

**MINUTES
TOWN OF FORT MILL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
March 21, 2023
112 Confederate Street
6:00 PM**

Present: James Traynor, Dan Stout, Mark Kerr, Sarah Curtis, Hynek Lettang, Matthew Lucarelli, Planner Zach Driggers, Planning Director Penelope Karagounis, Lauren Miller (Planning Department), Don Ferry (HELT Design), Natalie Honeycutt (The Learning Experience).

Absent: Jason Therrell

Chairman James Traynor called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, March 21, 2023. Chairman Traynor addressed the board regarding conflicts and the recusal process.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Traynor gave an opportunity to the Planning Commission to review and comment on the February 21, 2023, Planning Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Kerr made a motion to approve, and Commissioner Stout seconded the motion. The vote passed 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Commercial Appearance Review: The Learning Experience

Planner Zach Driggers presented the staff report and provided a brief overview of the request, the purpose is for the Planning Commission to review the commercial appearance review for The Learning Experience. Staff also noted the plans had been updated since the previous request that was deferred by the Commission in February of 2023. The Planning Department recommended approval of the request, contingent upon staff being able to approve minor adjustments.

Don Ferry (architect) provided descriptions of the material samples of the building. Mr. Ferry referenced the comments from the previous Planning Commission and called the Commissioners attention to what was changed to meet the previous request. Mr. Ferry addressed the playground and fence changes, first. Mr. Ferry stated the fencing along the front of the building will be eliminated. The proposed black iron fence will be 4' in height and around most of the perimeter and will meet the required spacing for childcare facilities. The playground area fence will be a 6' white PVC fencing encompassing the playground; internal playground areas will be divided by age groups

(4 playground areas) with the same 4' black iron fencing. The playground will be synthetic turf. The playground canopies will be blue, with an aluminum frame and cloth material that will cover the frame, specifically midnight blue. The awning on the front of the building, the dark bronze, will be standing seam metal; this will match the coping material. All the building storefronts are white with semi-tinted glass; this will be for all the windows. The metal doors will be the same white as the storefronts. The stone material will go around the skirt of the building and transition to EIFS. Mr. Ferry discussed the proposed EIFS alternative to address the variation comment. Mr. Ferry proposed an EIFS like material referenced as Sto EIFS System.

Chairman Traynor asked Mr. Ferry about the durability of the proposed alternative material. Mr. Ferry stated that an impact resistant layer could be applied underneath the material. A discussion occurred amongst Mr. Ferry and the Commissioners regarding the proposed EIFS alternative. Mr. Ferry stated if the proposed EIFS material is not considered, Hardieplank would be an option. A discussion occurred regarding the difference between the two materials and durability. Commissioner Lucarelli noted his concern with the alternative product, that the Commission takes a firm stance regarding not having too much EIFS. Mr. Lucarelli noted being consistent with varying materials as opposed to making something look different. The Commissioners reached a consensus on the Hardieplank material as opposed to the EIFS alternative.

Commissioner Traynor addressed the second access landscaping. Mr. Ferry stated that this area will be for future development. Commissioner Traynor requested additional planting material along Wolfpack Trail; Mr. Ferry indicated it would be ideally the same species as the rest of the site. Mr. Ferry later stated that he agreed to have similar species for the entire site.

Commissioner Lucarelli addressed the rooftop HVAC screening. Mr. Ferry stated they will be concealed; the roof will slope toward Banks Rd. Mr. Lucarelli also addressed the back of the building requesting that both end caps of the building consist of proposed Hardieplank. Mr. Ferry stated that this could be done for both end caps of the building.

Commissioner Lucarelli made a motion to approve the commercial appearance review for the Learning Experience with the condition for staff to have the ability to approve minor modifications to satisfy all comments and requirements with the additional request to continue the same landscaping pattern along Wolfpack Trail up to the Bypass. Additionally, the request for Hardieplank over the proposed alternative EIFS. Commissioner Kerr seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0.

Information and Discussion

Planning Director Penelope Karagounis recognized Commissioner Lettang for his service of over ten years on the Towns Boards and Commissions. The meeting was adjourned

at 6:37 pm.