

NEW BUSINESS

2023-0125 Public Hearing and Request for Conditional Use Recommendation - File No. J2023-0001 - to operate a drive-through as accessory to a permitted use for the proposed renovation/modification of the existing urgent care building to be utilized for a Bank of America, 3035 S. Rochester Rd., located on the east side of Rochester Rd. south of Auburn Rd., Parcel 15-35-200-051, zoned B-2 General Business District and B-3 Shopping Center Business District with an FB Flex Business Overlay, Lauren Farrow, Project Expeditors Consulting Corp., Applicant

(Staff Report dated 3/21/23, Kimley Horn Response of 2/28/23, Reviewed Site Plan, Floor Plans and Elevations, and Color Renderings, Development Application and Addendum, CBRE letter of 3/15/23, Reviewed EIS, Lease Agreement and Notice of Public Hearing had been placed on file and by reference became a part of the record thereof.)

Chairperson Brnabic introduced this item noting that it is a Public Hearing and request for Conditional Use Recommendation to operate a drive-through as accessory to a permitted use for the proposed renovation/modification of the existing urgent care building to be utilized for a Bank of America, 3035 S. Rochester Road, located on the east side of Rochester Road, south of Auburn Road, zoned B-2 General Business District with an FB Flex Business Overlay. She invited the applicants up to the presenter's table.

John Gaber, Williams, Williams, Rattner & Plunkett, P.C., Jose Perez, ADC Architects, and John Gross, Civil Engineer, Kimley-Horn, were in attendance to represent the Applicant.

Mr. McLeod presented the Staff Report, noting that the Conditional Use Request is for a drive-through ancillary to an overall permissible use of the financial institution, Bank of America. He commented that they are looking to re-utilize the existing urgent care facility located at Rochester and Auburn on the southeast corner. He noted that building is about 5,700 square feet. The request for the conditional use and site plan approval is to reuse and modernize the building for a Bank of America. He pointed out that the property is split-zoned between B-2 and B-3. The primary bank location will be the north portion of the site which is B-2. The south portion of the site which was the added-on parking lot when Verizon took over the facility at some point is B-3. The entire site and surrounding area is overlaid with the FB district as well, which is not considered for this request.

He showed what the building façade looks like currently and showed how they will be updated to brand the building for Bank of America. He stated that the applicants have worked with Administration for several rounds of site plan review. He pointed out that when the packet was issued and the staff report came out there were several disapprovals at the time; and he was happy to report that as of today the revised site plans that are included in the packet have been formally reviewed by all departments that originally indicated disapproval and have now been approved.

He stated that they are repopulating the site in terms of landscaping, providing a new pedestrian connection from the south end of the building out to Rochester Road itself and doing general cleanup of the overall site itself. He showed the proposed rebranded building for Bank of America, and noted that the primary materials will stay the same and be freshened up and the panels housing the signage will be updated in terms of color and configuration. He stated that the drive-through will be added to the back side of the building, and showed the existing parking and maneuvering as it exists today and how it will be removed and used as a drive-through lane.

He noted that the applicant is requesting a parking modification to allow for additional parking above and beyond the normal 125% allowable by ordinance. He pointed out that the total amount of parking will be reduced from how it currently stands; however, it is still in excess of the total amount of parking allowed by Ordinance. He noted that it is a re-use of an existing building with the addition of a drive-through so that may not be out of line from an Administration standpoint to allow for the modification. He showed the proposed floor plan and how the interior of the site will be laid out.

He reviewed the standards for the Conditional Use and mentioned that it sits on Rochester Road in front of the Meijer complex amongst other commercial uses, including fast foods with drive-throughs to the east as well as additional smaller shopping centers to the south and Meijer to the southeast.

Mr. Gaber stated that they are trying to repurpose this site and believe that Bank of America is a good use. He mentioned that this will be a relocation of the Rochester and Avon branch by Winchester. He noted that they plan to dress up the site both in terms of a more modern façade and to blend in more with the adjacent uses. He pointed out that they are reducing parking by 30% from 42 spaces to 29 spaces, and noted that 30 spaces is the Bank of America standard for its new branch locations. He noted that this is consistent with other Bank of America facilities in the city, and he pointed out that the branch on North Rochester Road has 40 spaces, south Rochester Road (being replaced) has 28 spaces. The one on Adams Road by the Meijer has 24 spaces. He stated that the landscaping will be a dramatic improvement over what is currently there, facilitation along the site will be improved as they are installing an ADA sidewalk from the parking area to the building itself, and the current ingress and egress will be maintained. He mentioned that it has a right-in and right-out only on Rochester Road with the other point of egress being into the Meijer ring road. It also has access to the drive to the north of the oil change facility that goes out to Auburn Road. He commented that they are excited about the redevelopment and Bank of America was excited to sign the lease, and they think it will dress up the area and enhance the look around the commercial corridor.

Chairperson Brnabic noted that the Conditional Use request requires a public hearing and opened the Public Hearing at 7:13 p.m. Seeing no cards submitted and no one wishing to speak, she closed the Public Hearing.

She commented that she does not have a problem approving the additional

parking as they are reducing the spaces by 13. She asked whether 29 was the total parking spaces.

Mr. Gross responded that one of his submittals mentioned 27 but 29 is on the site plan, with two of them being accessible.

Chairperson Brnabic requested the EIS be amended to reflect this correction before it goes to City Council.

Mr. Hooper stated that he would support this location. He pointed out that he banks with Bank of America and questioned why many of the locations he frequents have their drive-throughs closed.

Mr. Gaber responded that the drive-throughs are mainly for the purpose of ATM machines and will not be traditional drive-throughs. He explained that they will start with one ATM against the building on the inner lane with the potential to expand it to a second on the outer island. He stated it was more like a drive-up ATM.

Chairperson Brnabic questioned why all the drive-throughs are closed at Bank of America locations and only ATM options are offered.

Mr. Gaber responded that he thinks it is because banking customer service has changed and it is not necessary. He stated that most of what people used to do person to person can be handled through an ATM. Anyone having needs can go inside the branch. He commented it is Bank of America's prototype.

Chairperson Brnabic stated that she does use drive-throughs and questioned whether it is just cost savings.

Mr. Gaber responded that this is their new mode of doing business and other banks are going to that type of transaction.

Mr. Dettloff commented that it is a trend in the banking industry. He questioned the length of the lease.

Mr. Gaber responded that it was a long lease and does not recall. He commented that it might be a 10 or 20 year. It was mentioned that it was a 15 year lease with five year renewals.

Mr. Dettloff stated that he supports the project and it would be a great use for that site.

Mr. Weaver asked for clarification that all departments have now approved the site plan.

Mr. McLeod responded yes.

Mr. Weaver questioned the ingress/egress on the north side of the property and asked if cars would be allowed back in from Auburn Road.

Mr. Gaber stated that he believes cars can enter right-turn only, and believed that it was a right-in and right-out only on Auburn Road.

Mr. Struzik stated that there was a law enforcement concern with cut-through traffic, but looking at the cut it looks like it would only accommodate exit only if you go behind the oil change shop. He mentioned that you can get to Auburn Road by entering the parking lot another way.

Mr. Weaver stated that his concern is that if it is allowing traffic into the site it would be a potential point of conflict for people leaving the drive-through. He stated that he liked the drive-through in the rear of the building so that it is not sticking out on the side or front of the building. He asked if the striping in the southern parking area is meant as a cross-walk.

Mr. Gross responded that it is correct.

Mr. Weaver stated that he would concur that it is a good use for the site and the landscaping will help. He noted that his only point of concern was potential possible traffic conflict for cars leaving the drive-through and meeting up with cars potentially entering the site from the north.

Dr. Bowyer stated that she loves the repurposing of the building and will be great as it has been sitting unused. She commented that her worry is that if someone comes out of the oil change or is coming fast there might be some conflict with drive-through traffic leaving. She asked if there could be some signage that cautions that cars will be entering from the building on the left. She commented that it used to be conflict when it was Verizon and now there will be a lot of traffic as ATMs are used a lot and they will take the shortest way out.

Mr. Gross responded that they can look into that.

Dr. Bowyer pointed out that the drive is only large enough for one-way traffic to Auburn. She stated that she definitely supports how the project looks.

Mr. Struzik stated that he supports the redevelopment and commented that it is great to see an existing building repurposed instead of torn down. He noted that documentation provided states that this will be a low-intensity use for the drive-through and based on what he has witnessed for other businesses he believes that it is true. He commented that the access to the site is great and there are multiple ways to get to Auburn Road and Rochester Road so people do not have to be making dangerous left-hand turns, and they have access to a light on Rochester Road if they want to turn left. He noted that when he was doing his site visit, he did run into an Oakland County Sheriff's Deputy, who was giving him the signal to leave the site because he thought he was trying to cut through. He noted that this shows that there is already cut-through traffic and he is hoping that the issue will be resolved when the light is redone with a right-turn phase that goes along with the left-turn phase.

Mr. Hooper moved the motion in the packet to recommend conditional use approval. The motion was seconded by Ms. Neubauer.

After the voice vote, Chairperson Brnabic announced the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hooper moved the motion in the packet, correcting Huntington to Bank of America, with six findings, two pre-printed conditions, and a third condition added to revised the EIS as to reflect the 29 parking spaces, and a fourth condition to add signage as approved by staff to advise motorists of conflicting traffic on the exit-only to Auburn Road. That motion was seconded by Ms. Neubauer.

After the voice vote, Chairperson Brnabic announced that the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. McLeod noted that this item should move forward to City Council on April 17, 2023.

A motion was made by Hooper, seconded by Neubauer, that this matter be Recommended for Approval to the City Council Regular Meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 9 - Bowyer, Brnabic, Denstaedt, Dettloff, Gallina, Hooper, Neubauer, Struzik and Weaver

Resolved, in the matter of City File No. PCU2023-0001 (Bank of America), the Planning Commission recommends to City Council Approval of the Conditional Use to allow a drive-through at a proposed bank on site at 3035 S. Rochester Road, based on plans dated received by the Planning Department on February 7, 2023, with the following findings.

Findings

1. The use will promote the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. The building has been designed and is proposed to be operated, maintained, and managed so as to be compatible, harmonious, and appropriate in appearance with the existing and planned character of the general vicinity, adjacent uses of land, and the capacity of public services and facilities affected by the use.
3. The proposal will have a positive impact on the community as a whole and the surrounding area by further offering jobs and another financial institution.
4. The proposed development is served adequately by essential public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, water and sewer, drainage ways, and refuse disposal.
5. The proposed development will not be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to existing or future neighboring land uses, persons, property, or the public welfare.
6. The proposal will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.
7. The site has traditionally been utilized as an urgent care facility and the proposed financial institution with ancillary drive through will be less impactful.

Conditions

1. City Council approval of the Conditional Use.
2. If, in the determination of City staff, the intensity of the drive-through changes or increases, in terms of traffic, queuing, noise, hours, lighting, odor, or other aspects that may cause adverse off-site impact, City staff may require and order the conditional use approval to be remanded to the Planning Commission and City Council as necessary for re-examination of the conditional use approval and conditions for possible revocation, modification or supplementation.

2023-0126

Request for Site Plan Approval - File No. J2023-0001 - for the proposed renovation/modification of the existing urgent care building to be utilized for a Bank of America, 3035 S. Rochester Rd., located on the east side of Rochester Rd. and south of Auburn Rd., Parcel 15-35-200-051, zoned B-2 General Business District and B-3 Shopping Center Business District with an FB Flex Business Overlay, Lauren Farrow, Project Expeditors Consulting Corp., Applicant

See Legislative File 2023-0125 for discussion.

A motion was made by Hooper, seconded by Neubauer, that this matter be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye 9 - Bowyer, Brnabic, Denstaedt, Dettloff, Gallina, Hooper, Neubauer, Struzik and Weaver

Resolved, in the matter of City File No. J2023-0001 (Bank of America), the Planning Commission approves the Site Plan, based on plans dated received by the Planning Department on February 7, 2023, with the following findings and subject to the following conditions.

Findings

1. The site plan and supporting documents demonstrate that all applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, as well as other City Ordinances, standards, and requirements, can be met subject to the conditions noted below.
2. The proposed project will be accessed from S. Rochester Road, thereby promoting safety and convenience of vehicular traffic both within the site and on adjoining streets.
3. Off-street parking areas have been designed to avoid common traffic problems and promote customer safety.
4. The proposed improvements should have a satisfactory and harmonious relationship with the development on-site as well as existing development in the adjacent vicinity.
5. The proposed development will not have an unreasonably detrimental or injurious effect upon the natural characteristics and features of the site or those of the surrounding area.
6. The requested modifications to allow for a total of twenty nine (29) parking spaces is appropriate based on the supporting information provided by the applicant.

Conditions

1. Address all applicable comments from other City departments and outside agency

review letters, prior to final approval by staff including all comments noted on the site plans contained within the Planning Commission packets.

2. Provide a landscaping bond in the amount of \$26,268 based on the cost estimate for landscaping and irrigation, plus inspection fees, as adjusted as necessary by staff prior to temporary grade certification being issued by Engineering.

3. That a revised Environmental Impact Statement be submitted prior to the City Council Meeting for the Conditional Use Recommendation to reflect 29 parking spaces.

4. Add signage as approved by City staff to advise motorists of conflicting traffic on the exit-only access to Auburn Road.