



Town of Vienna

Charles A. Robinson Jr.
Town Hall
127 Center Street South
Vienna VA, 22180

Meeting Minutes Town Council Work Session

Monday, August 20, 2018

7:00 PM

Charles A. Robinson, Jr. Town Hall, 127
Center Street, South

1. Regular Business

Present:

*Mayor Laurie A. DiRocco
Council Member Tara L. Bloch
Council Member Linda J. Colbert
Council Member Pasha M. Majdi
Council Member Carey J. Sienicki
Council Member Howard J. Springsteen*

*Council Member Douglas E. Noble participated via speaker phone from
Minneapolis, Minnesota*

Staff present:

*Mercury T. Payton, Town Manager
Cindy Petkac, Director of Planning and Zoning
Michael D'Orazio, Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning
Carol S. Waters, Legislative, Deputy Town Clerk*

[18-977](#)

Proposed MAC project for Sunrise Assisted Living at 100-110 Maple Avenue East

Attachments: [Sunrise Development Project 2018](#)

Town Manager Mercury Payton opened the joint work session with the Planning Commission and Town Council at about 7:00 p.m. in the main Council Chambers of Town Hall in Vienna, Virginia. They were to hear a proposal from Sunrise Assisted Living for new construction which would fit the zoning parameters of the MAC (Maple Avenue Commercial Zone).

Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning Michael D'Orazio noted that the proposed new structure would replace the former medical buildings at 100 and 110 Maple Avenue East, at the northeast corner of Center Street and Maple Avenue. Sunrise proposed a mixed-use project with about 8,500 square feet of retail on the bottom floor, separate from the assisted living facility. They proposed around 80 to 90 assisted living units to be on the second, third, and fourth floors of their four story building.

Attorney Sara Mariska reported that Sunrise had already conducted a number of meetings with Town Staff and a work session with the Board of Architectural Review regarding this project, and would like to hear feedback from the Town Council.

Jerry Liang, CFA and Senior Vice President of Investments and Development with Sunrise Senior Living presented slides of interior portions of a sample Sunrise facility. He stated that Sunrise provides care services for seniors who are on average, about 85 years old. He said that they employ nurses and can help with

activities of daily living which would normally be conducted in one's home, but might have become difficult. These include services such as medication assistance, assistance with bathing, dressing, and feeding if necessary, and assistance with dementia care if needed. They keep one floor entirely secured and protected for those who require more significant dementia care.

Mr. Liang acknowledged that the site, which is barely three-quarters of an acre, is a challenging site. There are two major easements running through it. One is a massive 24-foot easement for a storm sewer that cannot be moved, and the other is a ten-foot easement for a sanitary sewer that has to be moved because it runs through the center of the site. Mr. Liang further noted that the site sits in a low point of a large area of the Town, so there are drainage problems that they are trying to solve. He emphasized that the Sunrise team had spent a great deal of time working out the constraints of the site.

John Rust and Scott Fleming of Rust/Orling Architecture described how the retail section of the proposed new construction occupies most of the first floor footprint and comprises the vast majority of the frontage along Maple Avenue. The retail space could be one large retail entity or it could be broken up into three or more smaller, boutique-type retailers. At this early stage, there have been no decisions on what retail might go in there. The ground level entrance to Sunrise is on the corner, and is just a lobby, stairs, and an elevator to the floors up above. Behind that lobby on the ground floor are 17 parking spaces conveniently located for the retail section. Below the ground floor is a full floor of parking with elevator access.

The architects spoke of how their design follows the MAC guidelines and said they think that they've met every requirement in the MAC. The front building façade is broken into three individual façades, each with their own individual architectural character. The MAC asks for the first floor to have at least 50% transparency with glass, and they designed close to 80%. They are using high quality brick materials. Using the multiple façades, they varied the roof lines, and with the undulating cornice and the use of mansards near the top, the height is visually minimized when viewed from the street. The maximum building height is 54 feet. They brought the architectural character of the building facing Maple Avenue around the corner, using the same architectural detailing and character on the Center Street side. They also broke up the architecture on that side so that there are multiple façades. On the Northeast elevation they did the same thing - they wrapped the architectural character around the corner. The architects showed examples of the high level of detail in their design, including architectural brick articulation, arched windows in brick, and cornice work.

On the right hand side of the site, adjacent to the Vienna Inn, the architects designed a pocket park over the sanitary sewer easement. Council Member Majdi asked about the pocket park and Mr. Fleming said they would make it a beautiful garden offering an opportunity to sit or to walk, and use for pedestrian access. The park would be dedicated for public use.

Council Member Springsteen questioned whether the total of 60 on-site parking spaces would be enough. Mr. Fleming stated that they are working with Town Staff on doing various parking and traffic studies to help prove out if that will be enough. He asserted that assisted living is a very low traffic generator and a relatively low parking demand use. He also said that none of the residents drive. Council Member Springsteen reiterated his concern that it would not be enough parking, considering Sunrise staff needs and visitors to Sunrise.

Planning Commissioner Sarah Couchman asked how the mezzanine space would be used. According to Mr. Fleming, the mezzanine space is basically what the assisted living space would have been on the first floor if there were not retail there. They had elevated it so it would be accessed only through the elevator banks and emergency staircases. It will be Sunrise's foyer, common space for assisted living, and units for residents. Mr. Fleming further described that the proposed building is shaped like a donut. It is not visible on the plans as presented, but there is a large center courtyard that would be for the primary and private use of Sunrise residents.

Council Member Howard Springsteen asked about ambulance parking. Mr. Fleming indicated that the area set aside for flexible ride share and drop-off spaces could be used for ambulance access. It would not block Center Street and it is next to the elevators.

Planning Commissioner Walter Basnight asked about the trash and compactor location. All of that is at the end of the loading zone.

Planning Commissioner Steve Kenney remarked that it is a great location since the Fire & Rescue Department is right down the street. Commissioner Kenney asked about noise protection along the building because of ambulances and firetrucks running outside the bedroom windows. Commissioner Kenney also questioned the parking counts and how that would work for all of that retail. He advised that the Planning Commission will want to see a diagram of the lower level parking.

Council Member Springsteen commented that it looks like a beautiful structure, but, this is a busy intersection and the sirens from the Fire Station may bother people. He opined that this is not an ideal location for senior citizens, but he would love to see this project located back from Route 123 a block or two.

Council Member Noble asked about the mix of services planned for this property. Mr. Liang said they anticipate that approximately two-thirds will be assisted living and one-third will be dementia care. Mr. Liang stated that the entire third floor is intended to be secured dementia care. Council Member Noble commented that one of the stated purposes of the MAC zoning is to create walkable communities and to provide opportunities for older residents to downsize and live within the community. He indicated that the idea is to provide independent living, not a place for effectively care-bound people living in a facility.

Planning Commissioner Sarah Couchman recounted that there is a large concern among Vienna citizens about a large influx of children crowding Vienna schools, and adding more people driving cars on Maple Avenue. From that perspective, an assisted living facility could be considered an ideal residential addition because they are not going to be taxing the schools and other resources that younger families might feel protective of, and from what she has seen, trips will be far fewer than some other residential proposals.

Council Member Bloch asked about the typical ability of a senior in assisted living, saying that if they are typically going out with a caregiver or a small group with a caregiver, they will not be walking around Maple Avenue by themselves for shopping or going to the library. In that case, Council Member Bloch said she kind of agrees with Commissioner Couchman that these could be the perfect people to be right there.

Planning Commissioner Basnight expressed his love for Vienna and his approval of this use for the site.

Council Member Sienicki opined that it is an ideal use for the location. She said that you can go to the library, you can go to the Town Green to watch a show, you can go to Whole Foods and get a bite to eat, and it is all right there so you don't have to travel very far. In her opinion, it is a nice, walkable place with a lot of amenities where family members would enjoy coming to visit and enjoy using the public spaces around there. She added that you can always sound-proof a building.

Council Member Springsteen asked about the set-back on the sidewalk on Maple Avenue there, and was told that this would be much bigger, as it is 20 feet back from the property line. He also asked about an emergency generator for the building and was told that they would have one on the roof along with all of the other mechanical equipment. Commissioner Couchman requested that when Sunrise comes before the Planning Commission, they provide some illustrations that show the visibility of those utilities from the ground.

Council Member Majdi requested a specific approach for Sunrise's forthcoming parking analysis. Instead of analyzing whether the proposal meets Town Code requirements, he requested that they analyze and provide data for how many people they expect to park there, at what times of day, and how they expect it to affect neighboring properties.

Mr. Payton thanked the Sunrise representatives and architects for their presentation and asked what the next step in the process would be. Mr. D'Orazio reported that the applicant had not yet formally submitted an application, so the next step would be to formally submit an application for rezoning the site to the MAC zoning district. He further noted that assisted living is allowed as a conditional use under the MAC zone, so the applicant would also have to apply for a conditional use permit.

Council Member Springsteen requested acknowledgement from the applicant that they would not come back to the Town and ask for grant funding or capital funding for any of the utility changes or other expensive site work. He reported that the last applicant estimated that those costs would run about two million dollars.

Mr. Liang said it was correct that Sunrise is undertaking the physical movement and transfer out...(then he was interrupted). Mr. Liang stated that they don't have a specific number tied to it, but needless to say, this is an extremely difficult site for all sorts of site constraint reasons. Mr. Liang went on to say that Sunrise understands Council Member Springsteen's position. He reported that Sunrise had heard from a number of different places that, this is the center of Town, and it is really, really important for everybody here and for the citizens of Vienna. Mr. Liang emphasized that their commitment as Sunrise is that they are not just good neighbors, but they are good neighbors for a really long time. Mr. Liang then spoke of the Sunrise of Fairfax establishment on Route 50 at Nutley Street which Sunrise had continually operated for the last 28 years. He stated that the building had finally reached the end of its useful life, and Sunrise had recently received approval from Fairfax County to tear it down and rebuild a brand new one in the same place. Mr. Liang maintained that their goal is to help beautify the Vienna corridor and this corner. Although the constraints on the site make it extraordinarily difficult to manage all of the requirements for both the retail component as well as the exteriors, as well as the units, as well as everything that they need to do, he thinks they can do that there. Given the parking requirements that are necessary and the high water table

and flooding issues in that location, Mr. Liang remarked that it makes underground parking extremely difficult. Mr. Liang concluded that in his opinion, senior housing and assisted living in particular is the ideal use for this particular location.

Planning Commissioner McCullough indicated that in her opinion, it would be a great thing in that location.

Council Member Noble requested that Staff and the applicant use current reference documents and current software for the traffic studies.

Mayor DiRocco thanked the applicants for bringing the application to Council.

2. Meeting Adjournment

The Town Council Work Session of August 20, 2018 adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Mayor Laurie A. DiRocco

Signed / Dated: _____

Attest: _____
Deputy Town Clerk

THE TOWN OF VIENNA IS COMMITTED TO FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STANDARDS. TRANSLATION SERVICES, ASSISTANCE OR ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS FROM PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ARE TO BE REQUESTED NOT LESS THAN 3 WORKING DAYS BEFORE THE DAY OF THE EVENT. PLEASE CALL (703) 255-6304, OR 711 VIRGINIA RELAY SERVICE FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED.