

City of Springboro
320 West Central Avenue, Springboro, Ohio 45066

Planning Commission Work Session
Wednesday, September 14, 2011, 6:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Marie Belpulsi called the Springboro Planning Commission Work Session to order at the Springboro Municipal Building, Council Chambers, 320 West Central Avenue, Springboro, Ohio

Present: Marie Belpulsi, Chairperson, David Vomacka, Janie Ridd, Barb Gibson, Hans Landefeld,
Becky Hartle
Absent: Chris Papakirk

Staff: Chris Thompson, City Manager; Dan Boron, Planning Consultant; Elmer Dudas, City Engineer;
Raj Sharma, City Engineer; Lois Boytim, Planning Commission Secretary

II. Agenda Items

A. Town Center Overlay District Review, 75 North Main Street (SR 741), sign package

Background Information

This agenda item is based on a request filed by ABC Signs to erect a sign package for Soooogood Café, 75 North Main Street (see enclosed application dated August 8, 2011). The building is located in the Town Center Overlay District and as such certain changes to the exterior of building are subject to the District's Design Guidelines. A finding of substantial compliance with the guidelines is required, first by the Architectural Review Board (ARB) and then by the Planning Commission. This item is scheduled to be reviewed at the Monday, September 12th ARB meeting.

A sign package for this property was approved at the February 23rd Planning Commission Meeting (that approval vacated a previous sign package approval from November 2010) however that package did not include a wall sign and only a black/white ground sign. A copy of the February 23rd sign package is included in your meeting materials. The proposed signs are a match to the existing Callejo Dental Office signs in terms of design (font and size), location (on same ground sign, in same sign band on building) and material/construction however the proposed signage introduces a secondary color, red, to the Callejo Dental Office's yellow sign theme. Town Center Overlay District policy is to have all signs on a site match in terms of color.

Staff will report on the recommendation of the ARB at Wednesday night's meeting.

Discussion

Brenda Hixon, representing Shawnette Hixon of Soooogood was in attendance to answer questions of Planning Commission.

Ms. Belpulsi commented that the application was for a sign package and asked for comments from Mr. Vomacka as a representative of the Architectural Review Board.

Mr. Vomacka commented that the ARB reviewed the application on Monday, September 12th. There were comments that the board was looking in that area for signs with multiple businesses in one building to have comparable signs. This sign has different colors on the icons but the fonts, lettering colors and background colors are the same. The board felt that the signs were comparable and approved the sign.

Ms. Belpulsi asked for comments from Planning Commission.

Ms. Gibson agreed with the ARB that as long as they stay with the same font it is acceptable.

Mr. Landefeld commented that the size was minimal, if it was a huge sign he might feel more strongly.

Ms. Belpulsi asked Ms. Hixon whether she had any questions.

Ms. Hixon answered no.

Ms. Belpulsi explained that this application would be voted on by the Planning Commission at the next regular meeting September 28th.

B. Site Plan Review, 945 West Central Avenue (SR73), gasoline service station/convenience store

Background Information

This agenda item is based on an application filed by GDP Group, agent for the property owner, for Site Plan Review approval for a gasoline service station and convenience store at 945 West Central Avenue. Number of pumps; amount of square footage. The property is located on the southwest corner of West Central Avenue (SR 73) and Sharts Road. The 2.43-acre site was formerly occupied by Northern's Sunoco but is presently vacant. The property has direct frontage and access to both West Central Avenue and Sharts Road. The property also directly abuts the on- and off-ramps located on the southeast corner of the I-75/SR 73 interchange.

The subject property was subject to a recommendation from Planning Commission to City Council to approve the zoning of the property from ED, Employment Center District, to B-1, Highway Business District on February 23rd. The rezoning became effective June 19th.

Adjacent land uses include retail commercial development to the east (Arby's and Bob Evans on the east side of Sharts Road), south (Comfort Inn) and north (Chipolte, Smyth Automotive on the north side of West Central Avenue). To the west is I-75 and on- and off-ramps associated with the I-75/SR 73 interchange that is currently under construction.

Adjacent zoning includes B-4, Destination Business District, to east; ED District to the south; B-1 District to the west, north and northeast.

This item was discussed extensively at the June 8th Planning Commission Work Session. A copy of the June 8th meeting minutes is included in your packets.

Staff Comments

1. Signage not subject to Site Plan Review process. Please coordinate with Dan Fitzpatrick, Zoning Inspector, at (937) 748-6845 or danf@cityofspringboro.com on compliance with provisions of Sign Code, Chapter 826 of the Codified Ordinances.
2. Please indicate dumpster enclosure details including exterior building materials for wall and gate and color.
3. Section 1280.08(b)(2) of the Planning and Zoning Code states that "...for all uses involving fueling or drive-through facilities, the site development shall locate vehicle parking, fueling areas, outdoor apparatus and drive-through facilities behind the principal structure and away from public streets to the maximum extent feasible." It is recommended that the applicant provide a cross-section or some other depiction of the manner in which the proposed fence and landscaping will screen the fueling locations and canopy.
4. Provide elevations or other details of the proposed fueling pump islands and canopy; sheet A2 "perspective" provides a partial indication of what is proposed for the canopy.
5. At appropriate time prepare a lighting plan that is consistent with Section 1271.02, Exterior Lighting, of the Planning and Zoning Code. Please note that, based on the discussion from the June 8th meeting that only high pressure sodium lighting is permitted. Also the June 8th lighting plan based map will need to be updated to match the current site plan proposal.
6. At appropriate time provide quantities of landscaping materials proposed on sheet L-101.
7. Is the 2.43-acre subject property going to be the subject of a replat? The proposed site plan does not include the entire 2.43-acre site subject to ED to B-1 District rezoning.
8. City staff to verify right-of-way dedication necessary to accommodate future road improvements to Sharts Road.
9. Per Chapter 1280.08(a)(2), provide a 35' Public access easement along the frontage of SR 73. This area shall be maintained as open space. Remove underground storage tanks (USTs) and landscaping from this area.
10. Per Chapter 1280.08(b)(1)(C), provide a traffic study showing that the proposed use will not create a traffic hazard or excessive congestion due to its location.
11. Provide an access easement to the property west of the gas station/convenience store along the south portion of the lot, aligned with the full access curb cut along Sharts Road. Also what are long-range plans for the remainder of the site to the west?
12. Public utilities to be extended to the west for the potential user of the western portion of the lot.
13. Proposed improvements along Sharts Road not approved as shown. Roadway to be three (3) lanes 41' wide (curb to curb). ODOT Type 2 curb.
14. Provide boundary lines including bearing and distances.
15. Provide existing topography and contours with one-foot intervals.
16. Show the present zoning and existing use of all adjacent properties.
17. Provide sidewalks on West Central Avenue and Sharts Road frontages.
18. The decorative fence proposed for the northeast corner of the site may be no higher than three feet (3') per code.
19. Please contact Elmer Dudas, City Engineer by e-mail at elmer@cityofspringboro.com or (937) 748-4365 for submission requirements for formal review and approval of this site plan.
20. Provide calculations for storm water management.
21. Please label elevations as north, south, etc.
22. Clearcreek Fire District: no comments at this time.

Discussion

Michael Rubino of GDP Group and John Warmack of Designplus Architects were in attendance to answer questions of Planning Commission.

Mr. Rubino commented that they have worked on the site plan in response to the Planning Commission comments from the last work session about orienting the building. Thornton's doesn't desire to put the pumps behind the building for security and branding reasons. Rotating the building per the Planning Commission recommendation seemed to make the pumps more visible. They have modified the building, realigned the curb cuts and removed some of the parking.

Mr. Warmack commented that they have realigned the "main entry announcement" and adorned the east elevation to enhance that end of the building.

Mr. Rubino added that they have added windows on the west elevation facing SR 75. They understand that this is at the entry to the City and want the building to be the primary feature. With roadway on three sides the layout works well for Thornton's from a security and circulation standpoint.

Mr. Warmack explained CPTED, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, the concept of design that does not encourage criminal behavior.

Ms. Gibson commented that the City does have a facility that is set up that way and she doesn't know of any problems. The other streets that are skirting it change the dynamic.

Mr. Vomacka added that they have banks with the drive thru in the back. The issue here is that the access out of the facility is constrained onto Sharts Road.

Mr. Boron commented that he is aware of CPTED. Staff is not looking to hide the pumps from view, merely to screen them. That is why staff asked for an indication of what the pump island canopy would look like.

The pump island elevation was presented and reviewed. Mr. Rubino commented that there is a grade change that works in their favor.

Mr. Rubino asked for clarification of the public access easement; whether it excludes landscaping, pavement or fencing.

Mr. Boron commented that he will go over that with Mr. Rubino. The decorative fence will need to meet the fence requirements; a maximum height of three feet.

Mr. Warmack asked about how the monument sign would be treated.

Mr. Boron explained that the design and look of it is under Planning Commission review; the sign code sets the maximum height at six feet.

Mr. Rubino asked for Planning Commission comment on the landscaping and the public access easement.

Ms. Ridd commented that that is what made the corner attractive.

Mr. Vomacka asked for clarification of the landscaping.

Mr. Rubino explained that the plants marked Pp were intended to be Colorado Blue Spruces.

Mr. Vomacka commented on the proposed expansion of the pumps; that they were not being approved at this time

Mr. Rubino stated that he understood that he would have to come back to Planning Commission for that approval. Eight pumps are good at this time.

Mr. Landefeld asked for clarification about the height of the fencing.

Mr. Boron commented that the fencing could be no higher than three feet. The monument sign can be six feet high.

Mr. Rubino commented that the sign will be placed on the highest elevation of the property.

Mr. Boron commented that that is what staff was looking for; a cross section showing the pump canopy to depict that.

Mr. Rubino commented that he will bring that to the next meeting.

Ms. Gibson asked about the ladder access on the back of the building; she asked that it be moved to the south end of the building next to the dumpster.

Mr. Rubino agreed that it is possible. They could move the landscaping to screen the door.

Mr. Boron about the material proposed for the glass on the west elevation.

Mr. Warmack answered that is was a spandrel glass with a glazed appearance.

Mr. Rubino stated that they have gotten the traffic study scope from engineering and will begin working on it. He asked about site lighting; whether LED lighting was being considered.

It was explained that they were welcome to stay for the discussion of the lighting ordinance that would be the next item for the meeting.

Mr. Boron asked about the volume of glass on the building. The exterior design standards talk about glass for doors and windows. The stone area below the doors and windows on either side needs to be extended so that it is not floor to ceiling glass. Staff would like to see more of a knee wall under the windows consistent with the code. Mr. Boron gave Mr. Rubino the relevant ordinance section and will work with him to redesign.

Mr. Rubino reviewed the staff comments to make sure there were no other issues.

Mr. Boron commented that staff would need larger copies of the building elevations for the Building Department.

Mr. Warmack asked when the building materials samples would need to be provided.

Mr. Boron answered that they could be provided at the formal meeting.

The time line and points to be covered for the traffic study was discussed. Staff indicated that the Planning Commission could issue a conditional approval pending the traffic study.

Mr. Rubino will discuss with Thornton's when the traffic study would be completed and staff will place the item on the Planning Commission agenda per their request.

C. Discussion, Planning & Zoning Code Text Amendment, Section 1271.02, Exterior Lighting

Mr. Boron asked Planning Commission for questions about the proposed text amendment.

Ms. Hartle commented that the ordinance talks about presenting a uniform color on a site but it does not mention a spectrum. She thought that was the point, to have a spectrum.

Mr. Boron answered that the research shows only one community in California that regulates to color corrected temperature or some kind of standard.

Mr. Vomacka commented that this ordinance wipes out the lighting code; it says you can have anything.

Mr. Boron answered that the intensity standard is still there.

Ms. Gibson commented that when driving around Springboro the lights have a yellowish, muted, warmer cast to all the lighting around town.

Mr. Vomacka stated that he believes that what has gotten us there is most communities have something like our high pressure sodium requirement which does produces colors in certain portions of the spectrum.

Ms. Gibson commented that they haven't tied to a color spectrum; she wants that standard continued. If developers can use any type of lighting but put a filter on it that gets them back to same uniformity, she has no problem exploring that. If they will be able to use any type of lighting within their own development then they have lost their uniformity and she is opposed to that.

Mr. Boron commented that it was the consensus of the board two years ago to go to that standard; to have a consistent on-site standard.

Ms. Ridd commented that she thought that it was community wide, which is why they have the high pressure sodium requirement so that every place would look the same.

Mr. Boron commented that it was staff's interpretation that they were looking at having a standard that was uniform on a site. He is having difficulty finding a standard staff can use. Color corrected temperature is a standard that is evolving. By placing a standard based on Kelvin of color corrected temperature; they would be changing it constantly with respect to the technologies that are available. High pressure sodium will continue to be available but lesser and lesser used. LED will probably be the predominant technology in the future. Induction will probably go the way as metal halide. Metal halide is making a comeback but is not going to be the technology. It will probably be LED, high pressure sodium lesser and lesser and then the others. Using filters is an idea but is not going to be the end all. It affects the color intensity and the projection of color. It is not the panacea that it is proposed to be. It may be a way to get there. He is trying to find a standard that is enforceable and relevant.

Mr. Boron commented that he has heard other standards proposed that may be the future such as a color rendition index which may be another way to go. This is projected to be the standard by some in the industry.

Mr. Vomacka commented that he doesn't understand why they can't say that the standard is the same foot candle standards that they have currently and light generated by any available technology so long as the color corrected temperature, or whatever the right term, is in the range of 3500 or 4000 or whatever the range is to stay within the warm colors. If in the future the technology or the standard of measurement has changed they can change with it. In the meantime they have something that allows people more flexibility in the kind of fixtures and lighting they can use while retaining the effect of that lighting that they are looking for.

Ms. Gibson commented that she thought that the discussion at the last couple of meetings was that the technology was available to them. Two years ago she was not in favor of the LED or induction lighting. She was hearing recently was that through filters that they would be able to take those technologies and bring them into a realm that put them into being compatible with what they already have and what she has been comfortable with in her tenure on the Planning Commission.

Ms. Ridd asked Mr. Rubino about his experience with other communities and using LED lighting.

Mr. Rubino answered that they have not run in a color issue only an intensity issue, as long as they meet the foot candle requirements. Sometimes there has had to be some education in what LED is.

Ms. Ridd commented that their problem is the bright white light of LED rather than the softer yellow light of the high pressure sodium.

Mr. Rubino stated that they have not come across it; it doesn't mean that it isn't available. He would have to ask his vendor whether they have a yellow hue.

Ms. Ridd commented that high pressure sodium was the color target because of its soft look; that's why it was required.

Mr. Warmack commented that if you get the same color in LED would you get the same look; no one knows that yet.

Mr. Boron commented that the color temperature keeps dropping, getting into the warmer grades that have a lower K number. The technology is getting better; the lenses for LED project better opposed to high pressure sodium that has an energy inefficiency relative to LED.

Ms. Ridd remembered from the previous presentation that the reason that they stayed with high pressure sodium was because of the color of LED. At that time there wasn't any choice.

Mr. Rubino stated that he would talk to their representative at Beta Lighting about doing a presentation for Planning Commission.

Mr. Vomacka commented that he would like to loosen the standards; move with the newer technologies and long as it doesn't come at the cost of a cold, white light.

Ms. Belpulsi commented that they want to keep up with new technologies, not make it difficult on developers while maintaining a certain look for the community. She asked about the gels that could be used.

Mr. Boron answered that from what he is hearing the gels have a life span; they degrade. LED has a better lifespan.

Mr. Rubino commented that LED has a better consistency until it gives out.

Mr. Boron commented for that a standard that could be used in a code, color corrected temperature may not be the answer. If the goal is to match what is there with the high pressure range or a color or temperature maximum or minimum that is what they would be looking at.

Ms. Gibson summarized by saying that the board consensus seems to be that they want a community wide standard to replicate what they already have in the warmer hues.

Ms. Thompson commented that they need to establish the measure, whether in lumens or whatever technology, in the color they prefer as long as the level is consistent throughout the City.

Ms. Ridd commented that what they are struggling with is how to define the color description

III. Guest Comments

There were no Guest Comments.

IV. Planning Commission and Staff Comments

There were no Planning Commission and Staff Comments.

V. Adjournment

Ms. Belpulsi adjourned the Wednesday, September 14, 2011 Planning Commission Work Session at 7:01 P.M.

Marie Belpulsi, Planning Commission Chairperson

Dan Boron, Planning Consultant

Lois Boytim, Planning Commission Secretary