

**CITY OF TAVARES
PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MEETING
TAVARES COUNCIL CHAMBERS
201 E. MAIN STREET, TAVARES
October 20, 2022**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Gary Santoro, Chairman
Deborah Murphy, Vice-Chairman
Dian Joy, Board Member
Bruce Peterman, Board Member
Brooke Matthews, Board Member - Absent
James Sweezea, Board Member
Dara Treadwell, Board Member

LAKE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

Helen LaValley - Absent

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Antonio Fabre – Planning Coordinator
Mike Fitzgerald, Community Development Director
Lindsay Holt, City Attorney
Jillian Roberts, Deputy City Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Santoro called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and asked those present to silence their cell phones. He led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Santoro asked if there are any additions or corrections to the August 18, 2022 Planning and Zoning Board Meeting minutes. There were none.

MOTION

Debora Murphy moved to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2022 Planning and Zoning Board Meeting, seconded by James Sweezea. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

SWEARING IN BY CITY ATTORNEY AND DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

Attorney Holt swore in those who were present and wished to provide testimony.

Attorney Holt asked the Board Members if there were any ex-parte communications. There were none.

PUBLIC HEARING

1) Recommendation on Resolution 2022-14 – 203 N. St Clair Abrams Avenue – Special Use Permit for School

Mr. Fitzgerald gave the following presentation:

SUMMARY:

An application for a Special Use Permit has been received to operate a school at 203 N. St Clair Abrams Avenue. The subject property is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of N. St Clair Abrams Avenue and Maud Street. The building located on the site was most recently occupied by a law firm. The property is within the Mixed Use (MU) zoning district, and a school is allowed only with the issuance of a Special Use Permit from the City Council.

The applicant, The Modern Schoolhouse LLC, envisions what is referred to as a "micro-school" with an estimated enrollment of 40-45 students across various grade levels. The subject property is in close proximity to the Tavares Public Library, downtown museums, Wooton Wonderland, and the Splash Park. The property includes an empty lot that will be utilized for student recess. The building has been evaluated by the Tavares Fire Department and Building Official, and no major issues were found. However, the applicant will be required to obtain permits for some plumbing and electrical improvements.

The subject property has limited on-site parking. It is the intention of the school operator to have parents use available public parking and walk children to and from the school. There will be no car drop off or pickup permitted to block any public right-of-way. City staff met with the applicant and conducted an evaluation of available public parking near the proposed site. City staff has determined that there are four (4) public parking areas consisting of a total of ninety (90) parking spaces that are in close proximity to the property with sidewalk access south of Maud Street. City staff has coordinated with the City's Engineer to design improvements to the crosswalk located at Maud Street and N. St Clair Abrams Avenue.

OPTIONS:

1. The Planning & Zoning Board moves to recommend approval of Resolution 2022-14, Special Use Permit for a school located at 203 N. St Clair Abrams Avenue.
2. The Planning & Zoning Board moves to recommend denial of Resolution 2022-14.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Board moves to recommend approval of Resolution 2022-14, Special Use Permit for a school located at 203 N. St Clair Abrams Avenue.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

Chairman Santoro asked if the intention for crossing the street will be at the crosswalk. Mr. Fitzgerald stated there is a crosswalk currently at Maud Street and St. Clair Abrams that will be upgraded.

Fawn Stam, 131 Madrona Dr, Eustis, and Sarah Classon, 1618 hilltop drive, Mount Dora – Applicants

Ms. Classon gave a brief overview of the Modern Schoolhouse:

- Serving Pre-k - 8th grade.
- Environment-based learning
- Small group education
- Overview of curriculum based on Florida Standards

Ms. Classon stated she is available for questions.

Board Member Joy asked if all families are going to cross at Maud Street. Ms. Classon stated all families will be directed to cross at the crosswalk at Maud Street and enter through the front door with a staff member supervising arrivals and drop-offs.

Board Member Peterman asked if the upgrades to the facility have been completed. Ms. Classon stated not all upgrades have been completed and are awaiting approval.

Board Member Sweeza asked about the anticipated start date and if the school plans to add additional grades. Ms. Classon stated the end of January or February of 2023 and noted it would be a different school as having higher grades would not coincide with the current model.

Captain Luckock, Tavares Fire Department, stated Modern Schoolhouse has been diligent in making the adjustments that were needed.

Chief Keith, Tavares Fire Department, noted the Modern Schoolhouse is working with Captain Luckock.

Chairman Santoro asked for questions or comments from the Board.

Board Member Sweeza asked which parking options are available. Mr. Fitzgerald noted the available parking lots in the area and noted the staggered drop-offs for the various grades.

MOTION

Bruce Peterman moved to recommend approval of Resolution 2022-14, seconded by James Sweeza. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Fitzgerald noted no Planning and Zoning Board meeting in November. He mentioned upcoming events.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

James Sweezea moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:35 p.m., seconded by Dian Joy. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jillian Roberts,
Deputy City Clerk