

**“Not Yet Approved”
CITY OF AUBURN HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

September 7, 2006

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

ROLL CALL: Present. Beidoun, Doyle, Hammond, Hitchcock, Hurt-Mendyka, Ouellette,
Patterson, Pierce, Verbeke
Absent. None
Also Present. City Planner Cohen
Guests. 9

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

PERSON WISHING TO BE HEARD – None

MINUTES -

Ms. Verbeke moved to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission/Recreation Commission Meeting of August 17, 2006 with corrections.

Supported by Ms. Doyle.

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

No: None

Motion Carried (9-0)

Mr. Pierce moved to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission/Tax Increment Finance Authority Meeting of August 17, 2006.

Supported by Ms. Doyle

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

No: None

Motion Carried (9-0)

PETITIONER –

5a. Site Plan - YourSource Management Group

Ms. Hurt-Mendyka and Mr. Cohen presented the request for Site Plan approval to allow the renovation of an existing building into a 2,980 square foot office building on a 0.74 acre site, zoned VC, Village Center district. The site is located at the 69 Squirrel Court.

Mr. Ouellette requested to abstain from voting in this matter due to his involvement with the property sale transaction.

The Commission's discussion yielded the following:

- The applicant will make every attempt to save the mature trees along the eastern property line.
- The 25 foot easement is included within the wetland setback
- The picnic area will not influence the 25 foot pathway easement.
- The construction should take 2 to 4 months to complete.
- The contractor is aware of the allowable construction hours per the city's zoning ordinance.
- The utilities will be under the road, there are two options to install utilities which would be an open curb cut or directional bore.

Ms. Verbeke moved to recommend to City Council approval of the Site Plan for YourSource Management Group subject to the conditions listed in the staff report.

Supported by Mr. Beidoun.

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

Motion Carried (8-0)

5b. Site Plan and Tree Removal Permit - Dean Industrial Subdivision, Lots 7 & 8

Ms. Hurt-Mendyka and Mr. Cohen presented the request for Site Plan and Tree Removal Permit approval to allow the construction of 2 industrial buildings totaling 21,354 sq. ft. on a 2.6 acre site, zoned I-1, Light Industrial district. The site is generally located at the terminus of Paldan Drive.

The Commission's discussion yielded the following:

- The proposed site abuts E. Dale Fisk Hawk Woods Nature Center.
- One landmark tree needs to be removed; a 24 inch cherry tree due to the grading. Evergreen trees will be planted for a buffer.
- The 2 buildings will share the same driveway.
- Both buildings will be 80 percent occupied.
- A Restoration Company is proposed to occupy one building. No hazardous chemicals are used in the restoration process.
- There is no room on the site for outside storage.
- The connection and repair to the existing detention basin will be addressed by the contractor.

The public hearing was opened and closed at 7:26 p.m., since there were no comments from the audience.

Ms. Verbeke moved to recommend to City Council approval of the Site Plan and Tree Removal Permit for Dean Industrial Subdivision – Lots 7 and 8.

Supported by Mr. Ouellette.

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

Motion Carried (9-0)

5c. Special Land Use Permit / Outside Storage of Materials and Vehicles - Commercial Contracting

Ms. Hurt-Mendyka and Mr. Cohen presented the request for approval to enlarge the applicant's existing outside storage area at 4260 N. Atlantic Boulevard from 1,800 sq. ft. to 17,300 sq. ft. to meet their current needs. The original permit was approved by the City Council in 1999. The site is located at 4260 N. Atlantic Boulevard.

The Commission's discussion yielded the following:

- The new storage area will be screened on three sides with a 10 foot, 3 inch masonry wall.
- The outside storage can not be completely enclosed due to truck maneuvering and snow removal.
- There will be additional arborvitaes planted on the west side of the site and 9 new 8 foot evergreen trees planted adjacent to the building.
- Business has changed due to owning more vehicles/equipment versus leasing. Also, there is a decline in business due to their close ties with automotive industry.
- The maintenance on the vehicles is completed inside their warehouse, and all disposal of oil and parts are in accordance with the laws.

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

- Impact on the vacant property to the west.
- The necessity for such a large increase in outside storage space.

The public hearing was opened and closed at 7:35 p.m., since there were no comments from the audience.

Mr. Ouellette moved to recommend to City Council approval of the Special Land Use Permit for Commercial Contracting to allow the outside storage of materials and vehicles as proposed by the applicant.

Supported by Ms. Doyle.

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

No: None

Motion Carried (9-0)

5d. Special Land Use / Automatic Changeable Copy Sign Permit - Red Ox Tavern

Ms. Hurt-Mendyk and Mr. Cohen presented the request from The Red Ox Tavern for a Special Land Use Permit approval to utilize an automatic changeable copy sign at 3773 E. Walton Boulevard.

The Commission's discussion yielded the following:

- The sign has already been installed due to miscommunication between the business and the Building Department.
- Property is unique because the business sits back 360 feet from Walton Boulevard.
- Red Ox does not own the property directly to the east or west of the driveway.
- The brightness of the sign will be regulated through the different seasons.
- Red Ox Tavern will verify the intervals for the text change is no quicker than 90 seconds intervals.
- Recommended that Red Ox Tavern look into the Amber Alert Program.
- Federal law prohibits the city from addressing the contact actual digital text.

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

- The sign should not be used until the business opens, which is currently 11:00 a.m.
- Leaving the sign on until 1:30 p.m. and promoting last call. Mr. Cohen explained the decision on the sign operation hours was decided by the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- Rex Ox Tavern's delay in addressing the Special Land Use Permit.

The Planning Commission requested that Rex Ox Tavern provide an update to the City Council regarding their participation in the Amber Alert Program and compliance with the 90 second interval for text change.

The public hearing was opened and closed at 7:55 p.m., since there were no comments from the audience.

Ms. Doyle moved to recommend to City Council approval of the Special Land Use Permit to allow an automatic changeable copy sign for Red Ox Tavern located at 3773 E. Walton Boulevard.

Supported by Mr. Patterson.

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

No: Hitchcock

Motion Carried (8-1)

Mr. Hitchcock stated that he voted against the sign because he was concerned with the "I do not know" attitude exhibited by the applicant regarding the need for city approval, text change intervals, and safety concerns.

OLD BUSINESS –

6a. RV / Vehicle Storage Text Amendment

Mr. Cohen explained that the City Council reviewed the latest amendment to this section of the Zoning Ordinance on July 24, 2006, but no action was taken. Members of the City Council questioned whether or not it was the Planning Commission's intent to require RV's to park on an approved surface in the side and rear yard.

The Commission clarified their intent that RV's should be required to park on approved surfaces in the side or rear yard. Discussion ensued regarding resident's rights, the costs involved with installing an approved surface, and rear yard parking. Utilities trailer will be added back into the ordinance, with specific language to include the utilities trailers must be licensed by the State of Michigan.

Mr. Pierce moved to recommend to City Council that "utility trailer" be placed back into definition of recreational vehicle with the added provision that the definition of recreational vehicle to include all vehicles subject to licensing by the State of Michigan. It is the Planning Commission intent and preference that recreational vehicles be parked on an approved surface in the front, side, and rear yard.

Supported by Ms. Doyle.

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

No: None

Motion Carried (9-0)

Mr. Pierce commented that by adding utilities trailers back into the ordinance there are other paragraphs that the language needs to be added back into also. Mr. Cohen stated that those issues would be addressed prior to presentation to the City Council.

NEW BUSINESS –

7a. and 7b. Master Plans for Rochester Hills and Troy

Mr. Cohen explained that per state law, the city of Rochester Hills and city of Troy forwarded updates to their Master Land Use Plan to city of Auburn Hills for comment. There will be no impact to the city in regards to either plan.

Ms. Verbeke moved that Mr. Cohen shall contact the Oakland County Planning Department to advise them that the Auburn Hills Planning Commission has no objections to the updated master plans for the city of Rochester Hills and city of Troy.

Supported by Mr. Pierce.

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

No: None

Motion Carried (9-0)

The Commission discussed whether or not Auburn Hills should add historical sites, preserved areas and unique cultural resources to its Master Plan, like Rochester Hills. It was noted that a historical booklet on Auburn Hills will become available shortly through the City Manager's office. Another idea would be to offer incentives to homeowners such a grant or financial assistance to help preserve the city's natural historical resources. Ms. Doyle will draft a letter for the Auburn Hills Review asking residents to help prepare a list of special characteristics of their neighborhood and/or cultural resources in the surrounding areas.

7c. General Discussion Regarding Signs

Mr. Cohen provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding signs. Discussion ensued regarding changes to the sign ordinance. The style, height, and size of signs were discussed.

The Commission's discussion yielded the following:

- Signs are very important to businesses for the advertisement value and locating a business.
- One idea would be to offer incentives to businesses to update their signs.
- Continue to allow pole signs, but they should be further back from the property line.
- Allow smaller sign size for a pole sign versus allowing larger sign on a monument.
- Monument signs should be allowed closer to the road.
- Request sheathing built around the base of a pole sign or a percentage of the pole.
- Allow smaller leasing signs.
- The purpose of the sign can help determine the style of the sign.

- Pros and cons of requiring Special Land Use permit for pole signs were discussed, with no consensus.

Mr. Cohen will proceed with the amendment to sign ordinance and bring it back to the Planning Commission for review on October 5, 2006.

7d. Subdivision Control Ordinance

Mr. Cohen reviewed the revised City of Auburn Hills Subdivision Control Ordinance with the Commission. He explained that it was a comprehensive update of the original ordinance adopted by the Pontiac Township Board in 1967 and that it was a "house keeping" revision intended to coordinate our rules with the Michigan Land Division Act.

Some Commissioners requested notification when a subdivision is reviewed by the City Council. Mr. Cohen advised against the request since it exceeded state law requirements.

The 1st reading of the Ordinance is scheduled to be reviewed by the City Council on October 9, 2006.

Mr. Cohen thanked Commissioner Pierce for his assistance with this matter.

COMMUNICATIONS –

8a. Sunset Terrace Site Condominiums – Revised Home Size

Mr. Cohen explained that the Saylor Building Company has notified the city that they plan to build smaller homes in their project than originally projected due to the economy and housing market. They have indicated that they plan to market their lots with 1,350 sq. ft. colonial homes, in lieu of the 1,700 sq. ft. to 2,100 sq. ft. homes discussed last year. The R-3 District requires homes to be a minimum 950 sq. ft., thus their revised home size still exceeds ordinance requirements. Staff had no objection to the change. It was the consensus of the Planning Commission that the change was acceptable.

8b. Cancellation of September 21st Planning Commission due to September 14th Joint Meeting with TIFA

It was agreed that the September 21, 2006 meeting should be canceled due to the September 14, 2006 meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING –

The next scheduled meeting is September 14, 2006. It is a joint meeting hosted by TIFA. The meeting begins at 5:00 p.m. in the Wesson Room at the Community Center. Meeting will end around 6:45 p.m. due to Zoning Board of Appeals meeting scheduled for 7:00 p.m. the same night.

ADJOURNMENT -

The meeting was adjourned at 9:53 p.m.

Jeanne Tyler.
Clerk III