



Ron Jona & Associates
Architecture • Planning • Interiors

June 10, 2008

Rochester Hills Planning Commission
1000 Rochester Hills Drive
Rochester Hills, MI 48309-3034

Re: Rezoning Request – Auburn Road at Livernois

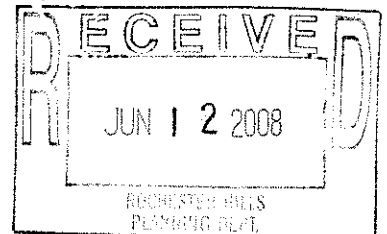
Dear Planning Commission Members:

I am respectfully requesting to rezone a small parcel of land, approximately 0.89 acres, located at the northeast corner of Auburn Road and Livernois. My request is to rezone this parcel from a B-5 to a B-1 District with the intention of redeveloping the site to a small neighborhood style retail center of approximately 5,000 square feet.

As I sure you are aware, the former activity, a Speedway gas station, ceased operations and basically abandoned this site nearly 5 years ago. Today the site is not maintained and left in an unsightly state.

As I understand the process for a rezoning it is my burden to demonstrate why the current zoning of B-5 is not viable and why the requested zoning designation of B-1 is more suitable. Let me offer the following.

- I would suggest that if the site were viable as a gas station it would have been redeveloped as one by now. Several factors affect this viability. Marathon Oil, parent company of Speedway, owns this site. Marathon has redeveloped 2 Speedway service stations in Rochester Hills in recent years but not this one. The simple answer is that today's demands are for multiple pumps and a large convenience type store. This site is small and irregular in shape and cannot support the multiple pumps and store.
- Current economic conditions are difficult if not impossible for small gas station (4 pumps or less) to operate profitably. I'm sure the Planning Commissioners are aware that it's not the owner of the station making the profits from the high price of gas. I also learned from staff that in recent months another small gas station operator was selling his site for redevelopment as a neighborhood style retail center. I believe this was the Sunoco at Walton and Livernois.



- The proposed B-1 Local Business District is intended to meet the general and basic needs of the residents in several adjacent residential areas. The closest services to this area are about a quarter to half mile west of the site. There are no such neighborhood facilities within one mile to the north, east, or south.
- The 2007 Master Land Use Plan designates this site as Business/Flexible Use 2. It is my understanding that a neighborhood retail center would be supported by that land use designation and that the current B-1 zoning designation is also in line with the land use designation.
- The redevelopment of this site will serve the adjacent residents and the city in general by removing an unsightly and obsolete structure and replacing it with an attractive and modern facility.
- The reuse of this site will not generate any additional traffic than the gas station did when it was operational. In fact, we anticipate that much of our patronage live in the apartment complex immediately north and will walk or ride bikes to our neighborhood retail center.

I trust these reasons are satisfactory in securing your support to rezone this property. I will be in attendance at the meeting to request this rezoning and will be happy to answers your questions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

RON JONA & ASSOCIATES

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ron Jona', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ronald A. Jona, A.I.A.