

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2014-0559 Request for Site Plan Approval - City File No. 14-020 - Fire Station No. 4, demolition and rebuild of the existing 4,086 square-foot fire station on 1.49 acres at 2695 Walton Blvd., east of Adams, zoned R-1, One Family Residential, Parcel No. 15-17-128-022, City of Rochester Hills, Applicant. The new building will be 8,345 square-feet with associated site improvements such as landscaping and paving.

(Reference: Memo, prepared by Sara Roediger, dated January 16, 2015 and updated landscape plans had been placed on file and by reference became part of the record thereof.)

Present for the applicant was Greg Mason, CHMP, Inc., 5198 Territorial Rd., Grand Blanc, MI 48439.

Mr. Anzek stated that Ms. Roediger had documented what had happened since the meeting a month ago. He, Ms. Roediger, Chief Canto, Mr. Cope, Mr. White of Building, Mr. Lee of Parks and Forestry and the consultant met onsite with the abutting property owners and had a very good discussion. He turned the matter over to Mr. Mason.

Mr. Mason agreed that they met with the neighbors. Pursuant to the direction given by the Planning Commission, they tried to reconcile options for the landscaping buffer to the south and the east sides of the building, which they had. He had done some renderings which showed versions of planted materials and mature plantings so the neighbors could see the difference. They showed a double tiered retaining wall system. He advised that the grade at the road (Walton) was not as significant as it was towards the southeast corner. He showed a view from the property of the neighbor to the east. One of the things they worked out was that they would plant material on the neighbor's property. They would remove her trees along the westerly property line and replace them with more quality based trees and integrate that with a series of tiered plantings. They would replace the arbor vitae with Chinese Junipers, which were less prone to deer damage. In the back corner, they would place the Junipers on the top side of the wall. He spoke with the Luteys prior to the meeting (neighbors to the south), and they would like to have the same thing, as far as planting on their property to help screen. They would bid the project handling the landscaping as an allowance, and they would work with the neighbors during construction to get placement and material plantings to their satisfaction. He felt that they had come a long way since the last meeting to address the scale of the planters and the plant material. He said he would be happy to answer any questions.

Mr. Yukon asked who would be responsible for replacement of the trees on private property. Mr. Mason said that those details had not been worked out, but there would be a warranty period for the plant material. After that, it would become the property owners' responsibility.

Mr. Schroeder asked how long it would take for the trees to mature. Mr. Mason said that it would take about 15 years.

Mr. Hooper noted that in the report, condition two talked about an established budget, and he asked what the budget would be in the bid documents. Mr. Mason said that he had not really come to that conclusion, but the landscape plan showed a dollar amount for every plant. It was his intention to take a count of all the plant materials and add the dollar value and then add a 20% factor for the allowance. Mr. Hooper asked if that would take care of the property owners on the south side. Mr. Mason said that it would be bumped up a little. Mr. Hooper asked how much he estimated, and Mr. Mason thought it would be much less than \$30k, so Mr. Hooper recommended adding in \$25k.

Ms. Brnabic stated that it seemed as if Mr. Mason had done a very good job of remedying the problems the neighbors had. She appreciated the perspective included in the packet, noting that it helped with the vision. She felt that everything had been handled very well, and she did not have a problem approving the fire station.

Chairperson Boswell opened the public comments at 7:14 p.m.

Karie Boylan, 2647 Walton Blvd., Rochester Hills, MI 48309 *Ms. Boylan commented that the Planning Commission should really be proud of the Staff and applicants. She stated that they had done a phenomenal job meeting with the neighbors and working through all the issues. The neighbors would work with everyone and enter into a memorandum of understanding regarding the care and maintenance. Everything about the fire station would be worked out as it affected their property, of that she was confident. She did feel that she did not address some of her issues adequately at the last meeting. She noted that she had been a police dispatcher and police officer for ten years before she went to law school. After she went to law school, she represented government for 18 years, specifically police officers, fire fighters and corrections officers who got sued in various capacities. After she started her own firm two years ago, she focused her practice on representing police officers, fire fighters and first responders with duty related PTSD*

and legal issues. She felt that there was no one in the room who believed that a Fire Department should not have a big, bad, best fire station throughout the community. She said that she truly believed that they deserved to have the best fire station and equipment that money could buy. She said that her issue with this particular structure was that it did not belong on the property. It was too large to accommodate the houses around it. There was not adequate buffering around it. They would put up with whatever was done, but she felt that it should have a better buffer. She said that it did not fit on the property because of the grade and elevation issues. Most of all, she said that even more than trying to protect her house, she wanted to see the residential character of the neighborhood protected. When coming up Walton Blvd. heading eastbound, all of the commercial establishments were left behind for the most part. She was referring to the commercial materials and colors. Going eastward, someone would enter into a residential neighborhood and all of the structures, whether it was the church or the offices, had the same residential appearance. They had neutral colors with stone and brick, and they were not made of the same composition as Bootlegs, for example. When that type of composition was put in a neighborhood, the commercial district was being extended into the future down Walton. Auburn Hills had cobblestone fire stations. She showed a picture of a prototype of a Sterling Heights station. She knew that City Council wanted to have some type of branding, but she was not convinced, when the City did not even have its own Police Department, that it needed to brand the Fire Department. She questioned whether the composition could be changed to fit into the residential character. She mentioned that she drove down 23 Mile Rd. and saw another Sterling Heights structure that looked like the proposed fire station but it had a different color, and it fit more into a residential neighborhood. She concluded that she would work with the City on the buffering, but she still felt that the station needed tweaking.

Dan Lutey, 55 Randolph Rd., Rochester Hills, MI 48309 Mr. Lutey noted that he lived directly behind the proposed station on the south side. He talked with Mr. Mason before the meeting about making the screen a little more dense. He had some big evergreens, but they seemed to have a problem with needles falling off. Mr. Mason talked about planting more trees, so there would not be a gap between the evergreens. He asked where the emergency warning siren would be, and if it would be moved. Mr. Cope advised that it was not being moved. Mr. Lutey said that he had a concern about lights on the back of the building. He realized the lighting would be shielded downward in the parking lot, but if there were lights on the building, he would like them to be shielded.

Mr. Mason agreed that they would be shielded lights. There was a photometric plan that he could share with Mr. Lutey. He stated that there would be no light that shed beyond the property lines, so Mr. Lutey would not be impacted by the light.

Mr. Lutey said that he appreciated everything the Planning Commission did to help the residents to get a satisfactory result when something was built. He said that Mr. Mason had been a big help, and having Ms Boylan in their subdivision was really good, because she knew what to say and how to say it well.

Chairperson Boswell closed the public comments at 7:20 p.m. He asked Staff if anyone had looked at changing the colors and composition of the building.

Mr. Mason said that several of the stations had similarities, and they had existing, standing seam metal roofs and existing brick. They took the composition of what was there and worked with that moving forward. In terms of the residential appeal, they tried to accomplish that with pitched roofs, incorporating brick, with landscaping and keeping the scale of the perimeters of the buildings down. They did really make an effort to make it not look commercial. Station four currently had a flat roof. He agreed that they established a theme for all the stations so anyone looking at the stations would recognize that it was a City facility. He indicated that the colors could be changed, but the red was chosen because it was a fire station, and that had tradition. They did not discuss incorporating cobblestone or any other finishes. They wanted to keep them clean and low maintenance. The lower band would be a smooth faced, cultured stone product. There would be an accent band at the window sill level, and then it would be brick above. With all the stations, there was a consistency as to how they were designed.

Mr. Hooper recalled that when City Council approved the budget, he had specifically requested that the fire stations should go to the Planning Commission. His only desire was to have a uniform look for the fire stations using sturdy materials like brick, block or masonry, not aluminum siding. He wanted something durable and long lasting that had quality construction, and he felt that the architects had achieved that. He agreed that the multi-stage roofs with different pitches helped. He remarked that beauty was in the eye of the beholder, and if he asked 100 residents, he could get 100 different opinions about what they liked or not. They had to rely on the architects and the Planning Commission members to make

the right decisions, and in his opinion, the plans met the test. He stated that the City aimed to be a good neighbor, and he felt that the motion should include a \$25k budget for landscaping to take care of the neighbors. He suggested that the neighbors would be on a first name basis with Chief Canto and if there was a problem, Mr. Hooper was sure the Chief would help solve it. He stressed that there really was not another location to put the fire station. It was property the City owned, and it was determined to be a good location to service the area.

Mr. Kaltsounis stated that the plans were significantly improved from the last meeting. He was happy to see the extra effort put forth. The Planning Commission always told developers to talk to their neighbors and make sure everyone was on the same page. He thought that they had done that and what had come out of those discussions resulted in a better proposal than they had before. He appreciated them making everyone happy, and he felt it was definitely the end result the Commission wanted to see for the development. He said that he visited some properties around town, and he saw a school with a red roof, and to him, fire station four looked like a school. He did not have a problem with the colors. He looked at the Master Plan in relation to Ms. Boylan's comments that there would be businesses all the way down Walton because of the station. He advised that Bootlegs was the end of commercial, and then the Plan showed residential or multi-residential all the way to the Livernois area, other than the bank at Old Perch. Hearing no further discussion, he moved the following motion, seconded by Ms. Brnabic:

MOTION by Kaltsounis, seconded by Brnabic, in the matter of City File No. 14-020 (Fire Station #4 Update), the Planning Commission **approves the site plan**, based on plans dated received by the Planning Department on November 17, 2014, with an updated Landscape Plan dated January 15, 2015, with the following eight (8) findings and subject to the following findings and four (4) conditions.

Findings

- 1. The site plans 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 original fire station was designed and built for a lower population and call volume, which has increased considerably since the 1980's.*

3. *The renovated fire station will promote the health, safety and welfare of the community.*
4. *The development meets the intent and standards of the zoning district with regard to municipal buildings.*
5. *Off-street parking areas have been designed to avoid common traffic problems and promote safety.*
6. *With the noted conditions, the proposed improvements should have a satisfactory and harmonious relationship with the developments on-site as well as existing development in the adjacent vicinities.*
7. *With the noted conditions, the proposed improvements will not have an unreasonably detrimental or injurious effect upon the natural characteristics and features of the sites or those of the surrounding areas.*
8. *With the noted conditions, the proposed improvements should have a positive impact on the community as a whole and the surrounding areas in which they offer support services.*

Conditions

1. *Submittal of a revised photometric plan that meets ordinance requirements, prior to final approval by staff.*
2. *Finalization of the landscape plan to be agreed upon by the adjacent property owners and city staff after the wall and building shell are constructed (anticipated by Fall of 2015), to determine the best landscaping that will meet the screening and aesthetic needs within the established budget set forth on the landscape plan.*
3. *Addressing all applicable comments from City departments and outside agency review letters, prior to final approval by staff.*
4. *That the City establishes a \$35k budget for additional landscaping and that the plantings be deferred until the retaining wall and structure are in place and that the placement, size and species involve input from the neighbors. and Staff, prior to final approval by staff.*

Mr. Reece noted that he had designed and built numerous fire stations, and he felt that the proposed design fit in with the vernacular of the

architecture along Walton. He did not see it as being a prelude to additional commercial development beyond the residential areas on Walton. He agreed with the theme of the design in terms that a resident in the City needed to know that it was a fire station. The red roof was significant in that regard, and people associated it with fire stations. He stated that it was in the interest of public safety for everyone. If a person drove down Walton and there was a crisis, they could pull into the lot and know it was a fire station. He thought that Mr. Mason had made every effort to try to blend the building in with the changes in elevation, the roof line and the design of the façade, and he could support it. He suggested, based on the lineal footage along the two property lines, increasing the landscaping allowance to \$35k, since they would be adding landscaping along the south property line. If it was being done in a bid environment, he felt that they should take advantage of that environment and do it up front. If everyone was in agreement and they had money left over, that would be great. He wanted to make every effort to make the residents happy and screened as best as they could.

Mr. Anzek said that as they worked with the neighbors, a couple of matters came up. He recommended that the planting of the materials should be deferred until the wall and structure were built, and then it would be a coordinated effort with the residents on the placement and size. Mr. Kaltsounis amended his motion to include both recommendations.

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

Aye 8 - Boswell, Brnabic, Dettloff, Hooper, Kaltsounis, Reece, Schroeder and Yukon

2012-0158

Request for Reconsideration of the request for a Conditional Use Recommendation - City File No. 12-006.3 - To construct a drive-through at The Walton Shoppes, a 22,880 square-foot retail center on a 6.33-acre portion of the development at 1200 Walton Blvd., east of Livernois, Parcel No. 15-10-351-081, zoned B-2, General Business, Tower Construction, LLC, Applicant.

(Reference: Memo, prepared by Sara Roediger, dated January 16, 2015, site plans and updated landscape plans had been placed on file and by reference became part of the record thereof.)

Present for the applicant was Arkan Jonna, A. F. Jonna Development Co., 4036 Telegraph Rd., Suite 201, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302.

Chairperson Boswell explained that in order for this matter to proceed, a motion for reconsideration would have to be made by someone in the majority in the vote for the Conditional Use Recommendation at the last