

MEETING: Site Review Committee **LOCATION:** City Hall
SUBJECT: Porter County Library Garden **DATE:** March 3, 2020
ADDRESS: 106 Jefferson Street
PRELIMINARY SITE REVIEW

IN ATTENDANCE:

Beth Shrader, Planning Director
(219) 462-1161 / bshrader@valpo.us
Carley Lemmon, Asst. Planner
(219) 462-1161 / clemmon@valpo.us
Vicki Thrasher, Building Commissioner
(219) 462-1161 / vthrasher@valpo.us
Mike Jabo, Engineering Director
(219) 462-1161 / mjabo@valpo.us
Mingyan Zhou, Engineering Dept.
(219) 462-1161 / mzhou@valpo.us
Bill Laird, Engineering Department
(219) 462-0016 / blaird@valpo.us
Nate McGinley, Water Dept.
(219) 462-6174 / nmcginley@valpo.us
Paul Scott, Water Reclamation Dept.
(219) 464-4973 / pscott@valpo.us
Tony Fahel, Water Reclamation Dept.
(219) 464-4973 / tfahel@valpo.us
Brent Dickson, Public Works Dept.
(219) 462-4612 / bdickson@valpo.us
Samantha Camp, Legal Dept.
(219) 462-1161 / scamp@valpo.us

PRESENTERS:

Andrew Moats, Shive-Hattery
(219) 476-1400 / amoats@shive-hattery.com
Jesse Butz, Porter County Library Director
jbutz@pcpls.org
Stu Summers, Redevelopment Commission
(219)462-1161 / ssummers@valpo.us

The following is a summary of discussion at this meeting.

OPENING: The Site Review Committee met to discuss the proposed Porter County Library Garden to be located at 106 Jefferson Street. Lemmon stated that site review is not an approval. Rather, it is a preliminary discussion of the requirements and issues to be considered by the developer or owner. It is possible it will need to come back before site review or to seek other approvals.

EXPLANATION OF PROJECT: Moats indicated that this site is the old Chase Bank drive-thru and it is located on the southeast side of the Porter County Library. The property will be used for a children's reading garden. Moats said they are going through the design process for the parcel. The drive-thru window and all affiliated parking will be removed. Butz mentioned this will be an outdoor gathering space, as well as an offsite programming opportunity space for the

library. It will be designed as a self-guided garden area for experiencing literacy, the outdoors and relaxing an engaging. During library hours, it will also be an offsite area for the library to conduct their programming needs for children and adults. This spot can be used as an event space to connect with other community organizations. Moats said there are several elements within the area that will need to be reviewed. There will be a 4-ft. fence around the perimeter for security purposes. There will be a gateway on the northeast side, and it is integrated with a Valparaiso Rotary project. The gateway on the east side along Michigan will be used to allow a food truck to be off the road and the sidewalk to supply an event. The slab will be thick enough to support a truck that is unloading or supporting an event. The walkways are all impervious. The turf in the middle will be natural grass. Natural landscaping will be used for the perimeter and there will be water features that run within it. Moats pointed out that on the last page of the plans there is inspirational imagery of items that might be placed around the garden. Moats mentioned that drawings should be completed within the next two weeks. The demolition package has been completed. The landscape and improvement packages are almost complete. Packages will go out to bid. Construction will begin as soon as the bidding and permitting processes allow. Moats said they are looking to complete the project sometime this fall.

STAFF COMMENTS:

SCOTT: The Water Reclamation Department is interested in what is being discharged into the sewer system. Scott asked if there will be any storm drains in the park area. Moats said there will probably be some drains, but he has not seen the plans yet. However, they will collect water and make sure it is retained before it enters the sewer system. They may retain a little water in a bio-swale. The natural flow is southwest to the northeast. Scott requested a copy of the plans. Moats mentioned that approximately 80% of the paving is pervious.

MCGINLEY: McGinley presented a drawing that showed three (3) sewer taps. McGinley pointed out the active sewer and which line needs to be capped off during demolition. McGinley also presented a drawing showing the water mains in the area. The water service comes off Jefferson Street and that it will be the line to tap into if an irrigation pit or a water service is required. Contacting Mark Geskey for a water service will be necessary. His contact information is mgeskey@valpo.us or 462-6174.

ZHOU: Zhou asked if the drive entrance off Jefferson Street and within the project parcel will be removed. Moats said the drive will be kept. The project will not go all the way to the to the parcel line. Zhou pointed out that other businesses south of this site also use the drive. Zhou asked if the entrance for the existing drive-thru off Michigan Avenue will be removed. Moats said this area

will be redone because the current grade does not work for this project. Zhou asked if the sidewalk and curb ramp at the Jefferson Street/Michigan Avenue corner will be redone. Zhou conveyed that if they are considering redoing the area, the ADA detectable warning plate must be yellow. Submittal of a detailed site plan showing proposed work including grading and drainage is required. A Site Permit from the Engineering Department covering erosion control and right-of-way cut is required.

LAIRD: Laird asked what type of outlet, if any, will be used in the bio-swale. Moats stated that he does not know but will find out. Summers believes the bio-swale will be dry and collect water during a rain event. It will drain to the northeast.

JABO: The plans will need to show drainage. We do not want a point source. There should be a level spreading across the lot. Moats mentioned that he will try to provide a grading plan as soon as possible. Jabo asked about the sidewalk and curb around the site. Moats showed Jabo a plan and explained where the sidewalk and the curb would be installed. Zhou mentioned the City standard for sidewalk width is 5 ft. Jabo asked how people will cross the street. Butz explained that at one time there was a stop sign and he hopes consideration will be given to installing a stop sign. Jabo asked if Butz wanted to appear before Traffic and Safety. Jabo said he will add Butz to the agenda for the meeting this month.

DICKSON: Most of the questions and concerns Dickson had have been covered. The plans call out a “possible pedestrian yield cross walk sign”. Dickson asked if this is an item they have not yet decided to install. Butz said if Traffic and Safety denies the stop sign the yield sign would be an alternative. He presented this idea the last time he appeared before Traffic and Safety. If they have to use the yield sign, he would then need to have librarians act as crossing guards. Dickson mentioned that standard signs are available at Public Works.

LEMMON: The property is zoned CBD, Central Business District. The Planning Department will need to look into the fencing and gates concerning heights. Lemmon mentioned that they will need to be mindful of the site distance requirement on the alleyways as well as the intersection of Jefferson and Michigan. Referring to Article 8, Section 8.215 of the Unified Development Ordinance will be necessary. Lemmon asked how large the storage shed on the southeast side will be. Moats said it will be a standard size. Butz said it will need to be large enough to store tables and 200 chairs for potential parties. The back half will hold irrigation controls. Lemmon asked if the area for food trucks will be gated on the inside or covered. Moats said it will just be a gated entry point. Lemmon asked if the existing drive will be used or will a new drive be created. Summers said they will be slimming down the existing drive. Lemmon asked if

electrical hookups will be provided for the food trucks. Summers said they may consider electrical hookups. Lemmon asked how big the portable bathroom will be. It will be a typical porta potty and only used for events. During library business hours patrons will use the restroom facilities at the library. Submittal of a Landscape Plan is necessary. Lemmon asked if there will be any lighting other than the string lighting. Moats said there will be controlled lighting for pathways. They do not want overhead lighting. Lemmon requested submittal of a Photometric Plan. A Zoning Clearance will be required. Summers asked if there is a height restriction for the gate. Lemmon said this is the portion Planning needs to investigate a little more. Moats said the gate is approximately 13 ft. high. Lemmon asked for a copy of the updated plans.

SHRADER: This is a gorgeous project and it will be great for downtown. As mentioned, there is not an easy category for the project to fit into the existing code. Further discussion will be required. The alley is marked as public. The drive is private because it was vacated. Summers said there is an easement of record. Shrader said there appears to be a 12-ft. drive that will still belong to the Chase Bank parking lot. Thrasher interjected this will be part of the permit submittal. Zhou requested a copy of the easement for our records.

THRASHER: A Demolition Permit for the Chase building is required. A Site Permit will be required to cap off the sewer as part of the demolition process. A Building Permit for the new park area is required. A detailed set of plans must be submitted. All contractors working on the project must be registered with the City. Thrasher is assuming that part of the gate will be considered a sign and a separate permit will be required. Summers interjected that this is a structure and needs further discussion. Thrasher said the gate does advertising and there is a sign component. The Planning Department needs to discuss this and provide information.

ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED:

Landscaping Plan
Erosion Control Plan
Detailed Site Plan
Site Improvement Permit
Submit Plan Showing Drains (Water Reclamation)
Building Permit
Demolition Permit
Contractors Registered with the City
Signage/Fencing Permit
Photometric Plan
Email Copy of Updated Plans (Lemmon)

Zoning Clearance
Provide Copy of Easement