



PSP2024-0038
City of Rochester Hills Fire Department Fire Training Tower

REQUEST	Site Plan Approval
APPLICANT	Donald F. Barry – A3C Collaborative Architecture 115 ½ E. Liberty Ann Arbor, MI 48104
LOCATION	Located west of Livernois, north of Hamlin
PROJECT NO.	J2024-0378 (PSP2024-0038)
PARCEL NO.	70-15-21-276-011
ZONING	EC – Employment Center District
STAFF	Chris McLeod, AICP, Planning Manager

Summary



The applicant (A3C Collaborative Architecture on behalf of the City of Rochester Hills Fire Department) is proposing to demolish the existing fire training tower located at the Fire Station on Horizon Court and construct a new fire training tower in the same location. The new fire training tower will be located at the southeast corner of the site, adjacent to the main parking lot for the Fire Department. The fire training tower will provide the Fire Department with a brand-new fire training facility that will allow fire staff to simulate a variety of emergency scenarios within and around the structure, providing significant new training opportunities.

The fire training tower will be of a modular design with metal side panels. The color scheme of the building will be white with red trim. The floor plan for each story of the structure is custom designed to facilitate specific training activities in a controlled environment. The purpose of the modular design is to allow not only flexibility in design but also the replacement of certain features, on a feature-by-feature basis, rather than replacement the entire unit or structure.

The fire training tower will be a total of four (4) stories tall or thirty-four (34) feet to the roof of the structure. The roof of the structure will also be utilized in training exercises and will include a code compliant railing along the top of the structure. The overall mass of the building will be reduced with each additional floor of the building. The first floor of the building will have a footprint of forty (40) feet by twenty (20) feet. The length of the second floor will be reduced by eight (8) feet, and have a footprint of 32x20. The third floor will be reduced again by eight (8) feet, having a length of twenty-four (24) overall feet, and finally the further floor will have a length of sixteen (16) feet, less than half of the length of the first floor of the structure, significantly reducing the mass of the building.

The existing training tower is thirty (30) feet in height. Therefore, the new structure is only four (4) feet taller than the existing structure. Within the EC Employment Center District, building height is limited to three (3) stories and forty-two (42) feet. However, the Ordinance does indicate that on parcels of five (5) acres or greater, the Planning Commission may approve an increase in the number of stories and the overall height. The Fire Department site is approximately 5.25 acres.

The topography of the area is such that the Fire Department site is approximately 10-14 feet lower than the property to the east that immediately abuts Livernois. In addition, the site along Livernois is currently developed with the ALSI Air and Liquid Systems building. This elevation change and the presence of an existing building will limit the ability to see the structure from Livernois. In addition, the property to the south, although under separate ownership, is largely wooded and will also help screen the building from any public view. Finally, even though the structure is technically four (4) stories tall and therefore requires additional review by the Planning Commission, the overall height to the top of roof is thirty-four (34) feet. This height is actually less than the forty-two (42) feet which is permitted by Ordinance for a three (3) story building.

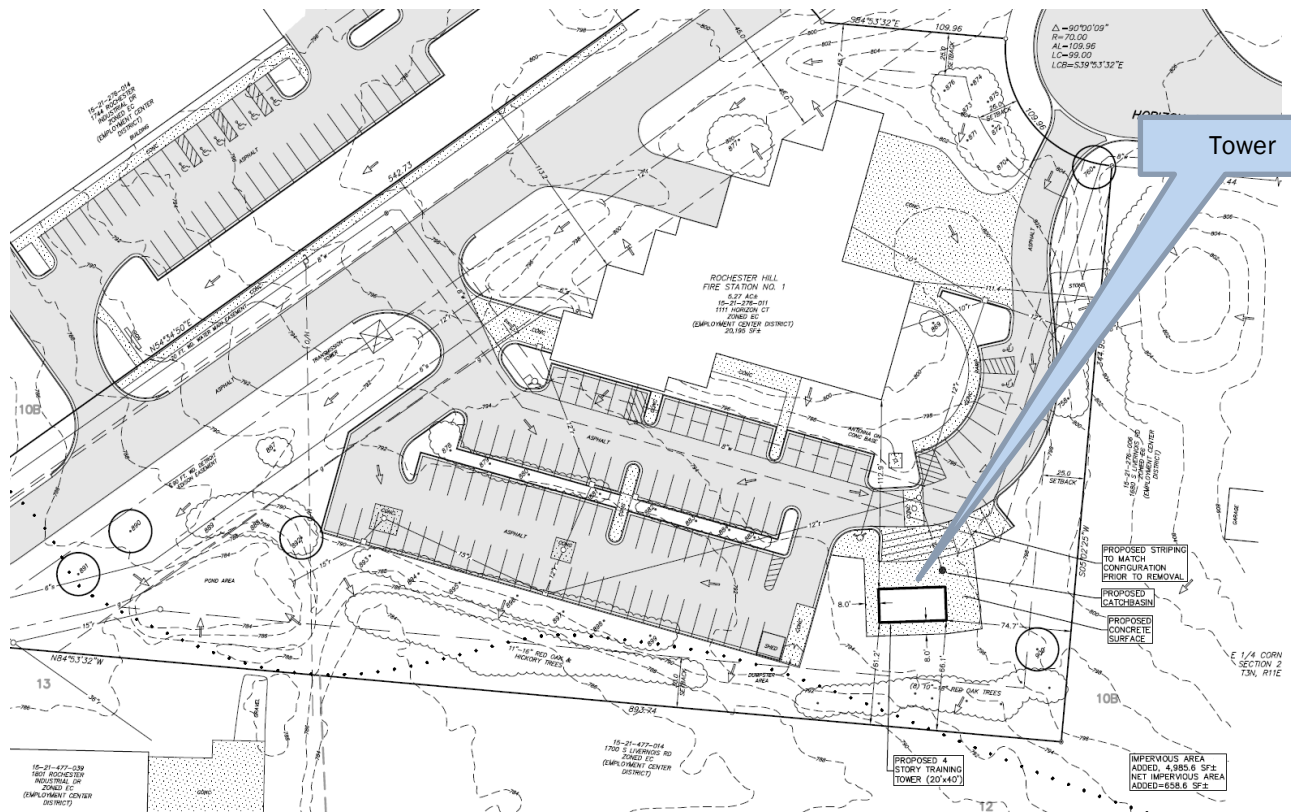
From a staff perspective, there is no objection to the increase in the number of stories for the training tower to allow a fourth (4th) story, given that the overall height does not exceed the overall height permitted by Ordinance.

Additional site improvements are limited given that the proposed structure will merely replace the existing structure that is currently in place.

Below is the summarization of the abutting zoning, future land use categories and existing land uses:

	Zoning	Existing Land Use	Future Land Use
Site	EC Employment Center District	RH Fire Department	Workplace
North	EC Employment Center District	Prefix	Workplace
South	EC Employment Center District	5 O'clock Garage	Workplace
East	EC Employment Center District	ALSI Air and Liquid Systems, LLC	Workplace
West	EC Employment Center District	Auburn Pharmaceutical	Workplace

RH Fire Department Fire Training Tower

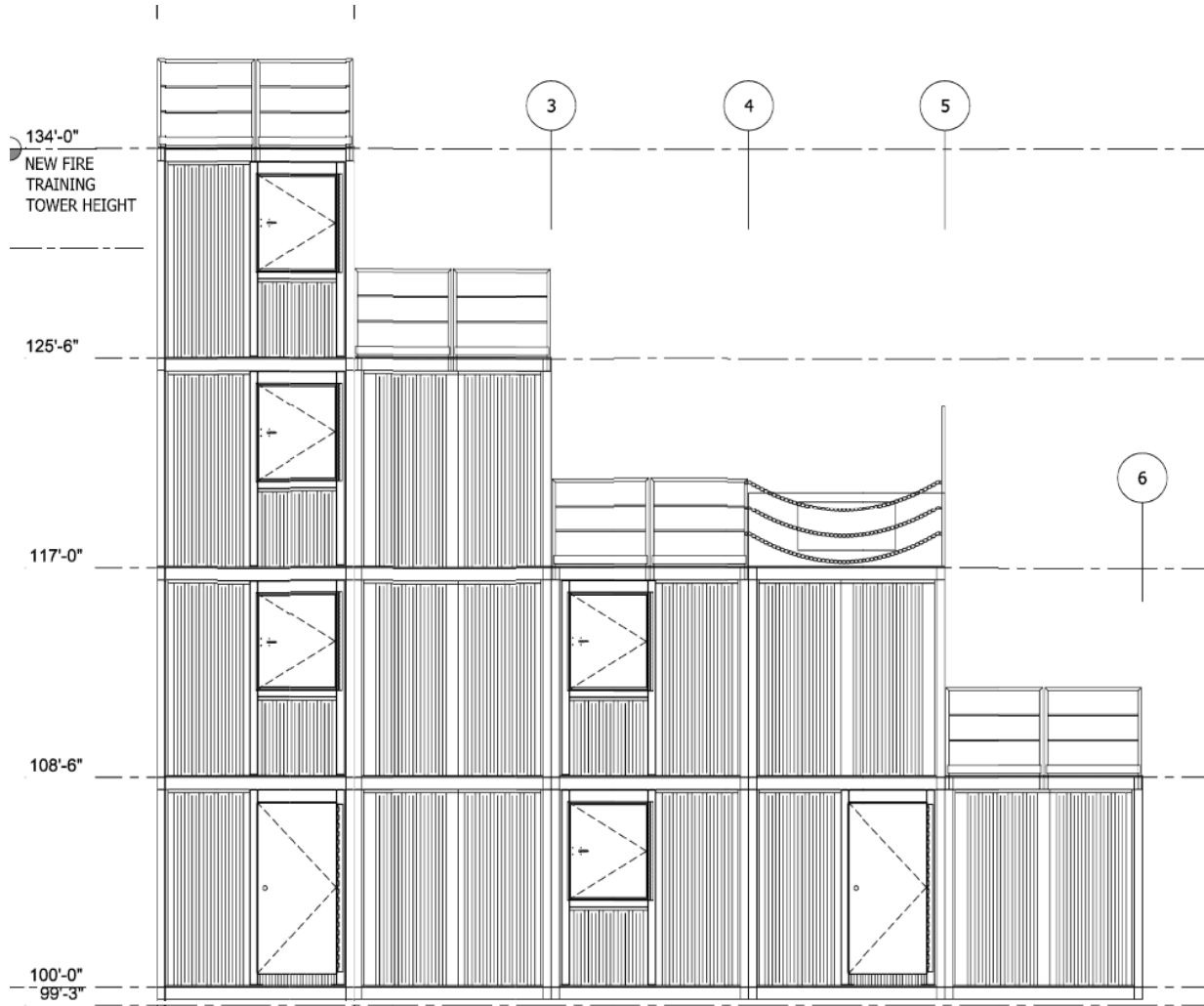


EXISTING - RH Fire Department Fire Training Tower

30'-0" +/- (APPROXIMATE HEIGHT OF EXISTING
FIRE TRAINING TOWER)

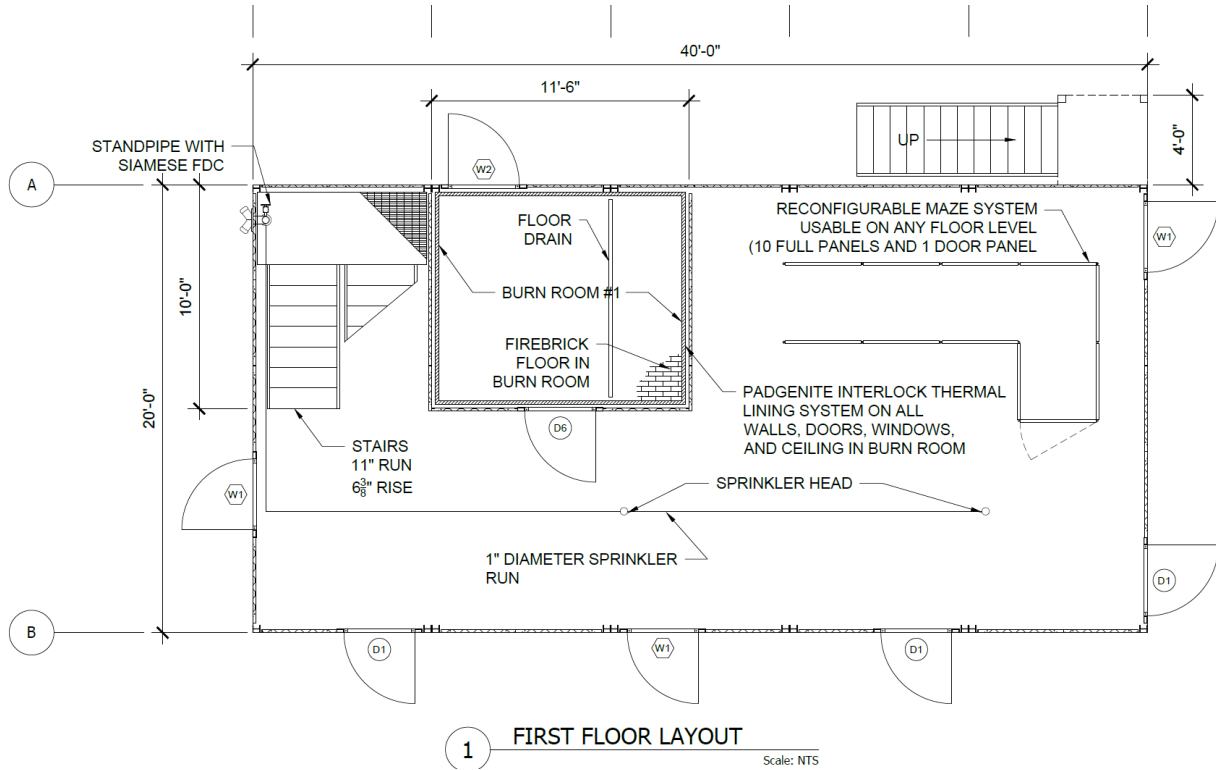


PROPOSED RH Fire Department Fire Training Tower Elevation



A FRONT ELEVATION

RH Fire Department Fire Training Tower Floor Plan (First Floor Only)



Staff Recommendations

Department	Comments & Waivers/Modifications	Recommendation
Fire		Approval
Building	Comply with Building Code Analysis noted Stairways and Guardrails to meet requirements of Michigan Building Code	Approval
Assessing		Approval
Engineering	Include storm sewer detail sheet as part of final construction set.	Approval
Engineering (Traffic)		Approval

Department	Comments & Waivers/Modifications	Recommendation
Engineering (Legal)	Label point of beginning	Approval
Parks & NR	Provide tree protection fencing	Approval
Planning	Modification to the number of stories being approved by the Planning Commission	Approval

Review Process

The site plan requires Planning Commission action due to the modification required for the number of stories of the proposed tower. After Site Plan approval, full engineering and construction plans can be reviewed administratively.

Motion to Approve Site Plan

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of City File No. PSP2024-0038 (RH Fire Department Fire Training Tower), the Planning Commission **approves** the **Site Plan**, based on plans received by the Planning Department on November 20, 2024 with a supplemental submission on December 11, 2024, 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 used solely by the City of Rochester Hills Fire Department and will not be utilized by the general public; therefore the structure and use will not generate any additional traffic to Horizon Ct. or Livernois Road.
3. The proposed structure will be fully integrated into the overall Fire Department campus by replacing the existing fire training tower with a similar structure. The structure will also be located within an existing industrial area, amongst a number of other industrial buildings.
4. The structure will be utilized by Fire Department staff already occupying the building and the Fire Department site already has adequate parking onsite that has been designed to avoid common traffic problems and promote resident safety.
5. The proposed improvements should have a satisfactory and harmonious relationship with the development on-site as well as existing development in the adjacent vicinity.
6. The four (4) story structure is not objectionable given that a taller, three story, 42 ft. high structure would be permitted.
7. The proposed structure will not have an unreasonably detrimental or injurious effect upon the natural characteristics and features of the site or those of the surrounding area.
8. The proposed structure will replace the existing fire training tower onsite in the same location it currently exists, in a similar configuration.

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. That the development and operation of the structure shall be consistent with the scale and nature of the

use as described in the application and at the public meeting.
