

MINUTES OF A REGULAR VOTING MEETING OF THE
FAIRFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION
MARCH 10, 2021

Scott Lepsky called the Regular Meeting of the Fairfield Planning Commission to order. Members present: Scott Lepsky, Don Hassler, Martin Medler, Melissa O'Brien, Bill Woeste, and Gwen Ritchie. Motion to excuse Brian Begley carried unanimously.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held January 27, 2021 were approved with changes to the last two sentences of the first paragraph on page three. Mr. Lepsky welcomed Mr. Medler to the Planning Commission. Mr. Medler is replacing Dean Langevin on the Planning Commission. He said he is thankful for Dean Langevin's service to the City of Fairfield over the last several years.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- I. Revised Concept and Final Development Plan/Meijer Gilmore PUD – Hypershine Carwash – Meijer Dr.

Erin Lynn, Planning Manager, briefly gave an overview of the PUD process.

An application has been submitted for a Final Development Plan for a Hypershine Carwash on approximately one acre of land located at the southeastern corner of the Meijer store parking lot at 6325 S. Gilmore Road. The proposed car wash will be located in the Meijer Gilmore PUD. The use change from a parking lot to a car wash requires a revised concept and final development plan. Prior to this application, the Chick fil A and Dunkin' Restaurant projects were also required to obtain approval; as the original plan called for perpetual green space in their locations. At the Joint Public Hearing with City Council on Monday, March 8, Councilman Scharringhausen asked the Planning Commission to determine whether or not the use is appropriate for the site and if it complies with the comprehensive plan. Staff requested the applicant discuss flipping the site plan so the entrance would face Casual Drive and S. Gilmore Road. The building elevations were discussed. The proposed building will be constructed entirely of masonry materials-brick and stone. Ms. Lynn requested the applicant to state if architectural features could be added to the exit to dress up that side of the building. The signage package was included in the slides; in addition to various wall signage, a 7-foot-tall, 22 square foot ground sign is proposed. It will be constructed using masonry products that match the building. The landscape plan that was submitted is generous. A small amount of gravel is shown

at the entrance of the building. Hardscape is usually not permitted, but because of the large amount of water involved, mulch would likely wash away. Screening could not be provided along Casual Drive because of the layout of the site. Two light poles are proposed that are shoebox style so the lights shine downward and not outward.

Rob Painter, with RVP Engineering, was in attendance. He stated that Meijer and Hypershine have a working relationship; there are other Hypershine carwashes located in Meijer parking lots in the region. The traffic count is good for a car wash on S. Gilmore Road. Hypershine is a high-end car wash; the vacuums and cleaning supplies are free. He said he understands that Fairfield Forward discourages auto centered usage in this area, like a gas station with noxious fumes and chemicals. Hypershine is a nice looking building that fits in with the grocery store and two drive-thru restaurants that are in the vicinity. It fits as a mixed use offering in the area. It is currently a parking lot and he thinks the car wash will be a better use of the property. He discussed flipping the layout of the site. Hypershine prefers their customers to make left turns onto their properties because right turns require customers to look over the top of their cars to find their way into the site. They also don't want to send their customers around to the back of the site. This layout works well for the use of the building. Mr. Hassler stated that the exit side of the building looks unflattering. Mr. Lepsky said the back looks non-descript; the Fairfield Forward plan asks for more. He suggested looking at adding awnings like on the front or other dimensional elements. Mr. Painter indicated that if these changes were going to make or break the deal then they would be willing to consider adding some additional architectural features. Ms. Ritchie asked why they were locating on this corner as it seems like the other corner would work better for traffic flow. She said she could see traffic backing up onto Casual Drive on the first pretty day when people want a car wash. Mr. Painter stated that this is the only lot that Meijer was interested in selling to them at this time. He said the car wash can service 100 cars per hour. He estimates that the peak times for this location during the week will be in the morning with traffic heading to work on 275 and on the weekend around noon. Ms. Lynn stated that the Public Works Department has seen the plans and they did not indicate any concerns regarding traffic. Mr. Lepsky asked if Meijer planned to sell off other parts of the parking lot for development. Ms. Lynn stated that Meijer has not approached the city with a plan, but staff has seen an unofficial conceptual plan that does show additional lots parceled off from the parking lot. Mr. Lepsky said he was concerned about not having a cohesive plan from Meijer; Ms. Ritchie agreed and stated she is concerned about traffic issues. Mr. Woeste said he was concerned that they did not have an overall plan to review. Mr. Painter stated Meijer can only parcel off so much of the parking lot before they would not meet their parking minimum requirement.

There was discussion regarding the timeline of the PUD approval and the items that have been discussed that need further information or review. One issue is the impact of traffic on Casual Drive. The second issue is the addition of architectural elements on the exit side of the building

facing Casual Drive. The third item is the overall Meijer long term plans for development. Mr. Painter said he would do his best to get in touch with Meijer and ask for more information as to their future plans for the entire site. Mr. Woeste also asked Ms. Lynn to get in touch with Meijer.

Scott Lepsky, seconded by Gwen Ritchie, motioned to table the request to allow for additional discussion. Motion carried 6-0.

II. Conditional Use – P & V Auto Repair – 1354 Hicks Blvd.

Ms. Lynn gave an overview of the conditional use process.

An application has been submitted for a motor vehicle service facility in the M-2 zoning district. The business two doors down from this address received approval for a similar use about 5 years ago. The applicant from that business moved to the building next door and was denied conditional use approval to operate from that space in December 2020. The subject property is an 8300 square foot building on approximately a ½ acre lot. The applicant is proposing to use just under half of the building or 3100 square feet. The owner of the building will operate a sign business in the other half of the building. There are six parking spaces in front of the proposed garage and four tandem spaces proposed on the north side of the building. Three spaces are available inside the building. Multiple vehicles are currently parked on the north side of the building, but they will be gone in April with the current business owner leaves. There are three spaces in front of the sign studio. No parking is permitted on the street for either business.

Hamlet Vargas, with P & V Auto Repair, and Erlin Dominguez, building owner, were in attendance. A welding shop previously occupied the building. Mr. Dominguez previously operated his business in Hamilton. He is a licensed sign contractor in the City of Fairfield. He stated that he will park his work truck inside the building in his space. He plans to have two additional employees. He will not need any additional parking spaces other than the three he has in front of his space. Mr. Vargas stated he has room for three cars and lifts inside the building as well as the parking outside that was previously discussed. He said he will not need more than 7 spaces because he will not store cars on the lot overnight. Ms. Lynn stated that the Commission wants to make sure there is enough parking and there are not a lot of cars left on site. Mr. Lepsky discussed other car repair facilities that operate as drop off and pick up the next day. Hicks Blvd. is not conducive to tow trucks bringing in wrecked cars coming in and out. Mr. Vargas said he will not be doing big jobs or body work, just service work like oil changes and brake jobs. The cars will be driven in by the owner and driven out; they will not need to be towed in or out. Mr. Dominguez stated he will not allow his tenants to park on the street. There was discussion regarding the gate that screens the parking on the north side of the building. The gate can swing both ways and Mr. Vargas intends to keep it. He does not plan to store anything outside, including tires and car parts. Mr. Hassler expressed concern about the business not having enough parking spaces and said he wants to clean up Hicks Blvd. He stated that he is not supportive of this type of business. Mr. Lepsky said he doesn't think Hicks Blvd. is a good location for this type of business. Mr. Woeste said he appreciates the applicants coming in first to get approval before moving into the space. A lot of these types of businesses come in after the

fact to get approval. Mr. Vargas said he wants to be honest and do things the right way. There was discussion regarding approval with a 6-month review. The applicant agreed to a 6-month review if necessary. Mr. Lepsky said he would ordinarily be against the conditional use, but since the owner of the building will operate his business next door to the applicant and the applicant is willing to be given a 6-month trial period, he is willing to consider approving the conditional use.

Scott Lepsky, seconded by Bill Woeste, motioned to approve the conditional use application with the following conditions:

1. The conditional use is only for the applicant (Hamlet Vargas) and shall not be transferable without obtaining Planning Commission approval.
2. The applicant shall apply for a certificate of occupancy prior to occupying the building.
3. The parking lot shall be striped and sealed per the approved drawing. All vehicles, both employees and vehicles waiting to be repaired, shall be parked in those spaces. The striping shall be completed prior to receiving a certificate of occupancy.
4. No auto body repair work shall be conducted on site. Only completely intact and nondamaged vehicles are permitted on site. All motor vehicles on site must be licensed and operable.
5. No outdoor storage of any items, including vehicle parts, is permitted.
6. All repair work is to occur inside the building.
7. No painting of any sort may be done in the building unless a paint spray booth installed. A paint spray booth requires a permit from the Building and Zoning Division.
8. All vehicles must be able to be moved to and from the site on their own without the requirement of a tow truck.
9. A six-month review of the conditions of approval is required to determine continuation of the conditional use approval.

Motion carried 6-0.

REPORTS/STUDIES/GENERAL DISCUSSION

Ms. Ritchie reported that the Parks Board is currently reviewing certifications. The city recently received a grant to purchase property at the corner of Groh Lane and River Road to connect the bike trail.

Mr. Woeste reported that City Council was in still in the process of finding a new City Manager.

Ms. Lynn stated that Greg Kathman, Development Services Director, wanted her to update the Commission on the vape shops in Riegert Square. Pamela Campbell, the owner of Mother Earth, voiced concern at City Council about the vape shops and the safety of her customers; including concerns about drug deals, speeding, fights, underage customers, and trash in the parking lot. She indicated that the nail shop next door was also concerned. The Zoning Division can police the

trash and the potholes in the parking lot. The Police Department is currently investigating the businesses and will provide a report to City Council. Mr. Woeste said he met with the Police Chief and he feels confident that they have a plan. Mrs. Campbell was also involved in the conversation with the Police Chief. Mr. Lepsky stated that he looks forward to viewing the police report and wants to see communication with the other business owners.

Motion to adjourn carried unanimously.

Scott Lepsky, Chairman

Lynda McGuire, Secretary