved on an ongoing basis in response to input from the Commission and the public. She invited anyone who is not receiving direct mailed notices to contact her to be added to the mailing list. She added that information about the petition was also available on the website.

Chairman Kehr reiterated that anyone in attendance who is not receiving mailed notices about this petition should contact staff to be added to the mailing list.

In response to questions from Chairman Kehr, Ms. Czerniak reviewed that no more than a majority of a quorum, no more than two Commissioners, can have a discussion about a petition outside of the public forum. She stated that in her experience, Commissioners do not have discussions outside of the public forum and are careful to avoid Ex Parte contacts. She stated that staff works hard to remain neutral, even on projects such as this one and the redevelopment of the Western and Laurel Avenues site, where City owned property is involved. She stated that staff does not get pressure from the Mayor or City Council to move petitions in a certain direction. She acknowledged that in any petition, City staff works closely with the petitioner throughout the process and encourages modifications in response to comments offered. She acknowledged that State law allows the City Council to discuss the purchase or sale of City owned property in Executive Session and to keep the terms of a pending contract confidential. She confirmed that members of the Plan Commission are not privy to the Council's discussions in Executive Session. She confirmed that the Plan Commission's purview is land use, not the economics of a project. She confirmed that prior to any final consideration of the plan, and once a site plan is approved, a grading and drainage plan will be prepared for City review. She acknowledged that the Donovan's property is low

and that the grade change will need to be taken into account when the drainage plan is reviewed.

In response to questions from Commissioner Dixon, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that the Plan Commission's role at this time is to determine whether the plan as presented is consistent with the Master Plan. She noted that the planned development plat will be presented to the Commission for review after there is clear direction on the site plan.

Chairman Kehr invited rebuttal to public testimony from the petitioner.

Mr. Witmer stated that the process has been long and stated that they have made a sincere effort to actively participate in the process. He stated that good things have come out of the process. He stated that his intent is to create something special, units that buyers are interested in and a completed project. He stated that his hope is to get the construction of the overall project finished.

Chairman Kehr invited staff response to public testimony.

Ms. Czerniak encouraged neighbors to contact her if there is activity on the site prior to 7 a.m. She stated that she will follow up with the developer directly. She clarified that the alley has not yet been vacated. She stated that the vacation will happen concurrently with final approval of the third phase of the development.

In response to questions from Commissioner Dixon, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that the permitted construction hours also apply to garage pick up, deliveries and staging of equipment.

Chairman Kehr invited final Commission discussion and comment.

Commissioner Freeman stated that he has spent many years in service to the City as have other Commissioners and members of the City Council. He stated that the unpaid volunteers do not serve the City, but instead, serve the residents. He stated that in his opinion, the City is unique because of the service of so many volunteers. He reminded everyone of the vision that the City established for this area a number of years ago and of the unappealing development previously located in the area. He reiterated that the development site was comprised of many different parcels and noted that the phase one and two areas could have been redeveloped with three or four story office buildings. He noted that during the initial discussions about redevelopment of the area, the Council Chambers were full and many parties were engaged in the discussions. He noted that from those discussions came a vision for the incorporation of meaningful green space and walkability into the development. He noted that in response to public comment, the City made a commitment to the Library to provide additional parking spaces to replace the spaces previously located on the City property, behind the Historical Society. He noted his concern when the green space was reduced in size as a result of the changes that occurred

to the second phase. He stated that the Church, in the interest of the larger community, agreed to sell property to the developer and allow the lone single family house along the McKinley Road streetscape to be removed to achieve more symmetry along the streetscape. He stated that as a result, some accommodations were made to expand the green space to the east, on to the southern portion of the third phase, to still provide a meaningful green space. He stated that it was very clear that the Master Plan was not intended to specify the size, shape and location of the buildings. He stated that in his opinion, the plan has improved dramatically as a result of the process noting that views will be offered to and through the development to the Church, Library and the train station. He noted that the meaningful green space is now only achievable by shifting the building in the third phase to the north, while still retaining an architectural element at the east end of the road. He stated that during the discussions of the Master Plan, the Commission was concerned about the views from Westminster looking south to phase three of the development and was also concerned about compatibility with the neighborhood. He stated that there was concern about mass on the street noting that in the plan now presented, there is no longer a building proposed on the Westminster streetscape. He reviewed that in early discussions a row of townhomes was considered for the third phase, stretching from the green space on the south to Westminster. He stated that he finds nothing in the current plan that is inconsistent with the Master Plan. He stated that he has no reservations about the level of detail and thought that has gone into the project to date. He stated that he appreciates how the developer has worked with the Commission and been responsive. He stated that he did not envision a pocket park on Westminster but instead, envisioned a building much closer to Westminster than now proposed. He stated that he prefers the current plan to the previous versions with some further modification to the north end of the building to achieve a more residential appearance. He stated that the pocket park now proposed on Westminster comes with some tradeoffs. He stated that the idea that the City has done some back room deal is not rational. He noted that the prior approvals allowed up to 14 units in the third phase and about half of that number is proposed.

Commissioner Moorhead stated that in his opinion, the proposed development as presented does not track with the Master Plan which calls for a single family home or duplex at the north end of the third phase. He noted that the condominium building in the third phase appears to be shifting north and stated concern about its proximity to the home at 373 Westminster at 28 feet away from the house. He acknowledged that there is discussion in the Master Plan about meaningful open space, walkability, bicycle accommodations and slowing traffic. He noted that the green space has grown from that originally envisioned in the Master Plan and questioned whether too much emphasis has been put on the open space to the south of the building to the detriment of the Westminster streetscape and the neighbors. He noted that this project is adjacent to the Central Business District and should be developed with higher densities, with less emphasis on open space. He acknowledged that open space should be addressed in the City's plans but questioned how much open space is appropriate in this location. He stated that as

proposed, the green space is the back end of the buildings, between driveways and parking spaces. He reiterated that Section 156.076 (A) of the City Code requires that new development relate harmoniously to existing structures. He stated that in his opinion, the proposed building is not harmonious to the structures to the north and east. He stated that the building as proposed appears overbearing. He stated that the building is 37 to 42 feet tall and requires a height variance. He stated that a shadow study was requested by a neighbor and would be worthwhile. He stated that with the development as proposed, it would not be unreasonable to say that the values of adjacent properties may be affected. He noted that the Traffic Study that was done at the start of the project used data from 2012 and since then, updated data was released in 2017. He noted that since vast changes in traffic have occurred since the study was completed such as ride sharing services and increased delivery services, it may be worthwhile to update the study based on more current data.

Chairman Kehr noted that the traffic study compared traffic volumes from office uses on the site with residential uses and found that there would be a significant decrease with the proposed change in use. She noted that the study anticipated up to 30 residential units with 260 daily trips in comparison to 424 daily trips for office uses.

Commissioner Moorhead noted that there is a one way street off of McKinley Road and questioned where delivery trucks will park and what the volume of that traffic will be. He stated that although the site is intended to be considered a planned development, the parcels are zoned differently, O-1 and GR-3, mixing apples and oranges. He added that the GR-3 properties are also located in the historic district and are adjacent to single family homes. He stated that the proposed condominium building is not achieving an appropriate harmony. He stated that the Master Plan calls for the consideration of two, two and a half, and three story buildings, a variety of housing types and a single family home or a duplex on Westminster. He stated that he respects the fact that the Plan Commission has discussed this project over many months but noted that what he is hearing is that the project as envisioned by the Master Plan may not be economically viable. He stated that if the project as envisioned is not economically viable, it should not be built. He stated that if a project that is not conforming to the Master Plan is desired, perhaps the zoning on the property should be reconsidered and it should be removed from the historic district.

Chairman Kehr stated that a planned development is a zoning tool and was envisioned by the Council to be used in this situation to create an integrated development in this area. She agreed that the Commission is not focused on the economic viability of a project. She noted that various options were considered for the phase three parcel and dismissed for reasons related to land use and compatibility. She noted that townhomes were considered but involved extensive impervious surface, multiple garages and a building extending from the green

space on the south, out to Westminster on the north. She stated that the Plan Commission worked hard to get the green space.

Commissioner Freeman noted that because the property is in the historic district it provides more flexibility and greater opportunity for public review and control. He noted that the three office buildings that were located on the development site were not historic buildings. He stated that the Commission has worked to try to achieve a development consistent with what was envisioned and the availability of the adjacent City property offered the opportunity to achieve the long discussed vision. He stated that the Historical Society building was an historic building but was dilapidated and its removal provided the opportunity to consider comprehensive redevelopment of the area and, as a planned development, the opportunity for Plan Commission oversight. He noted that there are already condominium buildings located in the historic district. He stated his hope that the green space becomes valued community space because of the walkability of the development. He noted that the developer has worked to accommodate the various requests made throughout the process. He reviewed that the City Council authorized up to two buildings on the phase three parcel and up to 14 units as part of the Purchase/Sale Agreement. He stated that the current proposal reflects a compromise on the part of the developer with respect to the building and provides green space at both ends of the development. He stated that not developing the site disregards 30 years of planning and the goals of green space and interaction with the Library.

Commissioner Kehr stated that when residential density is added to an area, it is important to provide green space with sunlight. She noted that the configuration of the green space went through several iterations. She stated that it is natural to have a third building at the end of the street, creating a triad of buildings and a focal point at the end of the road. She noted that the developer went through several development schemes with duplexes of different sizes on the north end of the property. She stated that the plan now presented pays deference to the homes to the east and west. She stated that more thought is needed on how to buffer the property to the east and how to properly deal with drainage. She stated that as requested by the Commission, the developer has provided an initial landscape plan which helps to establish a buffer. She stated support for the green space at the north end of the development because it protects the Westminster streetscape. She noted that the previous concerns about the visibility of the parking ramp from Westminster have been addressed. She stated that in her opinion, the green space now proposed at the north end of the site improves the neighboring homes and serves as an amenity to the streetscape.

Commissioner Moorhead stated that in his mind, the first two phases are distinguished from the third phase in that they have frontage on McKinley Road and are zoned O-1, not the GR-3. He added that the phase three property is located in the historic district and noted that when the Historic Preservation Commission approved the demolition of the former Historic Society building, the property was not removed from the historic district. He re-stated that the Code requires that the

new development must relate harmoniously to adjacent structures. He stated that the mass of the proposed building as currently proposed impacts the adjacent neighborhood.

Commissioner Dixon stated that pushing the building to the south, into the green space, will result in the loss of the focal point of the building at the end of the road. He noted that the extent of the shift of the building to the north, to account for the green space is clearly illustrated in the graphic provided and is fairly consistent with the 2016 Master Plan. He noted that he has ridden his bicycle through the area since the 1970's noting that the amount of traffic that used to travel through the area will be reduced with the proposed development and the roads much improved. He agreed that deference needs to be paid to the neighbors and encouraged ongoing communication particularly about a landscape buffer. He stated that with the curb cut now off of the alley, the design is much improved. He stated appreciation for Commissioner Freeman's review of the past Plan Commission's discussions and the historical context he offered. He stated that a great deal of time has been spent on this project, by all parties. He stated that the project is improved, but acknowledged that there is more refinement needed adding that the Historic Preservation Commission review is still needed.

Chairman Kehr suggested that the Commission not forward the petition to the Historic Preservation Commission yet. She acknowledged that there are some who feel that the project is moving forward too fast. She stated that the massing and height of the building warrant further study and discussion. She added that she is sensitive to the fact that some members of the Commissioner were not involved in the earlier discussions. She noted that the Commission received a letter that encouraged a pocket park along the Westminster streetscape.

Commissioner Freeman noted that as now proposed, there is in effect a pocket park on Westminster versus a two story duplex building, with at grade garages and driveways. He commented that if phase three is developed with townhomes, underground parking would not be provided and each unit will have an at grade garage. He questioned whether a row of garages would be a preferable solution. He noted that a row of two story townhomes could result in a longer building and units that are not marketable.

Commissioner Dixon stated that in his opinion, a row of two story townhomes is less desirable adding that he is not sure such a project would be built and if so, may not sell.

Chairman Kehr recalled that in one of the earlier plans, a driveway along the east property line was considered to potentially serve garages for townhomes however, that was rejected due to the impact on the neighbors to the east.

In response to a question from Commissioner Moorhead about leaving the parcel vacant and planting grass, Commissioner Douglass noted that the property is on the market and there is a developer who wants to buy it for development purposes.

Commissioner Freeman added that the City has not designated the property as a park. He stated that the City has directed that the property be developed. He stated that leaving the parcel vacant is not the highest and best use. He stated that the City has made commitments based on past actions of the Commission.

Commissioner Dixon noted that the property has been vacant for 90 years and the Council has directed that it be developed as part of a larger, integrated development.

Commissioner Moorhead stated that he is not against the development but reiterated that the mass and height as proposed is not in keeping with the adjacent neighborhood. He encouraged further study in an effort to bring the height down and reduce the appearance of mass. He stated that he would be open to considering shifting the building to the south to improve the transition between the building and the neighboring home to the east.

Chairman Kehr reiterated that she is not prepared to forward the petition to the Historic Preservation Commission. She suggested that the Commission continue the petition to allow the developer to do some further study and make changes to reduce the appearance of mass.

Commissioner Douglass commented that he was pleasantly surprised to see the duplex building eliminated from the plan. He stated that in his opinion, it is a benefit that the duplex building is gone and a big step toward a compromise that benefits the neighbors. He stated that he is surprised to hear that some of the neighbors would prefer a two story home on the streetscape rather than green space. He stated that in his opinion, the project is headed in the right direction with a good site plan solution. He stated that the massing of the building needs some additional refinement and offered four suggestions that could help to make the north end of the building less blocky and more residential in appearance. He stated that instead of the two story element configured as a vertical mass, a mansard roof could be considered. Second, he suggested that the porch element could be refined to make it more transparent noting that the brick piers at the corners appear bulky. He suggested that consideration be given to replicating the scale of the porch at the south end of the building, with columns to achieve a more residential scale. He suggested that the third floor could be scaled back slightly, pulling the mansard roof back. And finally, he agreed with Commissioner Moorhead that perhaps the green space at the south end of the development could be reduced slightly to allow the building to be shifted south, increasing the distance between the building and the neighbor to the east. He stated that the green space at the east end of the second phase is only slightly smaller than the green space reflected in the Master Plan. He stated that if the building is shifted south, the focal point can be adjusted. He

stated that all of the refinements together will serve to present less mass on the Westminster streetscape. He stated that in his opinion, the project has made great strides and is moving in a good direction.

Commissioner Freeman stated that the suggestions offered by Commissioner Douglass are helpful. He stated that reducing the size of the green space on the south works against some of the broader community interests but acknowledged that a slight reduction may be acceptable if it allows a more gradual transition as the building steps down to the north. He questioned whether aligning the driveways to the underground garages across the alley would present a safety issue. He noted the importance of the green space on the south as the Library evolves increasingly into a community space. He noted that although the front yard of the Library is a wonderful space, the slope makes the area unusable for events.

Commissioner Dixon stated that if the Commission continues the petition, it will be important to provide clear direction to the petitioner.

Chairman Kehr commented that Commissioner Douglass offered some interesting suggestions. She summarized noting that there seems to be agreement that concerns remain about the mass of the building and the need for appropriate landscaping to provide a buffer for the neighboring homes. She suggested that the developer focus on scaling back the building and making architectural refinements to the porch and rooflines.

Commissioner Moorhead said that the suggestions offered by Commissioner Douglass are good starting points.

Commissioner Freeman stated that he is interested in seeing refinements to the site plan and elevations based on the comments offered. He stated that he does not support reducing the green space unless it is minor.

Commissioner Douglass stated that a shadow study at the north end of the building would be helpful.

Commissioner Moorhead stated that he is interested in seeing consideration given to reducing the green space at the south end of the building for the purpose of reducing the impact of the building on the neighbors to the east and on the Westminster streetscape. He reiterated that the property marks the beginning of the historic district.

Chairman Kehr summarized that there are mixed opinions on the Commission with respect to whether or not to reduce the size of the open space at the south end of the building. She invited a motion to continue consideration of the petition.

Commissioner Freeman made a motion to continue consideration of the petition to December 11<sup>th</sup>.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dixon. He encouraged the neighbors to reach out to the developer with questions and comments and encouraged dialogue between all parties.

Chairman Kehr asked to see the image of the green space in relation to the Greensward in Market Square at the next meeting.

Commissioner Freeman invited input from the Library on the size of the green space prior to the next meeting.

The motion was seconded by Dixon and approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

**5. Information Only: Comprehensive Plan Update -- Introduction and distribution of the draft of the Route 60 Entrance Corridor Chapter.**

At the request of Chairman Kehr, Ms. Czerniak distributed a copy of the draft update to the Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan that speaks to the Route 60 Entrance Corridor area. She stated that a presentation of the draft will be made at a future meeting. She stated that the draft is being distributed to the Commission to allow time for review. She added that the draft is also available on the City's website.

**6. Additional public comment on non-agenda items**

There was no testimony presented on non-agenda items.

**7. Additional information from staff.**

Chairman Kehr noted that the meeting calendar for the Plan Commission meetings in 2020 was distributed. She noted that since two members of the Commission are absent, action on the calendar will be deferred until the next meeting. She asked the Commissioners to inform staff of any conflicts with the schedule so that as appropriate, revisions can be made.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Czerniak  
Director of Community Development