



Planning and Economic Development

Ed Anzek, AICP, Director

From: Ed Anzek
To: Planning Commission
Date: 7/15/2014
Re: Gilbert & Vennettelli Concept Plan

History

As the Commissioners will recall, G&V requested to terminate the Planned Unit Development Agreement they held with the City for the 28+/- acre site along Rochester Road. This action occurred last October, and one concern with voiding the PUD Agreement was what the appropriate base zoning for the site would be. The matter was deferred to the Planning Commission to provide a recommendation. After two meetings of discussion and input from many residents and staff, the Planning Commission recommended to the City Council that the underlying or base zoning be R-4 Single Family Residential along with the optional FB-2 Flexible Business Overlay also remaining with the site as a means to effect the Mixed Use potential development as first identified in the 1998 Master Land Use Plan and reinforced with the 2007 Master Land Use Plan.

Also prior to and during this time, Mr. Gilbert was working along several fronts in his pursuit to realign Eddington Blvd. with Drexelgate on the west side of Rochester Road in order to obtain MDOT's approval for a traffic signal. The fronts included the City Council, the Eddington Farms Property Owners Association, MDOT, traffic consultants, and city staff. Mr. Gilbert was advised early on by City Council that the question could not be fully evaluated unless and until a conceptual development plan for the entire 28 acres was prepared that would show how all the street configurations, alignments, and structures might work on this site with a realigned Eddington Blvd. The City Council advised Mr. Gilbert that they wanted to see a comprehensive development concept before they would consider any possible change to the Eddington Blvd. alignment.

Concept Plan Development

Messrs. Gilbert & Vennettelli retained the services of Gibbs and Associates to develop a concept using the FB-2 provisions and Form Based code guidelines. The realigned Eddington Blvd., as developed by Gibbs and Associates, is unique to what had been considered before. Previously, the city was reviewing, as options, two "T" intersections or two roundabouts that would "move" Eddington Blvd. 250'+/- southward to line up with Drexelgate. The roadway design that Gibbs is putting forward is a broad sweeping curve moving from eastbound to northbound and resulting in one "T" intersection with the existing Eddington Blvd. The curving road branches southward, resulting in a park/open space area centrally located in the site.

The structures shown are all two-story with interior parking to the structures. Mr. Gibbs will be present to further discuss the finer details with the concept he developed.

Summary

As a word of caution, I would like to state that concepts are developed as a means to demonstrate what something can look like, and that it can be functional. Please realize that as a concept, it is not intended to become "locked in". Over time, there may be different configurations of buildings, but the core element being the spine road that runs from the Fifth/Third Bank to Bordine's property is intact and accomplishes the intent of the '98 Master Land Use Plan.

Going Forward

It was at my insistence that the concept be shown to the Planning Commission first. If the matter had been presented to the City Council, I am of the opinion that the Council would have deferred the matter back to the Planning Commission immediately. The Council holds a great deal of trust in the opinions and insights of the Planning Commissioners. Once the Planning Commission has an opportunity to provide their thoughts and opinions on this concept, I would suggest the next step would be for the concept to be presented to the City Council.

I believe it is G&V's intent to work to move the roadway to support the marketing of their property. If it is their intent to initiate the relocation of Eddington Blvd., it is a discussion item for the City Council.

The objective for Tuesday evening is to hear what Mr. Gilbert and his team are presenting as a concept, hear from any residents present and offer suggestions and opinions of the concept. Staff will document those comments, and they will be forwarded on to the City Council when this concept is presented to them. As in past policy, all those that have spoken at a Planning Commission meeting regarding development on G&V's land holdings have been notified of this meeting.

Thank you.