

**CITY OF AUBURN HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

June 1, 2006

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Hurt-Mendyka called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present. Beidoun, Doyle, Hammond, Hitchcock, Hurt-Mendyka, Ouellette,
Patterson, Pierce, Verbeke
Absent: None
Also Present. City Planner Cohen, TIFA Chair Bennett
Guests. 8

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

PERSON WISHING TO BE HEARD – None

MINUTES -

Mr. Pierce to approve the minutes of May 18, 2006 with noted corrections.

Supported by Mr. Beidoun

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

No: None

Motion Carried (9-0)

PETITIONER –

Auburn Financial Center

Revised PUD Step One – Concept Plan and PUD Step Two - Site Plan for Building A

Ms. Hurt-Mendyka presented the request for approval for a revised PUD Step One and PUD Step Two Site Plan to allow construction of a 297,469 square foot building and parking structure on the site. The property is located on Five Points Drive between Squirrel Road and University Drive.

Mr. Cohen summarized the following key changes to the project since concept plan review: 1) decrease in building height; 2) increase in building size of Building A; 3) decrease in the number of parking spaces provided for Building A; and 4) improvement of tree planting plan. Mr. Cohen explained the Planning Commission and City Council should review and accept the proposed changes to the previously approved concept plan prior to the approval of the site plan for Building A.

Mr. Mark Alpine, developer for Auburn Financial Center, submitted his presentation with the following highlights:

- The height of Building A is proposed to be reduced by 22'
- The floor area of Building A is proposed to be increased by 33,143 sq. ft. The proposed building is slightly bigger because the office space is replacing the proposed parking deck area that would have been built on the bottom floors of the building.
- Parking provided for Building A is proposed to be reduced by 137 spaces.
- The parking deck is proposed to be physically separated from Building A, thus altering the positioning and setbacks of the buildings on the site. The parking deck is now proposed to be constructed between Buildings A and B, with only 3 levels versus the originally proposed 5 levels.
- 40% of the building is pre-leased and another 30% are willing to commit once the applicant has a defined start date.
- Building A will start construction in Fall 2006 and will be completed in Spring 2008. He estimates a lease-up period of 18 months, with Building A being fully leased by Summer 2009.

- Permission requested to have until April 2010 to seek Step Two approval for Building B to ensure that adequate time is allotted to evaluate the project.
- A traffic light will be added on Squirrel Road, near Five Points Drive, so traffic can cross over to go north on Squirrel Road.
- The crossover on University will be moved to align with Five Points Drive with a traffic light for smoother traffic flow. The developer's traffic study indicated 90% of the tenants will be utilizing I-75 to arrive at this site.
- The traffic lights will be installed as soon as the building permit process begins.
- They are expecting to exceed the LEED certification going either platinum or silver certificate.
- The landscaping has been increased and will exceed the city's landscape requirements.
- Building B will need to be approved by the city before any construction can begin. It will give the city a chance to review the impact of traffic, the parking and the construction process.
- The traffic impact was based on 1,600 cars being added to the site. With only Building A being constructed the impact will be much less at this time.

The Commission's discussion yielded the following:

- According to Mr. McAlpine, the City of Auburn Hills has the highest occupancy rate of office space in the state.
- There is a joint venture with Oakland University where the tenants will be provided with IT support on lease basis, and students from Oakland University will intern at the data center in the Auburn Financial Center building.
- Both buildings will look the same on the outside but actual office square footage can be adjusted in the second building.
- If parking does become an issue another alternative could be purchasing the parcel to the south or putting in a parking deck under the second building.
- A decision regarding the need for additional parking will be made by the developer at 75% occupancy.
- The parking structure will be constructed with natural limestone.
- The parking structure is open with tree screening.
- Closing in a parking structure can raise health and safety issues.
- There will be private guards on this site.
- 26 large trees will be planted along Joswick and they will be planted at the beginning of the project.
- An estimated cost to obtain LEED certification is \$1-2 million dollars: 1) needed to hire an outside firm to confirm all requirements are met; 2) this is considered a pilot program; 3) cost recovery will be considered on a long term basis; 4) increases on contractor's costs; and 5) need to hire a consultant that the site meets city's codes.
- The developer will report back to the Planning Commission to explain his LEED experience, so they can learn along with the developer.
- There will be roof top satellites that will be screened.
- The time frame on the road improvements is contingent on: 1) discretion of the city; 2) when the project actually begins; 3) length of the permit process; 4) approval for the light on north Squirrel Road; and 5) weather conditions.
- The developer will look into the U-Turn on University for traffic coming and going from Five Points Drive to see where a traffic light would be most viable. The applicant committed to be prepared to explain to the City Council in further detail how the traffic flow will work for this area.
- Construction will be performed Monday through Saturday, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and this information will be put into a written agreement with their contractors.
- All construction equipment will be contained on site.
- A restaurant, with outdoor seating, is still being constructed in Building A; several high-end restaurants are being considered.
- Some Commissioner's were concerned about a building this large conserving energy and water; the developer explained some of the inside lights are on for safety factors and outside lights will be adjusted accordingly. Also, the irrigation system will be monitored closely in this building since there will be employees available 24 hours a day.
- No up-lighting will be permitted on the west side of the building.
- Off site parking has been discouraged.

- Traffic count will be done after the building is occupied to determine if Joswick needs to be made into a cul de sac.

Some members of the Planning Commission had concerns with the following:

- Changes to the plan and need for revised PUD Step One review.
- Deficiency in the number of parking spaces provided.
- The expanded footprint of Building A.
- The height of the building was too tall.
- The traffic light and turning movements at University and Five Points needs to be reviewed more extensively.

Ms. Hammond left at 8:55 p.m.

Public hearing was opened at 9:02 p.m.

Patty Hassett, a resident on Joswick, asked if allowing PUD Steps 1 and 2 to be reviewed together set a precedent for future projects in the city. Mr. Cohen and Ms. Hurt-Mendyka explained it would not set a precedent since this was a unique situation and the changes to the concept plan are minor in nature. She is concerned about the height of the buildings.

Public hearing was closed at 9:12 p.m.

Ms. Doyle moved to recommend to City Council approval of the revised PUD Step One – Concept Plan for the Auburn Financial Center.

Supported by Mr. Ouellette.

**VOTE: Yes: Beidoun, Doyle, Ouellette, Patterson, Pierce,
No: Hitchcock, Hurt-Mendyka, Verbeke**

Motion Carried (5-3)

Mr. Beidoun moved to recommend to City Council approval of the revised PUD Step Two – Site Plan for Building A of the Auburn Financial Center.

Supported by Mr. Patterson.

**VOTE: Yes: Beidoun, Doyle, Ouellette, Patterson, Pierce,
No: Hitchcock, Hurt-Mendyka, Verbeke**

Motion Carried (5-3)

4141 Joslyn Road – Public Hearing
Rezoning from I-1 to B-2 District

Ms. Doyle moved to table this item to the July 6, 2006 meeting.

Supported by Ms. Verbeke.

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

Motion Carried (8-0)

AMPG Building Addition – Public Hearing
Special Land Use Permit, Site Plan, and Tree Removal Permit

Mr. Verbeke moved to bring this item back from the table.

Supported by Ms. Doyle.

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

Motion Carried (8-0)

Ms. Hurt-Mendyka presented the request for approval for a Special Land Use Permit, Site Plan and Tree Removal Permit to allow construction of a 39,434 square foot addition to an existing business in a I-2, General Industrial district. The property is located at 4120 Luella Lane on north of Harmon Road.

Mr. Cohen noted:

- This property is located next to the landfill.
- Proposing a shop/warehouse addition.
- The outside storage will be hidden from view from Harmon Road.

The Commission's discussion yielded the following:

- The company is a Tool & Die mold company for the automobile industry.
- The site meets parking requirements.
- All dirt will be removed from the site.
- The company could have up to 15 new automobiles parked in outside storage for testing, at a time.
- The outside storage, including vehicle storage, will be located between the new building and the OHD landfill.

Public hearing was opened and closed at 9:27 p.m., since there were comments from the audience.

Mr. Ouellette moved to recommend approval to City Council approval of the Special Land Use Permit, Site Plan, and Tree Removal Permit for the AMPG Building Addition and associated outside storage area.

Supported by Ms. Doyle.

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

Motion Carried (8-0)

OLD BUSINESS -

Mr. Cohen advised the board that the Knollwood/Oaknoll concerns were being addressed by city staff and a letter will be forthcoming.

Mr. Pierce stated that Dutton Road is now open.

Mr. Cohen is asking the commissioners to locate their Planning Commission certificates so he can provide them to MSU.

NEW BUSINESS –

Ron Melchert has been named the Director of Department of Public Works, replacing Mike Culpepper.

COMMUNICATIONS –

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING - The next scheduled meeting is June 15, 2006.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Jeanne Tyler.
Clerk III