



**PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF CHESTERFIELD
AT CHESTERFIELD CITY HALL
FEBRUARY 27, 2012**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Mr. Bruce DeGroot
Ms. Wendy Geckeler
Ms. Laura Lueking
Ms. Debbie Midgley
Mr. Stanley Proctor
Mr. Michael Watson
Mr. Steven Wuennenberg
Chair Amy Nolan

ABSENT

Mr. Robert Puyear

Mayor Bruce Geiger
Councilmember Connie Fults, Council Liaison
City Attorney Rob Heggie
Mr. Mike Geisel, Director of Planning, Public Works and Parks
Ms. Aimee Nassif, Planning & Development Services Director
Mr. Justin Wyse, Senior Planner
Ms. Susan Mueller, Principal Engineer
Ms. Mary Ann Madden, Recording Secretary

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. SILENT PRAYER

Chair Nolan acknowledged the attendance of Mayor Bruce Geiger; Councilmember Connie Fults, Council Liaison; and Councilmember G. Elliot Grissom, Ward II.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS – None

V. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Lueking made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2012 Planning Commission Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and passed by a voice vote of 7 to 0 with 1 abstention from Commissioner DeGroot.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Chesterfield Outlets

PETITIONER

The following individuals representing the Petitioner were available for questions regarding Chesterfield Outlets:

1. Mr. Mike Doster, Doster, Ullom, 16090 Swingley Ridge, Chesterfield, MO.
2. Mr. Richard Marietta, Architect for the project, 9921 Whitworth Way, Ellicott City, MD.
3. Mr. George Stock, Stock and Associates, 257 Chesterfield Business Parkway, Chesterfield, MO.
4. Mr. Bruce Zalaznick, Managing Partner of Outlet Partners, 112 Town Center Drive, Warren, NJ.

Lighting

Commissioner Watson had the following questions regarding the proposed lighting:

- What type of lighting is being proposed?
- How bright is the lighting with respect to lumens?
- What color is the lighting?
- Is it a flashing, standard, or chase LED?
- How many LED lights are there?
- Does it look like neon at night?

Mr. Marietta gave the following information about the proposed lighting:

- The light is a continuous, white LED light – it is not a chaser.
- Information about the lumens was not available but can be provided.
- The lighting is a strip light that has the LEDs on it, which illuminates a ledge and gives the appearance of a continuous white piece of light. It does not cast vertically on a dark sky situation. It is meant to reflect on an element above it, which gives a halo look around the buildings.
- The lighting is similar to a neon or a cathode ray look.

Ms. Aimee Nassif, Planning and Development Services Director asked if the lighting is similar in intent and brightness to any of the architectural LED accent lighting seen at establishments in Chesterfield Valley, such as O'Charley's and Sonic. Mr. Marietta replied that the intent and brightness are similar.

Commissioner Watson expressed concern about the proposed lighting and the fact that it will be seen from Highway 40. Mr. Marietta responded by noting that the lighting is not continuous around the entire building – it will just be at the accent portals that accentuate the tower elements.

Parking Lot Lighting

Councilmember Connie Fults asked why flat lens fixtures are not being used on the parking lot. Mr. Marietta replied that they have chosen LED-type fixtures for the parking lot because of their energy efficiency. This lighting has 40,000 hours of operating time, which allows the lighting to be changed only once every ten years. They have also elected to bring the lights down to a level lower than the lights across the street in order to give a more uniform spread of light across the entire parking lot for pedestrian safety.

Councilmember Fults asked Staff for clarification on the proposed parking lot lighting since it is outside of the City's Lighting Ordinance. Ms. Nassif stated that the Planning Commission can consider and grant exceptions to the types of light fixtures being proposed.

Chair Nolan asked if the Planning Commission could ask the Petitioner to use the same lighting that is used across the street from the proposed development. Ms. Nassif replied that the Commission could make such a request but pointed out that the light fixtures across the street are over 40 feet tall and the proposed lighting is 10-15 feet lower in height. She also noted that the City's Lighting Ordinance was not in place when the lighting across the street was installed so she cannot guarantee what the foot candle levels are.

Mr. Justin Wyse, Senior Planner explained that the parking lot lighting does have a flat lens but does not have the bow in it, which is typically seen with non-LED, non-flat lenses. The performance of the proposed light standards and fixtures meets all of the intentions of the City's Lighting Ordinance. None of the proposed lighting trespasses above the tops of the fixtures because of the full cut-off optics.

Councilmember Fults asked for clarification as to whether the proposed parking lot lighting meets the Lighting Ordinance requirements with respect to being "flat-lens and fully-shielded" and whether it would be considered a variance from the Lighting Ordinance. Mr. Wyse indicated that it does meet the Lighting Ordinance requirements and that it would not be considered a variance.

Councilmember Fults then asked if all of the lighting mounted on the building faces downward. Mr. Wyse explained that there are one or two locations where the light is cast up. In those instances, the light fixtures have been recessed back to prevent any light from shining above the roofline.

Councilmember Fults stated that the intent of the Lighting Ordinance is that light will not trespass; that an area would not be created that is brighter than the adjacent areas causing them to become darker; and that all light would be captured within the site. She asked if the proposed lighting meets these requirements. Mr. Wyse stated that everything submitted by the Petitioner complies with these requirements.

Commissioner Watson then noted that he has researched the proposed LED-lighting and agreed that they are very efficient, along with being brighter and lower in height which gives a better dark sky profile.

Traffic – Highway 40

Commissioner DeGroot asked what steps have been taken to insure that the new development does not pose a hazard to motorists on Highway 40.

Mr. Stock stated that during the rezoning process, two professional traffic consulting firms were engaged to perform a Traffic Impact Study for this development following specific criteria outlined by MoDOT, St. Louis County, and the City. The existing conditions for the Study were established at 2014, which is the anticipated time for occupancy of the mall. Both the final Traffic Study and the Site Development Plan have been reviewed and approved by MoDOT, the County, the City and all outside agencies, which confirms that the improvements shown on the Site Development Plan are consistent with the Traffic Study and will not cause an adverse impact to the public thoroughfares.

Road Improvements

Mr. Stock then outlined the following improvements:

- An east-bound ramp to service cars coming from the south and making left-hand turns.
- The ramp for right-hand turns for westbound traffic is being extended 500 feet with a seven-foot shoulder.
- A new signal at North Outer Forty and Boone's Crossing.
- A channelized right-turn lane that allows motorists to free-flow going east across the frontage of the development.
- Traffic coming from the west will be able to flow through the intersection and have their own designated lane going west.
- The westernmost driveway is right-in, right-out. There is a raised median that divides the four lanes.
- The main entrance was designed to be large enough to accommodate a lot of left-turn movements into the site. It is not anticipated that there will be a lot of left-hand turns exiting the development.

- If the main entrance is at capacity and slow, there are an additional two lanes going east to allow motorists to access the third entrance into the development or to go yet another 1,000 feet to the far eastern end of the site for entrance.
- Internally, there are free-flow conditions into the parking lot.

Mr. Stock stated that they are very confident that the plan and proposed improvements will accommodate the development and growth out to 2034.

Commissioner DeGroot asked for confirmation that the Petitioner is convinced that the steps taken will alleviate any concerns about traffic back-ups on Highway 40. Mr. Stock replied that they are cognizant that queuing of traffic on the interstate is not desirable. The Study did contemplate this issue and the improvements proposed are designed to mitigate this from occurring. However, back-ups are still possible in the event of an accident.

Commissioner DeGroot asked how they plan to educate westbound Highway 40 motorists who are exiting on to Boone's Crossing. Mr. Stock stated that MoDOT has not been approached about advance signage. However, the project does have the advantage of 2,500 lineal feet of frontage so that motorists coming from the east will pass the entire outlet mall knowing there is an egress from the right-lane. In addition, the pavement of the turn-lanes will be striped and they are proposing signage on North Outer Forty to identify multiple driveways beyond the first driveway.

Baxter Road Overpass

Commissioner Wuennenberg referred to the Baxter Road overpass and asked if the subject development takes into consideration the completion of this overpass. Mr. Stock stated that it does and noted that there was a lot of discussion regarding it. He explained that there is an escrow of monies by the developer of Chesterfield Outlets to do a study and potentially modify the driveways. When the overpass is completed, it is anticipated that half the distribution from the east-west will be coming into the easternmost driveway, which is a conventional driveway with a very deep throat depth.

Traffic from the West

Commissioner Watson referred to motorists coming from the west, such as St. Charles, and asked if there will be any improvements to address this traffic. Mr. Stock stated such improvements will be limited to signal improvements and interconnection. There will be signal upgrades at Chesterfield Airport Road and there will be interconnection with the signals on the bridge. There will also be an additional lane on the bridge as a result of the median being reduced.

Commissioner Lueking asked if the additional lane on the bridge will be going in both directions. Mr. Stock clarified that the additional lane is going south only.

Commissioner Watson asked if any additional lanes are being added on the eastbound exit. Mr. Stock stated that no lanes are being added at this time as the Traffic Study indicated that there was not a need for them.

Level of Service – Boone’s Crossing

Commissioner Lueking inquired as to the Level of Service (LOS) currently at Boone’s Crossing and questioned whether the LOS takes into consideration baseball games, the holiday season, etc. Mr. Wyse replied that it is currently operating at a Level C and that the LOS takes into account the typical weekday P.M. peak – the LOS does not attempt to include the absolute worst case scenario. As it pertains to the athletic complex further west and any events that coincide with the Saturday mid-day traffic, those volumes are included in the 2014 project volumes, which is the base line used by the Traffic Study.

Recycling/Garbage Removal

Mr. Zalaznick stated that recycling will be available for cardboard material and that a compactor will be used for the cardboard. He also noted that the Food Court is at the rear of the building near the garbage compactors.

Parking

Commissioner Lueking inquired as to how far the parking spaces for compact cars are from the base of the levee. Mr. Stock indicated that they are approximately 20 feet from the base of the levee.

Disturbance of the Levee

Commissioner Lueking asked for information about any disturbance of the levee. Mr. Stock stated that there is no disturbance of the levee. This project is a “betterment”. The levee, and most other developments, build their parking lots on the Protective Excavation Zone. However, this site is adding several feet of fill. The buildings’ finished floors are ten feet above the Protective Excavation Zone and are one-tenth of a foot above the 500-year flood on the Missouri River. The site is nine feet higher than the ice rink and its parking lots.

Mr. Mike Geisel, Director of Planning, Public Works, and Parks stated that the Levee District has required a seepage berm behind the ice rink due to the nine-foot difference between the two sites. From the subject site, there is no seepage berm requirement.

Comments from the Levee District

Commissioner Lueking asked if the Levee District has provided comments regarding the development. Mr. Stock replied that the Levee District has provided recommendations that are consistent with the Army Corps of Engineers and which have been incorporated into the plans.

Water Table

Commissioner Lueking inquired about the depth before the water table is encountered. Mr. Stock replied that it varies noting that the water table could be the existing ground elevation in some locations. The water table fluctuates with the river but the average seasonal high ground water elevation used for the bio-retention design and infiltration is at an elevation of 451. The buildings' finished floors are at an elevation of 468.1.

Open Space and Drainage

Mr. Stock stated that the master drainage plan is a trapezoidal channel across the front of the site and due to the proximity to the levee, it requires a reverse filter. By enclosing the channel with the dual 8-foot wide, 6-foot tall box culverts, they are able to provide more green space and landscaping along the corridor.

Commissioner Watson inquired about the size of the grates on top of the culverts. Mr. Stock stated that they are large enough to accommodate lowering a piece of equipment into them for clearing the culverts. Mr. Geisel added that the City designated the size of the grates and the frequency of the access points.

Fill

Commissioner Lueking asked how high the site is being raised with fill. Mr. Stock explained that the eastern third of the site has a lot of material, which is being re-distributed across the site. Fill is also being imported to the site in order to elevate the buildings so they are one-tenth of a foot above the 500-year flood elevation of the Missouri River.

Number of Tenants

Commissioner Watson inquired into the number of tenants anticipated for the mall. It was noted that there will be approximately 100-120 tenants.

North/Levee Side of the Development

Commissioner Lueking referred to the "warehouse look" of the development from the levee and the trash dumpsters that will be visible from the levee trail system. She asked if any changes would be made or whether it would remain as submitted. Mr. Stock stated that the trash dumpsters will be enclosed by 9'x6' screens and are several hundred feet apart.

Mr. Marietta added that there are horizontal breaks in the walls to accommodate at least four 8-foot wide corridors from the inside of the mall to the exterior – it is not a continuous canvas. There are changes in color materials, parapet heights, and the textures on the wall.

Mr. Stock added that the buildings are 96 feet from the levee trail and people using the trail are not looking down on the buildings. The trail is only six feet higher than the floors of the buildings. From the trail, the trash dumpsters will appear very small.

Length of the Site

Commissioner Lueking commented on the length of the development with respect to walking the entire site. Mr. Marietta stated that the average shopper will shop one end of the site, take a break at the Food Court, and then continue shopping the other end of the site before returning to their car. He noted that the majority of outlet malls are in a racetrack configuration, but the subject site does not allow for such a design. He added that the strip configuration has been done successfully at other locations across the country with Clinton, CT being one of them.

Parking Reduction

Commissioner Lueking asked for clarification on the parking reduction. Ms. Nassif replied that the Applicant requested a parking reduction, which Staff can grant up to 10%. The parking reduction requested was 6.6%, which was approved by Staff based on the parking demand study provided and ITE data. Mr. Wyse added that the Applicant requested a reduction based on gross leasable area vs. gross floor area – the 6.6% correlates to the difference in the gross floor area to the gross leasable area. Most studies regarding shopping centers agree that the *gross leasable area* is the variable that impacts the parking.

Commissioner Lueking referenced the *Chesterfield Valley Design Policies* that refer to automobile parking for buildings along I-64/U.S. 40 noting that parking should be primarily located on the side or rear of any building façade facing I-64/U.S. 40 or along North Outer Forty.

VII. SITE PLANS, BUILDING ELEVATIONS AND SIGNS

- A. Chesterfield Outlets:** A Site Development Plan, Landscape Plan, Lighting Plan, and Architectural Elevations for a 48.625 acre tract of land zoned "PC" Planned Commercial District located on the north side of N. Outer 40 Road, east of Boone's Crossing.

Commissioner Proctor, representing the Site Plan Committee, made a motion recommending approval of the Site Development Plan, Landscape Plan, Lighting Plan, and Architectural Elevations for Chesterfield Outlets. The motion was seconded by Commissioner DeGroot

Discussion on the Motion

Commissioner Watson stated that he still has issues with the proposed LED lighting around the cornices. He noted that there is not any accent lighting that high up anywhere else in the Valley and it is visible from Highway 40.

Commissioner Lueking stated that this is a rather large project with a lot of questions which she would like to digest before voting.

Chair Nolan asked the Commission if there is any interest in holding the project at this time. Commissioner Lueking indicated her interest in holding the project.

The motion to approve passed by a voice vote of 6 to 2 with Commissioners Lueking and Watson voting “no”.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS - None

IX. NEW BUSINESS - None

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS - None

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Michael Watson, Secretary