

**CITY OF AUBURN HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

March 6, 2008

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Hurt-Mendyka called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present. Beidoun, Doyle, Hitchcock, Hurt-Mendyka, Mitchell, Ouellette, Pierce, Verbeke
Absent. Kittle
Also Present. City Manager Auger, City Planner Cohen, TIFA Chair Bennett,
Guests. 20

LOCATION: City Council Chamber, 1827 N. Squirrel Road, Auburn Hills, MI 48326

PERSON WISHING TO BE HEARD - None

MINUTES

Ms. Verbeke moved to approve the minutes of February 7, 2008.

Supported by Mr. Beidoun.

**VOTE: Yes: All
No: None**

Motion Carried (8-0)

PETITIONERS

5a. Recommendation for Approval of Rezoning from I-2 to I-1 District for FEV Inc. (7:05 pm)

Ms. Hurt-Mendyka and Mr. Cohen explained that FEV Inc. is requesting a rezoning from I-2 to I-1 District. The reason for the change is to allow FEV Inc. to expand their facility closer to the rear property line adjacent to the OHD Landfill. The I-2 District requires a 100 foot rear building setback, while the I-1 District only requires 15 feet. The property is located at 4130 Luella Lane.

The Commission's discussion yielded the following:

- The current building is 380 feet from the rear property line.
- There will be no expansion of the main building to the north or south except, possibly for an accessory building.
- The only Planning Commission concern was the position of a future building in relation to the south lot line.

Public hearing was opened and closed at 7:13 p.m. since there were no comments from the audience.

Mr. Ouellette at 7:14 p.m. moved to recommend to City Council approval of the rezoning of 4130 Luella Lane from I-2 to I-1 District.

Supported by Ms. Doyle.

**VOTE: Yes: Beidoun, Doyle, Hitchcock, Hurt-Mendyka, Mitchell, Ouellette, Pierce, Verbeke
No: None**

Motion Carried (8-0)

Mr. Ouellette has a conflict of interest and requested to abstain from the following item and left the table at 7:15 p.m.

5b. Recommendation for Approval of the Site Plan for Dr. Michael Tobola Family Dentistry Office Building (7:16 p.m.)

Ms. Hurt-Mendyka and Mr. Cohen explained that Dr. Michael Tobola has requested approval to construct a one-story, 3,480 sq. ft. medical office building on a site zoned O, Office district. The property is located at 3709 Auburn Road.

Mr. Cohen reported that Dr. Tobola is seriously looking at constructing a “Green Building” and obtaining certification under the Leadership in Environment and Energy Design (LEED) program of the U.S. Green Building Council. His contractor is currently conducting a detailed cost / benefit analysis to determine the economic feasibility of meeting the minimum LEED certification requirements.

The Commission’s discussion yielded the following:

- Based upon the project’s square footage, 11 total parking spaces are required and 17 parking spaces are depicted.
- Garage doors on the side of the building are hidden from street, due to the fact that the building will be constructed on an angle.
- A future patio will be constructed close to the walking trail for use by his staff.
- The owner is aware of the hours (7 a.m. to 7 p.m.) for the pickup of refuse.
- Planning Commissioners are excited that the owner is looking seriously at making the office a “Green Building”. The contractor explained how they were using a bio-swale and energy efficient heating and cooling.

Public hearing was opened and closed at 7:30 p.m. since there were no comments from the audience.

Ms. Verbeke at 7:31 p.m. moved to recommend to City Council approval of the Site Plan for Dr. Michael Tobola Family Dentistry Office Building subject to staff and consultant conditions.

Supported by Mr. Beidoun.

VOTE: Yes: Beidoun, Doyle, Hitchcock, Hurt-Mendyka, Mitchell, Pierce, Verbeke

No: None

Abstained: Ouellette

Motion Carried (7-0-1)

Meeting was recessed at 7:32 p.m.

Meeting was reconvened at 7:36 p.m.

5b. Recommendation for Approval of the Site Plan, Special Land Use and Tree Removal Permits for Kensington Community Church (7:37 p.m.)

Ms. Hurt-Mendyka and Mr. Cohen explained that Kensington Community Church requested approval to construct a 1,500 seat, 72,084 sq. ft. church facility on a site zoned R-1A, One-Family Residential district. The property is located at the southeast corner of Dutton Road and Bald Mountain Road.

Kensington Community Church is a rapidly growing non-denominational church with an estimated 11,000 weekly attendees. The church has 4 campuses; which include a regional hub in Troy and satellite campuses in Birmingham (Groves High School), Rochester Hills (Adams High School), and Clinton Township (John Armstrong Performing Arts Center).

This site was chosen as the church’s 2nd regional hub due to its location along the I-75 and M-24 corridors. The church’s growth strategy is to create circles of satellite campuses in facilities they rent clustered around a centralized hub campus in a facility they own. The idea is that the regional “hub” churches, Troy and Auburn Hills, would serve as base locations that send people out on mission work in their community and launch other satellite campuses.

This is a request for approval to construct a 1,500 seat, 72,084 sq. ft. church facility on a site zoned R-1A, One-Family Residential district. The property is located at the southeast corner of Dutton Road and Bald Mountain Road.

Kensington North is expected to serve up to 4,500 attendees over 3 Sunday services between 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The church may add a 5:30 p.m. Saturday service in the future.

Christopher Aller, with SA & A Architects introduced the church project to the Planning Commission. The following is the outline of his presentation:

- *Introduction of Kensington Church*
 - *History and background of Kensington Church*
 - *Video*
- *Architectural presentation*
 - *Summary of the proposed project – computer animation*
 - *Site Details*
 - *Placement of the building*
 - *Parking lot layout*
 - *Traffic study*
 - *LEED site initiatives*
 - *Landscaping*
 - *Community input – Addressing Mr. Heilbrun’s concerns - increased landscaping to the south*
 - *Storm water Management – water quality improvement*
 - *Site lighting*
 - *Building Details*
 - *Character of the church community is reflected in the style of the building*
 - *Lively, energetic, dynamic, not your typical church.*
 - *Layout of the building*
 - *Material selection – scale and texture*
 - *Building height*
 - *LEED design features – reduction in water use, reduction in energy use, recycling, air quality, efficient HVAC systems, recycled and local material use*

The Commission’s discussion yielded the following:

- The church plans on constructing a LEED certified building.
- There will be no road access to Bald Mountain Road.
- The church worked very hard with Dave and Ann Heilbrun to accommodate their concerns. A custom buffer will be constructed.
- The building will be constructed on the center of the site.
- Based upon the number of seats in the church 500 total parking spaces are required and 623 parking spaces are depicted.
- Light poles shall be limited to 20 feet in height.
- This parcel will be created via a land division/combination, which has been submitted under a separate application.
- The retention pond is on the south of the site.
- They do not plan on importing soil to the site.
- The storm water will be directed with open bio-swales throughout the site to help water quality.
- The facility could potentially grow up to 120,000 square feet, if a training and children’s wing is added.
- At this time, the church does not envision increasing the auditorium size or adding a chapel.
- The church is required to plant 246 replacement trees on site. Of these, 241 are required for the previous mass-grading/soil moving operation; and an additional 5 trees are proposed to be

removed on the west side of Bald Mountain Road for a proposed sanitary sewer connection. The equivalents of 549 replacement trees are proposed.

- Money will be put into escrow for the Bald Mountain Road bike path - paths are required both on Bald Mountain and Dutton Road.
- Kensington is a non-denominational, non-profit church, owned by its member with a board of directors.

The Commission's concerns are the following:

- The building façade was too busy and too colorful.
- Traffic study comparison used only weekend days. Though not proposed at this time, future services could occur during week days.
- Traffic flow is a concern with church members turning movements in/out of Dutton road.
- Traffic study used Y2000 data which they do not feel is current. Mr. Cohen explained all municipalities across the United States use the same national standard for churches.
- The changeable copy sign design.
- Church's patrons using Bald Mountain Road. They would like to see a road sign indicating "no left turn between certain hours" on Dutton Road for Bald Mountain Road.
- If services are added on different days besides Sunday, the traffic could conflict with The Palace of Auburn Hills' traffic.
- A traffic study was not done at Dutton Road and Lapeer Road, since it was not requested by Oakland County Road Commission.
- There is concern about the impact on the road network if services are added for major holidays and weekday events.

Ms. Becky Lee, Campus Director, stated the design of the outside of the building and changeable copy sign are still open to changes. It is a very early stage in the design process. She will look into the Amber Alert for the changeable copy sign.

Public hearing was opened at 9:01 p.m.

Ms. Lee responded to Mr. Bennett's question is that the church's name, Kensington, is so named because the first church service was held at Kensington Middle School. Also, the music at the church services is considered contemporary played by a band and vocalist.

Mr. Heilbrun a resident on Bald Mountain Road, is concerned about the height of the church, the building is being constructed on the highest point of the site. He is also concerned about traffic using Bald Mountain Road. Mr. Heilbrun questioned the lights on the site and feels the building is a steel structure warehouse, which he does not care for. He mentioned a road that could be built going around the structure closer to his property and he is afraid there maybe a noise issue. He stated he saw a halo around top of building originally proposed. Mr. Aller verified that the halo is not being considered and the lights will be minimized at night.

Mr. Aller stated the reason the building is proposed in the middle of the site is to not to have to place the building closer to Mr. Heilbrun's property. He further explained, on behalf of the church, that noise (music, etc) will not be emitted beyond the building and that the church will abide by the City's noise ordinance.

Ms. Laura Ochs resident on Bald Mountain Road feels the building looks like a "clown facility". She feels the façade is very unattractive and does not fit into the area. She also agrees that the traffic study data used is too old. Another of her concerns is larger church traffic volumes on Bald Mountain Road. Ms. Ochs questioned if there could be alternatives to the height and façade.

Public hearing closed at 9:48 p.m.

Most commissioners questioned if further consideration could be made for the façade to be revisited regarding colors and the design. Ms. Mitchell was wondering if the church could poll more of their neighbors regarding the façade and also obtain a study on weekday traffic.

Mr. Ouellette recommended that Kensington Community Church have sample of materials and actual colors for the City Council Meeting.

In response to a question, Mr. Cohen explained if Kensington Community Church decided to broadcast or use satellite they would need to obtain a Special Land Use from the city, if the dish exceeded sizes established in the zoning ordinance.

Ms. Verbeke would like someone to contact Oakland County Road Commission to see if a “No Left Turn Sign” could be installed indicating non-use when the church is in service.

Ms. Doyle would like City Council take a more serious look into traffic implications from further developments (e.g. the subdivisions at Squirrel/Dutton and commercial developments at Dutton/M-24).

Mr. Pierce stated the traffic study was very conservative which indicates a minimal effect on the road network. Kensington already has an established church in Troy, in a much more congested area, with the same amount of participants and handling it well. He also reminded everyone that the height of this church is the same height of the Apostolic Church on Squirrel Road.

Mr. Ouellette at 10:09 p.m. moved to recommend to City Council approval of the Special Land Use Permits, Site Plan, and Tree Removal Permit for Kensington Community Church – North Campus subject to staff and consultant conditions.

Supported by Ms. Mitchell.

VOTE: Yes: Beidoun, Doyle, Hitchcock, Hurt-Mendyka, Mitchell, Ouellette, Pierce, Verbeke

No: None

Motion Carried (8-0)

Meeting was recessed at 10:10 p.m.

Meeting was reconvened at 10:16 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS - (10:17 p.m.)

The meeting for Tuesday, April 15th at 6:00 p.m. is scheduled in the Wesson Room at the Community Center. Discussion will tentatively involve meeting with OHM for a discussion on roundabouts and long range planning issues.

The meeting scheduled for June 5th has been rescheduled until June 19th, and will be held in the Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Cohen stated Chrysler is selling some of their property in OakTec Park.

Ms. Verbeke asked Mr. Cohen to look into traffic problem with vehicles cutting through Commonwealth now that Walton Boulevard is closed.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Hurt-Mendyka advised the planning commissioners of the “Green Building Seminar” scheduled for Thursday, March 27, 2008 starting at 8:00 a.m. at the Community Center.

Mr. Cohen advised the commissioners that City of Ann Arbor is looking into passing a Citizen Participation Ordinance, and they will be meeting with Mr. Walterhouse, the Assistant City Manager and Mr. Cohen on Tuesday, March 25, 2008. He invited all the commissioners to attend.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is April 3, 2008.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 p.m.

Jeanne Tyler
Clerk III