



Department of Planning and Economic Development

Staff Report to the Planning Commission

January 17, 2014

Rayconnect Addition	
REQUEST	Site Plan Approval
APPLICANT	Rayestate Rochester Hills, LLC 2350 Austin Ave. Rochester Hills, MI 48309
AGENT	Earl Brown
LOCATION	2350 Austin Ave. (West of Crooks, North of Auburn)
FILE NO.	08-002.3
PARCEL NO.	15-29-452-036
ZONING	I, Industrial
STAFF	Jim Breuckman, AICP, Manager of Planning

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Summary

Rayconnect is proposing a 30,700 square foot manufacturing/warehousing expansion to the existing 80,000 square-foot industrial building on Austin Ave. just east of Devondale. Access to the site is from Devondale and Austin Roads, with the majority of traffic using Austin Ave. The existing Rayconnect operation, which was built in 2009, has grown rapidly and the company now has a need to expand and add employees. This planned expansion was estimated to be needed in about 5 years after they first opened. It is anticipated that the expansion will be in operation by the end of 2014.

As most of the Planning Commissioners will recall, Rayconnect was being heavily recruited to the Carolinas in 2007. The City worked very closely with the state and county in developing an incentive package to keep them in Rochester Hills. The City Council supported this effort with the passage of an Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate entitling them to a 12-year tax abatement. The city also moved forward on the extension of Austin Ave which was an identified improvement in the Austin Area Plan done in 1998 as part of the Master Land Use Plan. Basically, the Austin Plan called for the road to be extended thereby opening up over 35 acres of land for industrial development.

The City Council also heard and granted additional tax abatements for the expansion and the personal property. This matter was approved on December 9, 2013. In our efforts to be responsive to the timely

needs of our business community, staff is requesting an expeditious approval to enable Rayconnect to get under construction as soon as possible to help them meet their contractual deadlines.

Adjacent Land Uses and Zoning

The site is surrounded by Industrial to the north, east and west and there is residential zoning to the southwest. Adjacent uses are a mix of industrial and residential. The area is master planned for regional employment center.

Requested Actions

The requested action is site plan approval.

Site Plan Review Considerations

The site complies with all zoning ordinance requirements. As you may recall, the site was originally designed with the currently proposed addition in mind. Zoning requirements have not changed since the site was designed and built 5 years ago, and so the site and proposed addition remain in compliance with the zoning ordinance.

The Fire Department review contains one comment that must be added to the plans, and the Engineering review notes that the stormwater management system needs to add additional capacity and a pre-treatment device. As the proposed stormwater management system is an underground system, adding additional capacity should not impact the site design.

Site Plan Summary

As part of the technical review for this project, the plans and supplemental documentation have been reviewed by all applicable city departments. Based on the review comments included in this report or contained within the enclosed information, and if the Planning Commission agrees the addition will be harmonious and compatible in appearance with the existing development, staff recommends approval of the following motions relative to City File No. 08-002.3 (Rayconnect Addition).

Site Plan Approval Motion

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of City File No. 08-002.3 (Rayconnect Addition), the Planning Commission **approves** the **site plan**, based on plans dated received by the Planning Department on December 20, 2013 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 development meets the intent and standards of the I, Industrial district.
3. Off-street parking areas have been designed to avoid common traffic problems and promote 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. All utilities will be provided from existing utilities on-site.
7. The proposed expansion will enable Rayconnect to add employees and grow its operations.

Conditions

1. Fire and Engineering approval of the plans based on the applicant successfully addressing the comments in the Fire review dated 1/13/14 and the DPS/Engineering review dated 1/13/14.

Attachments: *Site Plans, dated received December 20, 2013, Sheets C1-C-5 and Landscape Plan, Sheet L-1, prepared by PEA; Electrical Site Lighting Plan, Sheet PE-1, prepared by Maengineering; Floor Plan, Sheet A1.1 and Elevations, Sheet A2.1, prepared by SDA Architects, Inc.*

Assessing Department memo dated 1/8/14; Building Department memo dated 1/8/14; Public Services Department memos dated 1/13/14; Fire Department memo dated 1/13/14; EIS.
