

2017-0524

Applicant would like to present a proposal for a mixed-use development on approximately 9.4 acres just north of the building at the northwest corner of Rochester and South Boulevard, zoned O-1 Office Business and B-3 General Business with an FB-3 Flex Business Overlay, part of Parcel No. 15-34-477-015, Jim Butler, PEA, Inc., Applicant

(Reference: Memo prepared by Sara Roediger, dated November 15, 2017, and site plan and associated documents had been placed on file and by reference became part of the record thereof.)

Present for the applicant were Jim Butler, PEA, 2430 Rochester Ct., Suite 100, Troy, MI ; Cheryl Bohren, NORR Architects, 150 W. Jefferson Ave., Suite 1300, Detroit, MI 48226 and Eugene D'Agostini, D'Agostini Companies, 38700 Van Dyke Ave., Suite 200, Sterling Heights, MI 48312.

Ms. Kapelanski noted that the site was located between Bolyard Lumber and the existing office building at Rochester and South Boulevard. The site was zoned B-3 Shopping Center Business and O-1 Office Business with an FB-3 Flexible Business Overlay. The applicant was proposing a four-story hotel in the rear of the site. They were also proposing a two-story, 29,000 s.f. mixed-use retail, office and restaurant building. There was an optional drive-through proposed. The existing medical office building was also shown on the plan. She stated that staff had not reviewed the plan for conformance, and the applicant was present only to receive initial feedback on the proposal.

Mr. Butler said it was about a nine-acre site (including the office building), located at the northwest corner of Rochester and South Boulevard. It was in the FB-3 district. There was an existing medical building right at the corner. There was one access drive that came off of Rochester Rd. They were proposing to enhance that and create a boulevard to access a mixed-use development. Along the frontage of Rochester Rd., a retail, office and restaurant building was proposed. Between the two buildings was a walkway so someone could walk in off of Rochester Rd. to the buildings or past the building through a central park area and ultimately to the hotel. The plan provided 338 parking spaces.

Ms. Bohren advised that they were proposing to have 11,000 s.f. of retail with 12,000 s.f. of offices above that and the end cap would be an approximately 6,000 s.f., one-story restaurant with outdoor seating and a walkway underneath the two-story space to connect to the hotel.

Mr. Butler said that the images in the packet showed some outdoor

seating in front of the restaurant. The four-story hotel, a Marriott Fairfield Inn and Suites was proposed with 108 rooms. There would be a significant amount of shared parking between the uses. There was a drive-through option shown as to how it would work.

Mr. D'Agostini said that in addition to preparing and going through the metamorphosis of change in design, they took an opportunity to meet with the adjacent homeowners to address any concerns they might have. The homeowners were very cordial and thankful the applicants made an effort to reach out to them. One of the concerns was that rather than having a landscape barrier or in addition to one, they would like to see a wall. That would have to be vetted with the Planning Commission, because he knew it was not something preferred in the City. He concluded that the residents were very receptive and welcomed the development.

Chairperson Brnabic said that she did not have any speaker cards, but she asked anyone who wished to speak to fill out a card and hand it in to Ms. Gentry.

Ms. Morita said that seeing Mr. D'Agostini, she realized that he was a former client. She did not think it would impact any future decision. She no longer had a business relationship with Mr. D'Agostini, but she felt that it was important to disclose it.

Mr. Dettloff thanked the applicants for bringing the concept to the City. He asked them if they had considered traffic impacts. Mr. Butler related that they had initiated a traffic impact study. They wanted to have a conversation with the Planning Commission before they explored it fully and to be able to give the consultants the correct square footages and uses. Mr. Dettloff said that given what was proposed, it would put a lot of additional traffic onto the roads. He thanked them for taking the time to meet with the residents. He indicated that the Commissioners really appreciated that, and it was important so it would become a win-win situation. He asked if they had done any other developments in the City.

Mr. D'Agostini said that his partner did the Bolyard Lumber. They did the office building on the corner, which was part of the development. He had done numerous things in the metro Detroit area, but the two mentioned were the only ones in Rochester Hills.

Mr. Kaltsounis thanked the applicants for coming. He noted that the Commissioners had seen a few hotels recently. There had been a lot of debate amongst the Commissioners as to the best place for them. A lot

of developers wanted to put them into the back of a project. The biggest concern was the residents behind the hotels. There had been one proposed at the gas station at Rochester and M-59. It was very close to the homes, and it was also four stories. When they imagined a cross section, it was imposing. Mr. Schultz had mentioned a new hotel at Stephenson Hwy. and 14 Mile that was a similar distance from homes. He was going to drive by to get a feeling. He did not always like drive-throughs, but there were places for them, and the subject site might be one. When he looked at a similar development with a four-story hotel, he considered turning it 90 degrees to put the hotel closer to the road as a potential option.

Mr. D'Agostini said they felt that the site lent itself well to the configuration they had proposed. The homes to the west, and there were five homes that abutted the property, had relatively deep yards. There would be a 125-foot setback with a 50-foot greenbelt. He felt that there would be a pretty healthy buffer. He realized that it would be four stories, and it would be somewhat imposing. In response to the suggestion of turning the buildings 90 degrees, they created some alternate plans and met with the Planning staff. They showed the challenges they had with that configuration. The primary challenge was that it forced all of the parking to the back and away from the commercial. It failed the functionality test. It also tended to create more of an imposition to the homeowners. There would be parking and traffic as opposed to seeing the back of a hotel, which would be a barrier to the traffic, noise and light pollution from the cars pulling in and out of the parking lot. They felt what was proposed was the best result both from a functionality and a use standpoint. Mr. Kaltsounis appreciated that, but to him, it would be more palatable to see the end of the hotel rather than the whole backside. Mr. D'Agostini said that they did several iterations which he would be glad to share. He added that their choice was to find users that did not need a drive-through, however, they did show a drive-through in the event that it was a must.

Mr. Reece felt that the development was laid out well. His biggest struggle was a four-story hotel backing up to a residential area. The difference between where they showed it versus where the applicant at the location up the road had it, was that with the latter, it was right on top of residential. He agreed that the setback was farther, and it would have a different feel, but he would like to hear from the residents. He was not disputing that Mr. D'Agostini talked with them, but he could not believe they were all happy that a four-story hotel would be in their backyards. Mr. D'Agostini agreed that they were not thrilled to see a four-story hotel, but they were very pleased that he reached out to them. They did not feel

that the plan was overly offensive. The focal point of the conversation was that there were teens that cut through their yards to get to the party store on the east side of Rochester Rd., and they felt that the continuation of the wall currently behind Bolyard would pre-empt that. That was driving the wall idea.

Mr. Reece indicated that it was something they would continue to look at. He also felt that traffic would be a big concern. He assumed that the people staying at the hotel would want to get to M-59. They would have to turn left out of the site in the mornings, assuming they were business guests, and it was a horrible intersection. He claimed that they had done a great job with the layout, and he said that they should continue to study it. Mr. Reece reiterated what Mr. Kaltsounis said about not liking drive-throughs.

Mr. Schultz wished to commend the consultants on what he felt was a very successful site layout. He had brought up the Marriott currently at 14 and Rochester Rd., which was a much different situation. The residential lots that abutted the hotel were very shallow, and the hotel was closer to the property line. In the proposed situation, there was an exorbitant amount of space between the hotel and the residents. Ultimately, the high dollar rents would be pushed up against the road, and the site had to work financially. He thought it was a great layout.

Mr. Hooper said that he liked the design and the layout. He would prefer not having a drive-through and rather have a destination restaurant or two. Regarding the traffic, he did not think that everyone would make a left onto Rochester Rd. People would go onto South Boulevard and turn left at the light. He suggested that there might need to be improvements to South Boulevard or something to enhance the traffic. He did not think it would be a good situation to make a left onto Rochester Rd. Other than that, he was supportive of the concept.

Mr. Anzek stated that he had been working with the applicants for 15 years trying to figure out what they could do with their parcel of land. He had seen a lot of different alternatives. At that time, they were working a lot with just retail and office, since FB-3 was not in place. He liked the concept a lot for things others said, such as coming in from the boulevard and incorporating the flow with the existing office building. He reminded that hotel uses created very little impact on the neighbors. People showed up, and they did not party or spill out into the street. They went to sleep and got up in the morning and left for work. There would not be activity until early evening. He thought that the separation between the

hotel and the retail worked with the intent of FB-3. He agreed that people would find a way to get in and out. If they wanted to go north, they would go onto South Boulevard, as Mr. Hooper said. He thought that the elevations were exceptional. He observed that the site would work very well, and he liked the concept of the office above retail. The Boulevard Shoppes on Walton Blvd. were very successful. He congratulated the applicants on a good-looking plan. He liked the uses and the fact that they had incorporated with the existing office building. He thought that it was one of the more successful buildings in the City.

Chairperson Brnabic asked the applicants if they had any further questions. Mr. Butler said that he did not, and Chairperson Brnabic thanked the applicants.

Mr. Anzek mentioned the wall, and said that he did not think the City had an aversion them as much as wanting them to be green. If there was a solid wall, he felt the Commission would work with the applicants. Mr. D'Agostini said that they would ultimately want to get some input from the homeowners. He would prefer greenery, but they would do whatever it took to accommodate.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Roediger advised that staff had received plans for Premier Academy, and they were targeting the December 19th meeting. They met with the Road Commission to finalize some of the transportation improvements.

Mr. Dettloff asked if there was anything going on with the former K-Mart site. Ms. Roediger said that plans were submitted, and the first review was completed. She noted that the plans were on the City's Development Map, and they showed the re-development of the K-Mart building with a couple of tenants, including an Art Van Furniture, the relocation of the existing Burger King just north of its current site, and the addition of an Aldi grocery store next to Steinmart. There would also be a new outlot with a restaurant pad. They hoped to get on the December meeting as well, and they just submitted revised plans. Depending on how those plans looked would determine if they were ready for December.

Mr. Schroeder asked what had changed with Premier. Ms. Roediger advised that they had made some modifications to improve access. They picked up additional property to the south to allow for a full access off of Adams, which would be restricted to right in, right out. There would