

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
PLAN COMMISSION

BOARD MEMBERS

Val Gomez, President
Anthony Serna, Vice President
Lilia Ramos, Secretary
Joanne Moricz, Commissioner
Chanthini Fowler, Commissioner
Douglass Sloss, Commissioner
William Allen, Commissioner
Lydia Lopez, Commissioner
Stacy Winfield, Commissioner

Regular Meeting Minutes
(Via Zoom Videoconference)
Wednesday, September 1, 2021 @ 4:30 p.m.

Reported for Fissinger & Associates
By: Lisa Pena

CALL TO ORDER: 4:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present in Chambers: Val Gomez, Anthony Serna,
Lilia Ramos, William Allen

Present Via Zoom: Joanne Moricz, Chanthini
Fowler, Douglass Sloss, Lydia Lopez, Stacy
Winfield

STAFF: Present in Chambers: Richard Morrisroe, Douglas
Powers, Ateria Allen

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Regular Meeting of Monday,
August 16, 2021

Comments/Questions: None

Motion to approve August 16, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes
made by Lilia Ramos. Second by Anthony Serna.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

NEW BUSINESS:

1 City Planner's Report:

2 MR. GOMEZ: We'll move on to New Business. We have the
3 City Planner's Report. We have three items. First one is
4 Site Plan for 4600 Indianapolis Boulevard. Mr. Powers.

5 MR. POWERS: Thank you, Commissioners. So this is Site
6 Plan for 4600 Indianapolis Boulevard. This was presented in
7 front of the Technical Review Committee which all the
8 necessary technical revisions have been made. This is the
9 end plan that was submitted.

10 So as you can see here they're proposing a Dunkin
11 Donuts. And the petitioner and his associate are here as
12 well.

13 I'll be more than happy to entertain any questions
14 related to the Site Plan. If you have any questions for
15 them, I am sure they'll be more than happy to speak too.

16 MR. GOMEZ: The zoning clearance issue, that's been
17 cleared up then?

18 MR. POWERS: Yes, it has. That was cleared up at the
19 previous meeting, yes.

20 MR. GOMEZ: I just wanted to get that on the record.
21 Are there any questions from our Commissioners? Any
22 questions? We have the gentlemen for the contract here.

23 MR. MORRISROE: Where are the walkup people, where do
24 they come where they're walking?

25 MR. PATEL: So the front of the building that's facing
Indianapolis Boulevard there will be a window right up here.

MR. GOMEZ: Can you please --

MR. PATEL: Sure. So if you're looking at the drawing
at Indianapolis Boulevard -- sorry. Can you hear me?

MR. POWERS: Can you give your name?

MR. PATEL: Yes. My name is Chintan Patel, Sam. I'm
the Dunkin franchisee and owner of this project.

So if you're looking at the drawing of Indianapolis
Boulevard, there's this concrete pad right here. There's
going to be seating areas and there's going to be a window up

1 here for walkup welcoming guests to come.

2 MR. MORRISROE: But it's not on the plan right now?

3 MR. PATEL: It is.

4 MR. GOMEZ: You can see it right there.

5 MR. SERNA: Where it says decorative rail.

6 MR. PATEL: It says order pickup window. Do you see it?

7 MR. MORRISROE: That's the pedestrian pickup window. I
8 see it. Thank you.

9 MR. GOMEZ: If we grant approval, how soon would the
10 project start?

11 MR. PATEL: I'm sorry.

12 MR. GOMEZ: How soon would the project start?

13 MR. PATEL: So my general contractor is licensed and
14 approved in East Chicago. So he said it would take him a
15 week and a half to mobilize troops. And we can break ground
16 as early as two weeks.

17 MR. GOMEZ: How long would it take to complete?

18 MR. PATEL: We're ballpark talking about three months.

19 MR. GOMEZ: Three months?

20 MR. PATEL: Three months, yeah.

21 MR. GOMEZ: Are there any other questions or comments?

22 MS. RAMOS: I have a question. So then it's a walkup.
23 You can't get into the actual store and buy coffee?

24 MR. PATEL: No. You cannot go. It's a drivethrough
25 only facility with a walkup window.

MS. WINFIELD: Excuse me. I have a question. Is the
walkup window only due to Covid or will it eventually open up
where you go in?

MR. PATEL: No. This project is only walkup or
drivethrough only.

1 Dunkin is now geared towards drivethrough only
2 building businesses rather than seat-in.

3 I own the one down the street as well on Calumet
4 and Chicago. That one was a full facility there. We have
5 dine in and everything.

6 MS. WINFIELD: (Inaudible).

7 MR. PATEL: I'm sorry. You broke up.

8 MR. GOMEZ: Please repeat your question because you
9 broke up a little bit.

10 MS. WINFIELD: I am sorry. It froze on me.

11 MR. DOUGLAS: It froze. So she didn't hear you asking
12 her to repeat.

13 MR. PATEL: I am sorry. I didn't hear your question.

14 MR. GOMEZ: Is that Stacy?

15 MR. POWERS: It is.

16 MR. GOMEZ: Stacy, can you repeat your question please?

17 MS. WINFIELD: What are you saying? You froze on me.

18 MR. POWERS: Can you repeat your question?

19 MR. GOMEZ: Can you repeat your question?

20 MS. WINFIELD: I said how many in Northwest Indiana do
21 you have that's just a walkup? I see the one in the Harbor
22 is just a small area you can go in. But is there any other
23 along here that's just a walkup window?

24 MR. PATEL: Yeah. So this is quite a new thing for
25 Dunkin. There's already a couple of them in the works
already in Indiana.

 I believe there's one that's coming in Hobart.
There is a franchisee named Herish (phonetic). He is the one
that owns the Whiting Dunkin. He is opening a few of them.

 There's also one on Glenwood Dyer Road that's next
to our other Dunkin that's also going to be a drivethrough
only building.

1 The majority of our customers are drivethrough
2 based. Our drivethrough to front counter ratio is probably
3 90 to 10 percent. 90 percent of our customers go through
4 drivethrough.

5 MR. GOMEZ: I noticed that.

6 MR. PATEL: That's why if you look at the plan we see we
7 have a large stack of cars that we can service and get in and
8 out rapidly.

9 MR. ALLEN: She had also asked if this was related to
10 Covid.

11 MR. PATEL: No. It's not related to Covid.

12 MR. ALLEN: It's not related to Covid?

13 MR. PATEL: No. This is one of the new Dunkin models
14 that Dunkin is going with. And I believe Starbucks is doing
15 the same thing.

16 I am not sure if McDonald's will follow or not.
17 But Dunkin and Starbucks are doing this model now.

18 MS. WINFIELD: Thank you.

19 MR. PATEL: You're welcome. Thank you.

20 MS. RAMOS: I have one more question. How many parking
21 spots will there be for those that do walk up?

22 MR. PATEL: Right now if you look at the drawing we have
23 five plus ADA accessible parking spot. Plus there's going to
24 be parking all along the other property on the Magoun. It's
25 not shown on this plan.

 MR. GOMEZ: It's the other half of the parking lot.

 MR. PATEL: So if you look on the Magoun where the
entrance is where the cars enter, there's a curb cut right
there. You can keep going.

 MR. ALLEN: There will be public parking?

 MR. PATEL: Public parking. We're in the middle of -- I
am not sure.

 MR. POWERS: Do you want me to speak?

1 MR. PATEL: Yeah.

2 MR. POWERS: Thank you, Commissioners. So just to
3 clarify the parking that's listed on here, this does meet the
4 minimum parking requirements per the amount of staff that
they have. And it doesn't necessarily intend that parking to
be used for pedestrians. However they could use that.

5 It's assumed that people who are driving
6 automobiles are more likely to use the drivethrough than park
and walk up to the window.

7 However there is also parking. There has been a
8 parking lot on the other side west of this property, the
Magoun property. So there is potential there.

9 And one of the reasons I am assuming that this is
10 primarily intended for pedestrian and the drivethrough is
because the minimum size requirements.

11 They would not be able to fit a larger Dunkin
12 Donuts on this property and be able to meet those
requirements. They would have to procure a larger property
or locate it elsewhere.

13 MR. GOMEZ: Is that the correct address 4600
14 Indianapolis?

15 MR. PATEL: Yes.

16 MR. POWERS: Yes. That is the correct address.

17 MR. GOMEZ: Any other questions or comments?

18 Comments/Questions: None.

19 Motion to approve Dunkin Donuts, 4600 Indianapolis Boulevard,
20 Site Plan made by Anthony Serna. Second by William Allen.

21 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

22 MR. GOMEZ: Thank you.

23 MR. PATEL: Thank you to all the Members here. We
24 appreciate it.

25 MR. GOMEZ: Good luck.

1 MR. PATEL: Thank you.

2 MR. GOMEZ: Next on our agenda we have Resolution Number
3 01-2021. This is for the Lakefront Economic Development
4 Area. Along with this we have the Redevelopment Resolution.
5 Mr. Powers.

6 MR. POWERS: Yes, Commissioners. So this is associated
7 with as it mentions the Lakefront Economic Development Area.
8 This is the amendment to the current existing TIF allocation
9 that's out there.

10 I do believe that we have Karl Cender and William
11 Marsh here in the crowd with us too that may have some
12 additional information associated with this. However I'm
13 more than happy to field any particular questions we may have
14 associated with this resolution that was passed by the
15 Redevelopment Commission.

16 And today we're here to look at the written
17 findings in regards to what it is that they proposed or
18 passed at that meeting.

19 MR. GOMEZ: So we give approval. Redevelopment had
20 their actions. And we have our actions. Then it will go to
21 the Council, right?

22 MR. POWERS: That is correct. So we would make written
23 findings that would be presented to the Common Council at
24 which time they will make the determination.

25 MR. GOMEZ: Are there any questions or comments from the
Commissioners?

MS. WINFIELD: Yes, I do, Mr. President. At this time
you said this is just a Resolution? You're going in and out.

MR. GOMEZ: We have the Resolution that Redevelopment
passed. And then we have the Plan Commission Order. That
should be in your packet, Order Number 01-2021. Then from
here it will go to the Common Council for approval.

MR. POWERS: So the job today is to help prepare with
these written findings that will presented to the Common
Council so they can make a better informed decision in
regards to this proposed Resolution and whether it should or
should not be granted.

MS. WINFIELD: Okay.

1 MR. GOMEZ: Mr. Cender, would you like to give a few
comments?

2 MR. CENDER: Sure. Thank you, Mr. Gomez. Karl Cender,
3 Financial Adviser to the Redevelopment Commission as well as
to Mr. Marsh on this project.

4 This project involves Mr. Marsh wanting to develop
5 10 acres on his property site around 3600 Michigan Avenue.
And it's going to include a rail area so that freight and
6 other items can be loaded and unloaded off of railcars on the
tracks.

7 So what the Redevelopment Commission has done is
8 pass their amended declaratory to create a third allocation
area from the original Lakefront.

9 And this is just specific to his 10 acres here. I
10 believe it's around 10 acres approximately. So he can do his
rail project.

11 This is at the request of the City Administration
12 that we create a separate allocation area specifically for
this project.

13 So the Redevelopment Commission on July 20 approved
14 the amended declaratory. So with that it's before you with
the Plan Commission Order.

15 And the findings basically are that the Order says,
16 just real quickly, that the Amendment to the Declaratory
Resolution and Redevelopment Plan for the area conforms to
17 the Comprehensive Plan of Development for the City and that
the Mandatory Resolution of Plan are in respect ratifying and
18 confirm.

19 And that Number 3, no residents of the area will be
20 displaced by establishment of this allocation area, Number 3.
And the Resolution constitutes a written Order of the Plan
Commission approving this Amended Declaratory Resolution.

21 So basically we're here just to seek your approval
22 that we're not changing any of the zoning requirements or
anything. It's just to create an allocation area from an
23 exiting allocation area as a separate one.

24 MR. GOMEZ: The bond results stay the same? There's
nothing different.

25

1 MR. CENDER: Right. This Number 3, it's not an
2 expansion of the original Lakefront. It's just taking this
3 10 acres and creating its own separate allocation area from
4 the original Lakefront allocation area.

5 MR. GOMEZ: I'm glad you mentioned all that because I
6 would have had to read it. Saved me the trouble of reading
7 this.

8 Are there any questions or comments on Plan
9 Commission Order Number 01-2021?

10 MS. WINFIELD: Mr. President, am I able to call him
11 because I've been freezing. So I kind of really missed the
12 whole presentation he just made.

13 And I believe I froze right now. Can you hear me?

14 MR. ALLEN: We can hear you.

15 MR. GOMEZ: Stacy, we can't really hear you again. Can
16 you repeat --

17 MS. WINFIELD: Can you hear me? Can you hear me now?

18 MR. GOMEZ: I can hear you now. Can you repeat the
19 question?

20 MS. WINFIELD: Can I call him? Can I get a number from
21 Ateria to call him because I kind of missed the presentation?

22 MR. POWERS: That's Stacy Winfield. She's asking if she
23 can contact for this information since she's missing it.

24 MR. CENDER: Sure.

25 MR. GOMEZ: We can give Mr. Cender your e-mail address.

MS. WINFIELD: Thank you.

MR. GOMEZ: Ateria, if you can do that after the
meeting.

MR. CENDER: I'll be happy to answer any questions of
the Commission Members here. And as you mentioned,
Mr. Gomez, assuming it gets approved today it will go before
the Common Council. And they'll have another opportunity to
ask questions as well.

1 MR. GOMEZ: Are there any other questions or comments?

2 Comments/Questions: None.

3 Motion to approve Resolution 01-2021 Lakefront Economic
4 Development Area made by Anthony Serna. Second by William
Allen.

5 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
6 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

7 MR. GOMEZ: Thank you.

8 MR. CENDER: Thank you.

9 MR. MARSH: Can I say something?

10 MR. GOMEZ: Sure.

11 MR. MARSH: Thanks. I'll make it quick because we all
12 have dinner to go home to. But I just want to say thank you
to all of you.

13 We moved here in 2014 with a steel operation. We
14 came here because the Midwest is the heart of Industrial
America. I'm a huge believer in American Manufacturing. And
15 I want to see it return. I was looking for a home that would
be supportive to our company, our workers, our industry.

16 Since we moved in our steel company has done well.
17 We've expanded operations to sort of an industrial real
estate operation. And now we're moving to start a rail
operation.

18 The City has been nothing but supportive. And
19 without you, without your partnership it would be impossible.
And I'm grateful. And I recognize that. And I commit to you
20 that I'll be the best steward that I can. I'll be a good
community member.

21 But I thank each and every one of you for being our
partner.

22 MR. GOMEZ: Thank you.

23 MR. MARSH: And I've got a gift from our chickens and
24 our plum trees. I normally try to bring something.

25 It's productive land. We try to make our

1 industrial real estate also very friendly and productive for
2 other things.

3 So we've got some eggs that were laid today and
4 some plums that are going to be a little bit tart. Let them
5 ripen up a little bit. But they're here for the taking.

6 MR. GOMEZ: Thank you. Are you planting more trees
7 along the front there?

8 MR. MARSH: We are.

9 MR. GOMEZ: I drove by. I seen that they're planting
10 more.

11 MR. MARSH: Fall is a great time to plant. So we're
12 planting some more.

13 MR. GOMEZ: What is that on the end? It looks like a
14 big pond or something.

15 MR. MARSH: It's a pond. We're going to try to get a
16 pump and fill the pond. And then we're going to fill the
17 pond with fish.

18 So we're bringing a little bit more life. Because
19 then when you get fish, you've got the birds coming in. When
20 you get the birds coming in, we'll plant a big tree.

21 You can see there's an island in the middle. Next
22 tree on the island we'll put some lights on the tree. Then
23 it's going to look really nice. That's the plan.

24 MR. GOMEZ: I live on Grand and I drive by there coming
25 to work. And I always see that. I was wondering. It looked
like a big pond.

MR. MARSH: Come on in when you drive by, please. I
mean every one of you are welcome. We'd love to have you
come in.

MR. GOMEZ: Thank you.

MR. MARSH: Thank you.

MR. GOMEZ: Next item on our agenda is Dumpster
Screening Ordinance. Mr. Powers.

MR. POWERS: Thank you, Commissioners. I think this

1 actually is a pretty good time to present this because as the
2 most recent application it mentions landscaping issues.

3 Well, in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan it was
4 mentioned about how there is additional need for landscaping
5 and buffering requirements that could be enforced if they're
6 adopted into the Zoning Ordinance.

7 So today, Commissioners, what I'm presenting you
8 with is a draft proposal in regards to potential dumpster
9 screening requirements for new and future development. So
10 this way any new developer could be held to these boundaries.

11 Looking forward to any feedback you have and also
12 seeking your approval if you have no feedback.

13 MR. GOMEZ: So this would be some action from the Plan
14 Commission?

15 MR. POWERS: So this is being presented to you today
16 because this would affect the rules and procedures in regards
17 to any proposed development as required by them.

18 If this was approved by the Plan Commission, then
19 it would have to go in front of the Common Council to request
20 an amendment to the existing Zoning Ordinance to allow for
21 this to be enforced with future development plans to be
22 processed by the Planning Commission.

23 MR. GOMEZ: So our action, once we approve it then it
24 goes to the Council. And the Council will amend the
25 Ordinance.

MR. POWERS: That is correct.

MR. GOMEZ: Are there any other questions or comments on
the Dumpster Screening Ordinance?

MR. SERNA: Yes, sir, Mr. President. Mr. Powers, just a
question. Would the Council or is it something you would do
as far as enforcement?

In looking at A-1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 is it normally
that you would put an enforcement or fines or penalties,
enforcement or penalty in here or is that something that is
added later on?

Just asking because like any ordinance or like any
rule if it's broken what are the consequences?

1 MR. POWERS: That's a good question. Actually today
2 what this lines with is the Development Plan.

3 So how our rules and procedures work is if someone
4 is proposing a new development they have to meet our
5 Development Plan Requirements.

6 That is the reason that the Technical Review
7 Committee is in place because we will go through and verify
8 those technical aspects of the Development Plan.

9 Once it's gotten technical approval that everything
10 is all right then the Plan Commission, you have the
11 determination on any other factors that you see that may or
12 may not be in line with the Development Plan Requirements as
13 to whether this should or should not be approved.

14 So this will allow from the Technical Review
15 standpoint for us to say that if these drawings are in
16 compliance or not. If they do not meet these screening
17 requirements, their drawings would not be able to be
18 approved.

19 Though it is possible if Code Enforcement was to go
20 out and enforce if they did not maintain these standards, the
21 only thing that's mentioned here after the development is for
22 example if they didn't have a gate. If the gate was removed,
23 that could potentially be a Code Enforcement issue.

24 But the real issue that we tend to face is it's
25 very difficult to address social factors as in how people
26 handle their waste and whether they close the dumpsters.

27 But when it comes to a development standpoint, it's
28 stating, hey, you need to screen this so that way seagulls
29 are less likely to pick trash out and bring it into the
30 neighboring properties and we have all kinds of nuisances
31 because it's difficult to address that social factor through
32 enforcement issues.

33 MR. SERNA: Thank you. Thank you for the explanation.

34 MR. GOMEZ: Any other questions or comments?

35 Comments/Questions: None.

1 Motion to approve Dumpster Screen Ordinance made by Anthony
Serna. Second by Lilia Ramos.

2 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
3 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

4 OLD BUSINESS: None.

5 COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS:

6 MR. GOMEZ: Are there any other comments from the
Commissioners?

7
8 MS. WINFIELD: Yes. Mr. President, yes. I know
Mr. Morrisroe is not there, is he?

9 MR. MORRISROE: Yes, I am.

10 MR. GOMEZ: Yes, he is.

11 MS. WINFIELD: I just want to say the gas station on
12 Chicago and Euclid, I have received several complaints that
they're not allowing people to use their restrooms.

13 I've had older people that had went into that gas
14 station and have tried to go to the restroom. And the
gentleman would say that the restroom is out of order. Then
15 I've had other residents go behind them and go in. And the
bathroom is not out of order.

16 I don't know what's going on with that, a gas
17 station that he don't want to allow the residents to use the
restroom.

18 I was going to take a ride over there myself to
19 see. But if someone could address him with that issue? I've
received several complaints about that.

20 MR. MORRISROE: We should have Code Enforcement check.

21 MR. GOMEZ: Is that something Code Enforcement could
22 look into?

23 MR. POWERS: Yeah. Code Enforcement can look into that.
It is a private business. However they can certainly look
24 into that and see if there's something that can be addressed.

25 MS. WINFIELD: I don't know what's the issue. Well, I
guess I will e-mail Sandra because I can't speak to Code

1 Enforcement. That's why I am bringing it to the
Commissioners.

2
3 As a council-person we're not allowed to call Code
Enforcement. I have to call the Chief of Staff.

4 But I'll bring it to the Commission since this
5 Commission approved for that gas station. And I'm constantly
receiving complaints about it.

6 And the restrooms are not actually closed. They're
7 just not allowing the residents to use the restroom.

8 MR. POWERS: You've made that a part of the record. I
9 have no issue looking into this. And we'll let you know what
I am able to find out.

10 MS. WINFIELD: Thank you.

11 MR. POWERS: You're welcome.

12 MR. GOMEZ: Any other comments from the Commissioners?

13 PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

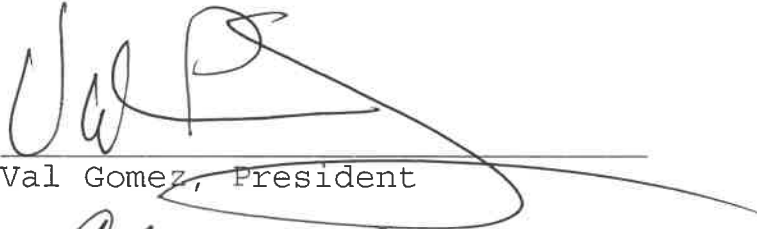
14 * Next Regular Meeting Date: Monday, September 20,
2021 @ 4:30 p.m.

15 Motion to adjourn was made by Anthony Serna. Second by
16 William Allen.

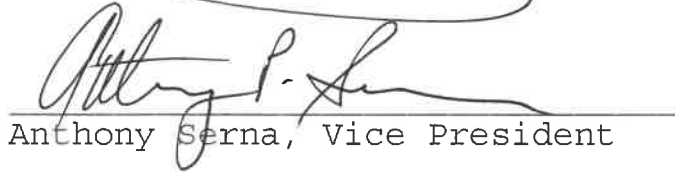
17 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
18 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

19 * Meeting ended at 4:59 p.m.
20
21
22
23
24
25

Approval of Meeting Minutes of
Wednesday, September 1, 2021
Approved and Signed September 20, 2021



Val Gomez, President



Anthony Serna, Vice President

Lilia Ramos / Zoom

Lilia Ramos, Secretary

Joanne Moricz / Zoom

Joanne Moricz, Commissioner

Stacy Winfield / Zoom

Stacy Winfield, Commissioner

Douglass Sloss / Zoom

Douglass Sloss, Commissioner



William Allen, Commissioner

Lydia Lopez / Zoom

Lydia Lopez, Commissioner

Chanthini Fowler / Zoom

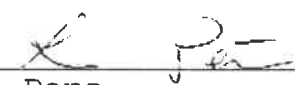
Chanthini Fowler, Commissioner

C E R T I F I C A T E

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

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

Dated at Portage, Indiana, this 16th day of September, 2021.



Lisa Pena
Notary Public Porter County
Certified Shorthand Reporter
License Number 084-003483

