

**KENT PLANNING COMMISSION  
BUSINESS MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 21, 2021**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**Amanda Edwards  
Jeff Clapper  
Nickolas Bellas  
Michael Bruder**

**STAFF PRESENT:**

**Eric Fink, Asst. Law Director  
Bridget Susel, Community Development Director  
Tim Sahr, Development Engineer**

**I. Call to Order**

Ms. Edwards called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. Roll Call:**

Mr. Bellas, Ms. Edwards, Mr. Bruder, and Mr. Clapper were present.

Ms. Susel stated that Chris Clevenger-Morris has submitted his resignation and thanked him for his time and commitment to the Planning Commission on behalf of the City.

**III. Reading of Preamble**

Ms. Edwards read the Preamble, which describes the purpose and procedures of the Planning Commission as well as the applicant's right to an appeal.

**IV. Administration of Oath**

Mr. Fink instructed those members of the audience wishing to be heard on any of the cases presented at this meeting to rise and raise their right hand. Mr. Fink administered the Oath, "Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony that you are about to give this evening is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God? Please say "I do." The participants responded, "I do."

**V. Correspondence**

None

**VI. Old Business**

None

**VII. New Business**

**A. PC21-016 LUCKY BONSAI  
304 S. Prospect St.  
Conditional Zoning Certificate and Site Plan Review**

**The applicant is requesting a Conditional Zoning Certificate and Site Plan Approval of a home occupation for a bonsai tree business. The subject property is zoned R-3: High Density Residential Zoning District.**

Mr. Sahr introduced the project as presented in the staff report. Mr. Sahr explained that the site is accessed from S. Prospect St. and is surrounded by residential uses on the east, north, and west and by outdoor recreational uses to the south. He stated that the applicant has lived at this address for approximately 20 years and began the care and sale of bonsai trees as a hobby, which has now become a business. He explained that the homeowner is now seeking a Conditional Zoning Certificate and Site Plan Approval for a home occupation. He stated that per the applicant, customers will only come to the residence a few times a month on an appointment only basis and the applicant has proposed a single parking space at the end of the drive for customer use. He stated that all utilities are existing and are to remain unchanged and no new signage or new site lighting is being proposed at this time. He added that no new landscaping is being proposed but notes that because the nature of the business produces a certain level of rotating or changing landscaping. He stated that no dumpster will be installed on site; trash service is managed via cans moved to the curb for weekly pickup. He stated that Architectural Review Board review was not required for this project and no new variances are required at this time. He concluded that staff finds that a Conditional Zoning Certificate is in accordance with the standards established in the zoning ordinance and other applicable development regulations except as recommended in the staff report.

Josh Oldham, 304 S. Prospect St., stated that his bonsai tree business has been growing quickly but he is not ready for a separate commercial location; he is in an in-between spot. He stated that he wanted to get the appropriate approvals from the City so that he could continue. Mr. Oldham stated that he has a 12' x 16' greenhouse in the backyard where he grows seedlings and maintains his other trees. He stated that he prepares the shipments from a back room in his house and his garage is used for storage. He stated that nothing is visible from the street.

Ms. Edwards questioned the hours of operations.

Mr. Oldham stated that so far it has been sporadic, but it is mostly by appointment only; on average approximately 5 people per week.

Mr. Bellas questioned if the designated customer parking space will be closest to the sidewalk.

Mr. Oldham stated that yes, it is usually at the end of the driveway.

Mr. Clapper questioned using the alley as parking.

Ms. Susel stated that alleys do allow for 30 minutes parking for loading and unloading. She stated that if the applicant's customer base increased to where he needed to utilize alley parking, the applicant should talk to the Community Development Department before using the alley.

**Public Comment**

Carl Eckert, 303 S. Chestnut, stated that he lives behind the applicant's property. He stated that the greenhouse has been there a couple of years and is lit all night. He questioned if there was a safety issue with using propane tanks for heating. He stated that he doesn't want to see a precedence of businesses in the neighborhood and that the public right-of-way remain public.

Mr. Bellas questioned the greenhouse lighting.

Mr. Oldham stated that there is very little light. He stated that it is only lighting so that he can work inside in the winter. He stated that he uses 1-2 LED grow lights. He stated that they could be on timers if necessary.

Mr. Bellas questioned the propane tanks used for heating.

Mr. Oldham stated that he has a 100lb propane tank, which is the maximum portable fillable size.

Mr. Clapper questioned if the lights need to be on all night.

Mr. Oldham stated that they do not.

Mr. Clapper questioned if the light can be screened after dark.

Mr. Oldham stated that he isn't sure that he could eliminate it completely if it was on at night but he could dampen it with a shade cloth. He stated that typically in the winter, the lights turn on to give the plants 3-4 hours of light. He stated that he has in the past left the lights on all night but that doesn't have to happen.

Mr. Bruder questioned the customer that just stopped by without an appointment.

Mr. Oldham stated that they didn't have the correct time on the website when he went back to work; they are in the process of making the correction.

Mr. Clapper questioned the regulations for lighting.

Ms. Susel stated that the light has to be zero at the lot line. She stated that if needed the light can be shielded. She stated that the original submission included a sign near the street, however, signage is prohibited for a Home Occupation in an R-3 district but a 2' x 2' name plate affixed to the house 10' from the door is allowable.

**Planning Commission Discussion**

Mr. Clapper suggesting adding a condition limiting the hours of the lighting.

Ms. Susel stated that the regulations will limit the light at the lot line but the Commission may add a condition to add timeframe for the lights to be turned off.

Mr. Clapper stated that he would like to see the customers by appointment only.

Ms. Edwards stated that the hours are a condition of Section of 1105.27(B)(1).

Mr. Bellas stated that when he drove by the property, he could not see any of the business activity in the rear yard. He stated that if the applicant sticks with the lighting restrictions and has customers by appointment only, he feels that the business will be compatible with the neighborhood.

Ms. Edwards stated that she doesn't see a lot of harm to the community and feels that the conditions have been met. She reminded the applicant to be courteous to the neighbors regarding the lighting. She stated that because there are ordinances that take care of the lighting issues, she is in favor of the project.

**MOTION:**     *In the case of PC21-016, Lucky Bonsai, 304 S. Prospect St., Mr. Bruder moved that the Planning Commission approve the Conditional Zoning Certificate for a home occupation as presented.*

*Mr. Clapper seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.*

**B.     PC21-017     BRIDGE BIBLE CHURCH  
                          1050 W. Main St.  
                          Conditional Zoning Certificate and Site Plan Review**

**The applicant is requesting a Conditional Zoning Certificate and Site Plan Approval at the listed address. The subject property is zoned IC-R: Intensive Commercial Residential Zoning District**

Mr. Sahr introduced the project as presented in the staff report. Mr. Sahr explained that the site is accessed from West Main St. and is surrounded by commercial uses on three sides and residential uses to the south. He stated that the proposed use is a religious institution, which is conditionally permitted in the IC-R: Intensive Commercial Residential Zoning district. He stated that the applicant is under contract with the current owner for purchase of the property. He stated that the current parking lot provides 130 non-handicapped spaces and 5 handicapped accessed parking spaces. He added that all utilities are existing and are to remain unchanged including storm water flows from the property. He stated that the applicant has proposed to reuse the existing monument sign with new face plates. He stated that no new lighting or landscaping are proposed. He stated that currently the site has a couple of dumpsters, which are to be removed and the applicant is planning on having trash cans that will be taken to the curb weekly. He stated that consideration by the Architectural Review Board was not required and no new variances were required or requested. He concluded that Staff finds that the request for a Conditional Zoning Certificate is in accordance with the standards established in the Zoning Ordinance and other applicable development regulations except as recommended in the provided staff report.

Tom Weise, 2096 Creeks Crossing Trail, Mogadore, stated that he is a member and board member for the Bridge Bible Church. He stated that they are currently under contract with the current owner. He stated that the only building change that they are proposing is to eventually remove the two garage doors on the west side of the building and replace them with windows and a door for a side entrance for the youth group. He stated that they would also reface the existing sign to identify their church.

Mr. Clapper questioned the population of the church membership

Mr. Weise stated there are roughly 150 current members.

Mr. Bellas questioned any additional landscaping plans.

Mr. Weise stated that they will add annual flowers and some boxwood shrubs to add some color around the entry.

Mr. Bellas questioned whether or not they have considered planting any smaller trees on the property.

Mr. Weise explained that the property is mostly asphalt in the front of the building so there aren't many options. He noted that there is a fenced in rear yard that is their only real greenspace but it isn't visible from the street.

Mr. Bruder questioned the schedule of the church activities and goals.

Mr. Weise stated that the congregation meets on Sunday morning for worship; currently it is a single service but if their congregation were to grow substantially, it could increase. He stated that the youth group meets on Sunday evenings and during the week the facility would be used as the administrative office for the full-time pastor, and 3-5 part-time staff/volunteers, who would have a work space. He stated that they also have other auxiliary groups that would meet on a weekly basis on different days and times.

Ms. Edwards questioned the locations for the landscaping.

Mr. Weise explained that it would be the bed that runs the length of a portion of the front of the building.

Ms. Susel stated that the landscaping code was not in effect when the building was originally renovated.

Mr. Weise stated that the landscaping will probably not take place until next spring.

**Public Comment**

None

**Planning Commission Discussion**

Mr. Bellas stated it is exciting for the church to have its own building after many years and that he is in favor of the project.

Mr. Bruder echoed Mr. Bella's comments. He stated that he lives in that area and would like to see the building occupied.

Ms. Edwards agreed with Mr. Bruder and appreciates their efforts to add greenery and flowers to the current beds. She stated that she feels that it is a good use of the space and is in favor on the project.

Mr. Clapper noted that the church would be tax-exempt and questioned whether the reduction in taxes constitutes a detriment to the community as a whole under conditions for conditionally permitted uses.

Ms. Susel stated that property taxes benefit the school district and financial detriment is not a factor in the approval process. She added that the property previously had a 12 year tax exemption on 75% of the real property tax when the Record Courier occupied.

**MOTION:** *In the case of PC21-017, Bridge Bible Church, 1050 W. Main St., Mr. Bruder moved that the Planning Commission approve the Conditional Zoning Certificate with the following conditions:*

**1. Technical Plan Review**

*Mr. Bellas seconded the motion. The motion carried 3-0-1. Mr. Clapper abstained.*

**VIII. Minutes**

**MOTION:** *Mr. Bruder moved to approve the July 6, 2021 Planning Commission minutes as presented. Mr. Clapper seconded the motion. The vote carried 4-0.*

Mr. Fink noted that the July 20, 2021 Planning Commission minutes cannot ever be approved due to not being able to achieve a quorum of members that were present for this meeting. The minutes will be filed as a record of the meeting.

**IX. Other Business**

None

**X. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** *Mr. Clapper moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bruder. The motion carried 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.*