



City Hall
208 North First Avenue
Alpena, Michigan 49707
www.alpena.mi.us

Planning & Development

AGENDA

City of Alpena Planning Commission

Special Meeting
Friday, April 1, 2016, 5:30 p.m.
Alpena, Michigan

CALL TO ORDER:

ROLL CALL:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMISSION ACTION:

1. 16-SP-01 Review a site plan submitted for a proposed new building to be constructed at 234 W Chisholm.

BUSINESS:

COMMUNICATIONS:

REPORTS:

1. Development Update

CALL TO PUBLIC:

MEMBERS' COMMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT:



Memorandum



Date: March 29, 2016

To: Planning Commission

Copy: Greg Sundin, City Manager
Don Gilmet, Building Official

From: Adam Poll, Planning and Development Director

Subject: Site Plan Review at 234 W Chisholm Street.

Bruce Deitz on behalf of Tim Fitzpatrick has delivered a site plan for Planning Commission review for a new 4,920 SF office building proposed to be constructed the currently vacant location of 234 W Chisholm (Former Kentucky Motor Lodge). The site is zoned Central Business District (CBD) and lies within the Downtown Overlay District (DOD). Office buildings are allowed by right in the CBD, but the DOD requires that any newly constructed building requires a site plan review. The Planning Commission reviews the proposed site plan and elevation of the building to ensure that a variety of design standards are met. The Planning Commission does have the ability to approve modifications from the written design standards, including building height, in order to allow creativity and flexibility in design while maintaining the intent of the district regulations.

The intent of the design standards for the DOD is written in the Ordinance.

- 1) *Encourage and direct development within the CBD and portions of the Waterfront District*
- 2) *Encourage development with the physical qualities necessary to maintain the character and enhance the economic vitality of downtown Alpena.*
- 3) *Encourage the renovation of traditional historic buildings and development of new buildings which are compatible and consistent with nearby structures and the character of a traditional downtown.*
- 4) *To provide a pedestrian-oriented downtown environment that promotes accessibility to retail space.*
- 5) *To reinforce and enhance a compact development pattern*
- 6) *To accommodate commercial, residential, entertainment, cultural, and governmental uses.*
- 7) *To reinforce the unique physical character of downtown, focusing on the design context.*
- 8) *To establish minimum criteria for building design compatibility.*

The applicant is requesting to construct a 4,920 SF single story office building at the former location of the Kentucky Motor Lodge at 234 W Chisholm. They are proposing a 5' front yard setback and a 12' side setback off of Fourth Avenue. The site plan shows 18 parking spaces which are located in the rear of the building and not easily visible from Chisholm Street. Fourteen parking spaces are required. Other features include a shrubbery which would appear to block any view of the dumpster enclosure or parking area from Chisholm Street. The site in question is unique in that it is located on the edge of the CBD and DOD districts and any properties further north on Chisholm Street are not upheld to the same design guidelines.

The building would appear to cover 62% of the front lot line. The design standards call for 70% front lot line coverage. As many of the other buildings in the area do not meet that requirement or are significantly setback from the front of the property it would appear that 62% coverage would not be out of character for the area.

Surrounding buildings include the Chamber of Commerce located across Chisholm Street. This building is a single story office building that is setback from Chisholm Street with a row of parking in the front yard. The opposite corner of the intersection to the north of the proposed building is a vacant lot adjacent to Latitudes Tavern. Directly across Fourth Avenue is the Red Wing Shoe Store. This is a single story commercial building with a 0' setback off Chisholm and Fourth Avenue. Adjacent to the shoe store is Meridian Contracting which is a converted single story residential home with a 10' to 15' front setback from Chisholm. To the south of the proposed building is the Frontier Building and to the south east is a bank parking lot/drive thru. First Merit Bank is located on the corner of Third Avenue and Chisholm Street and has a 0' setback from Chisholm Street. The former Kentucky Motor Lodge was two stories and set back off of Chisholm with parking located in the front of the building. The applicants are proposing a 5' front yard setback off of Chisholm Street which would not appear to be out of character for the area. One of the primary functions of the 0' setback that is required is to eliminate private parking in front of a building and create a pedestrian friendly environment to encourage a walkable community. In this case a 5' setback would still appear to encourage walkability and the parking is hidden in the rear of the building. In addition, a 12' side yard setback would meet the standards of the DOD and visibility would not be obstructed. The building could have a 0' setback off of both Chisholm and Fourth and meet DOD standards.

The proposed building is a single story with a parapet wall on the Chisholm Street façade to give the appearance of a second story. The block in questions does have a minimum two story height requirement for new buildings. This location would appear to be on the edge of the minimum two story height requirement. The block across Chisholm Street does not require a second story for development. Other buildings on the same block (including First Merit Bank and Frontier Communications Building) are two story buildings, but are not located adjacent to the proposed building. Nearby buildings such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Red Wings Shoe Store are single story structures.

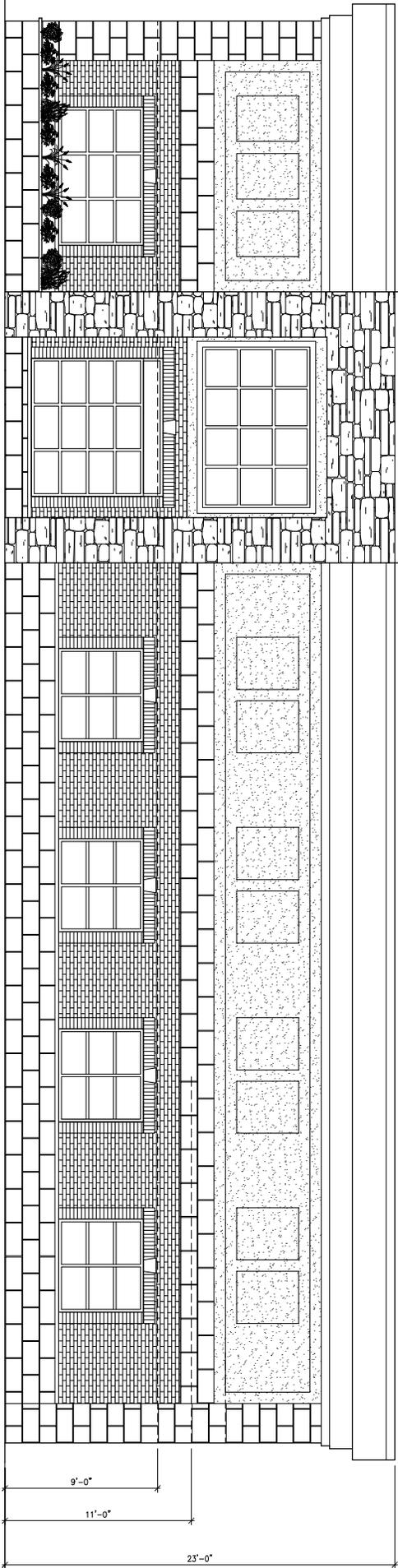
The façade of the proposed building would appear to meet most of the other design criteria of the DOD. The building scale would appear to be similar to surrounding buildings, even though the buildings on the same block are located over 200' away. The proposed roof appears flat, with a three dimensional cornice treatment. The materials used are principally masonry with some EIFS trim on the upper level which create a distinct and separated ground floor area.

The primary façade meets most of the requirements with the exception of the lack of a principal pedestrian access accessible from the public sidewalk. The submitted elevation does not indicate that a door is present on the front façade. There would appear to be a logical location that is currently shown as a window. Staff inquired with the applicant who stated that they would prefer to keep the large window on the front and when a future tenant moves into the space, the building is designed so the window could be removed and a door could be added later. Due to the focus on pedestrian access in the downtown and the emphasis that has been placed on walkability both locally and elsewhere, staff would recommend that a door is installed along the public sidewalk on Chisholm Street even if it is not initially utilized.

The amount of windows on the front façade would appear to be adequate, and as previously the parking/loading area would appear to be sufficient.

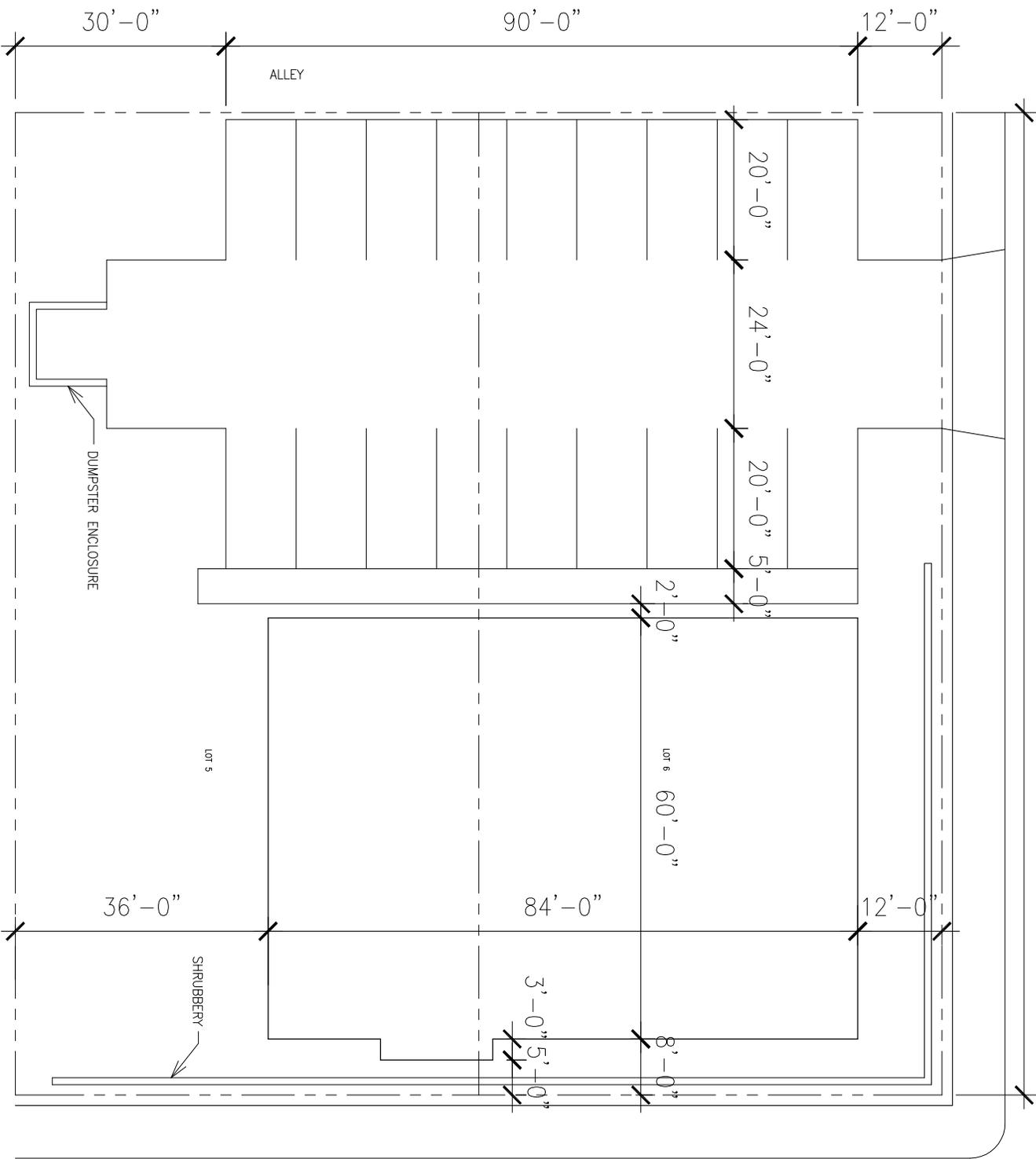
Staff has presented the site plan and a preliminary elevation to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Design Committee where it was reviewed. The DDA Design Committee liked the design and thought it should be approved, but noted that they would prefer if there was pedestrian access off of Chisholm Street.





FOURTH AVENUE

140'-0"



CHISHOLM STREET

CITIZEN'S NATIONAL BANK
ZONED CBD-1

