



City of Oakbrook Terrace
Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
Tuesday, May 2, 2017
Case #18-1

The Planning and Zoning meeting was called to order by Chairman Noble at 6:00 P.M.

Chairman Noble asked Building and Zoning / Planning and Zoning Secretary Bossle to take roll call.

Present: Chairman Noble, Commissioners Schneider, Ventura, Jackson, Cardenas, Donoval, Smurawski

Absent: None

Also Present: Mihaela Dragan, Building and Zoning Administrator, Peter Pacione, City Attorney, Michelle Bossle, Building and Zoning / Planning and Zoning Secretary.

Chairman Noble said the first order of business was to approve the minutes of April 4, 2017, Case #17-17 for Oakbrook Terrace Tower / One Tower Lane, Petitioner BRE IL Office Owner LLC to Allow a Research Laboratory.

Chairman Noble asked if there was any final discussion. There was no discussion.

Chairman Noble asked for a motion to approve the minutes of April 4, 2017, Case #17-17 for Oakbrook Terrace Tower / One Tower Lane, Petitioner BRE IL Office Owner LLC to Allow a Research Laboratory.

MOTION Commissioner Jackson moved and Commissioner Smurawski seconded the motion to approve the minutes of April 4, 2017, Case #17-17 for Oakbrook Terrace Tower / One Tower Lane, Petitioner BRE IL Office Owner LLC to Allow a Research Laboratory.

A VOICE VOTE WAS TAKEN AND PASSED 7-0.

Chairman Noble said the second order of business was to consider the request by IPX Mid America Investors, LLC for the following relief in order to more accurately reflect the current conditions and proposed improvements at 1 & 2 Mid America Plaza ("Subject Property"):

1. An amendment to Ordinance 83-19, which originally granted a Special Use for Planned Development, and an amendment to ordinances amending the Planned Unit Development pursuant to 156.025 to allow modifications to the site plan, landscape plan, building elevations and signage plan, which would result in a loss of landscaped area totaling 647 square feet and adding 647 square feet of hardscape area to allow for the proposed improvements to the Subject Property.
2. To permit signage variations as follows;
 - o An exception from Section 156.043 (C) (5) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit three seasonal parking area sign displays, double sided, not to exceed twelve square feet per sign face and not to exceed fourteen feet in height from ground level to the top of the sign, instead of the maximum 9 feet, to permit the installation of banner signs on existing sign posts.
 - o An exception from Section 156.043 (F) (5) of the Zoning Ordinance limiting the area and height of directional signs in order to allow three directional signs with a maximum sign area of six square feet per sign face instead of the allowable maximum of three square feet and not to exceed five feet in height instead of the maximum allowable of thirty inches above grade.
 - o An exception from Section 156.043 (C) (8) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit two monument signs along 22nd Street and Route 83 to be situated three feet from the property line instead of the minimum ten feet from the property line.
 - o An exception from Section 156.043 (C) (10) of the Zoning Ordinance to permit a total of ten freestanding signs instead of the three permitted freestanding signs.
3. To permit parking variations as follows;
 - o An exception from Section 156.101 (D) (1) of the Zoning Ordinance to allow all regular parking spaces on the Subject Property to have dimensions of 8'3"x16' instead of the minimum 9'x19' and to permit a minimum width of drive aisle to be nineteen feet instead of the minimum twenty-two feet.

Chairman Noble asked all those who would be speaking this evening to please stand up and be sworn in.

Kelly Curtis Gibbel, Vice President of Equus Capital Partners, Ltd., Evan Danner, Asset Manager and Acquisition Analyst of Equus Capital Partners, Ltd., Michael Teiber, Satellite Manager of Balanced Environments, Inc., and Stephen T. Wright, Principal of Wright Heerema Architects were sworn in by Michelle Bossle, Building and Zoning / Planning and Zoning Secretary.

Chairman Noble asked the Petitioner to stand and state his case.

Kelly Gibbel of Equus Capital Partners took the floor stating that in July of 2016 Equus purchased Mid America. At that time there were some wayfinding issues, landscaping limitations, need for short term parking for visitors, and just upgrading the overall building identification. All of these were pulling back the property's ability to compete with some of the buildings that have recently gone under renovation in Oak Brook; Commerce Plaza, Oak Brook 22, and 1900 Spring Road. In order to compete with this, Equus felt the need to explore what can be done to improve this property that was built 32 years ago and has had no renovations since that time. Steve Wright with Wright Heerema and Mike Teiber with Balance Environments were hired as consultants to look at the landscaping issues, the overall architectural and also the signage. Based on studies done by these consultants, a renovation plan was developed. This property is basically bordered by Route 83, 22nd Street, Hodges and Mid America Road. The building has a lot of limitations just because of its boundaries and when it was built 32 years ago, a lot of the ordinances being discussed did not exist. With signage and parking, and some of the landscape issues, those ordinances came into effect after this building was constructed so that creates a bit of a problem when making changes because this is also a PUD. By presenting a new plan that will make sure that the PUD specifications are met at the same time that the ordinances are met, in order to do the redevelopment that will make and keep this a class "A" property in Oakbrook Terrace and competitive with the Oak Brook properties. On a little bit over five acres with two levels of underground parking, it is on a major thoroughfare being Route 83 and 22nd Street and though the years, both Route 83 and 22nd Street have been widened.

Petitioner Gibbel continued by showing an aerial view of the property along with a colored plan of the renovations to the exterior. The first limitation is that the building had been centered but there is no parking; parking is on either end of the building, or underground. Someone trying to find their way throughout the property, it has its limitations. The proposed renovations include basically clipping off a part of the building itself and making a new entry way on the north end. From a wayfinding standpoint, when somebody parks their car on either side, they have no idea where the entrance is located. The new entry would give the proper identification needed plus improvements to the doorway system by adding double doors and a vestibule and make it ADA accessible. The other issue is when coming to visit the property, short term parking is needed. The one story link between the two buildings is where the security guard is located. By taking that piece and making it the focal point, whereby nothing is being added to the elevations, but enhancing the current elevations, improving the pavement and giving it a grand look. The architect has designed this pavement area so that it lines up with the new lighting lines that are on the inside. Some of the land will be taken to provide six parking spaces, two of which would be ADA parking spaces.

Petitioner Gibbel added that the other improvement is the sidewalk which is right in the roadway would instead wrap around the building so that the entire building, both the clients and tenants will be able to take continuously and have better ADA access with ramping to the building. Doorways would also be changed to improve the ADA accessibility. On the Route 83 side, the modifications would be minor; adding monument signage whereby identifying the building as being part of Oakbrook Terrace. Right now there is no identification so to speak to identify where this building is and the name of the building. The name of the building is on the top of the building, but it is way too high; by bringing it down to eye level so when in traffic the building can be identified by name and what town it is in. There is signage throughout the property but it is not appropriately sized for the property so that people can find the wayfinding. One of the ways to improve the signage instead of just replacing the existing signs, sign for sign; some signs will be removed and then more decorative signing will be added versus having hardscape type signage. By creating a softer signage that when coming through, there would actually be seasonal signage. Also, by replacing the two-sided angled signs with just one plate across, so that guests can read the wording right across where they are when they come in on Hodges and the break-in at 22nd Street. The current signage is three feet off the property line and according to the ordinance that was created since this building was built; it now has to be ten feet off the property line which is restrictive just because of when the building was built. So in the variance, the request is to replace the sign where the current, original signage is; not asking for additional signage, but to put the new sign where the original signage was put 32 years ago. The wayfinding signage is a bit of a modification from typical signage in the ordinance, but it is more eye-pleasing and decorative and doesn't clutter the landscape as much on the grade level which would then allow more plantings. From a landscaping standpoint, right now some land would be taken away, but landscaping will be added where it does not exist now and giving it a decorative look with benches where right now it consists of stone. Landscaping will also be added around Route 83 along the east side as well as enhancing all the beds; whereby much of the landscaping right now is pretty tired and needs to be more vibrant. Basically in the give and take of everything, the modification being asked for whereby there is about 641 sq. ft. less of landscaping which a majority of that comes to the circular area to add outdoor seating. Right now there is a huge planter that looks like a fountain which would be taken out in order to put more casual seating for clients and visitors to sit in while they are there. The parking modification is more for the record. No changes are being made to the parking dimensions or the aisles in the parking lot; basically it comes down to is that's the way it was constructed to be put on the books as it meets the ordinances. In going through the process, they wanted to make sure the PUD was updated and that both the ordinance and PUD align with each other as far as acceptability.

Petitioner Gibbel then went through the boards brought for display pointing out the signage emulation to the height of individuals as well as the new signage on Route 83. On the east elevation, changing out the revolving doors; one would go away on the north and on the south adding an additional door so that there's better egress out of the building. A good example would be going down Route 83 and entering the parking lot, the changes would modernize it tremendously; not pulling out the elevation in anyway or changing anything of the building, instead going into the building to create the flow that the building needs to move through these buildings and creating a ramp and a walkway making it more ADA accessible to the clients and visitors. The gold portal will also be changed to a brushed stainless steel and give it a white look. At lot of interior changes will be made but that will be when they submit permits for the building changes. From the drawings, the inside will be brought out so that when driving by the building it is inviting because of the modernization being done on it.

Chairman Noble asked if there were any comments from Building and Zoning Administrator Dragan.

Building and Zoning Administrator Dragan took the floor stating that the Applicant is seeking approval for an amendment to the Planned Unit Development and an amendment to ordinances amending the PUD to allow the proposed exterior improvements to the property. The Applicant is also requesting approval of exceptions to the PUD to permit variations from the Zoning Code for signage and parking. Christopher Burke Engineering reviewed the plans and has no objections. Ralph DeLuca of Oakbrook Terrace Fire Protection District also reviewed the documents and the items noted in his plan review memo will be addressed during the permit submittal process if the request will be approved by the City. The upgrades to the property will be a big improvement. The new owners are also considering many interior improvements; however those are just part of the permitting process and not to be discussed tonight at the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. Based on the few exterior changes, an amendment to the Planned Unit Development and amended ordinances is required as their building elevations changes, site plan and landscape plan changes and also the exceptions to the PUD for the number of signs, location and parking spaces dimensions. The Applicant explained about the number of parking spaces; ordinance number 16-33 approved a total of 1,239 parking spaces to be provided for the subject property. The Petitioner would like to keep that number although being able to create additional parking spaces but staying within the ordinance approval of a total of 1,239 parking spaces which would allow in the future, an expansion of medical use without having to come back every time there is a little change for a public hearing.

Chairman Noble asked if there were any questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Schneider asked if the dimension of 8'3"x16' for the parking spaces is the current, existing dimensions.

Petitioner Gibbel responded yes.

Commissioner Schneider asked if the seasonal signs are just for decoration or if they will say anything.

Petitioner Gibbel replied that the seasonal signs will give direction relative to visitor parking.

Building and Zoning Administrator Dragan commented that seasonal banners in the parking lot were previously approved for Pete's Fresh Market, Kimco Shopping Center / Home Depot, and Oakbrook Terrace Tower.

Chairman Ventura asked if there was a limitation on the height of the seasonal signs or the width.

Building and Zoning Administrator Dragan responded that limitation for height is not to exceed 16 feet for the light poles which they had a variation previously approved. The banners will be installed on the light poles. The restriction in that area is 9 feet in height for the signs. The seasonal signs will be above the 9 feet in order for them to be seen when entering the parking lot.

City Attorney Pacione added that the seasonal signs will be a maximum of 12 sq. ft.

Commission Jackson asked if they will be adding additional parking spots beyond what are there today.

Petitioner Gibbel replied that six spaces will be added at the west entrance for very short term parking; two of those spaces would be for handicap parking. The pavement will also be improved; color-coded so that along the west side which is Mid America Road, giving direction to the center entrance of the building.

Commissioner Jackson asked if the purpose of the petition is to waive the current, which were approved from prior zoning requirements, to make the full-time parking spaces for the employees who work in the two buildings in compliance today.

Petitioner Gibbel stated that the six new parking spaces will be larger and in compliance with what is required by the ordinance today, but not to confuse matters and specify the difference between the dimensions of the new spaces from that of the current 1,239 spaces.

Commission Jackson questioned if the current tenants in the building were asked if there was enough parking, what they would say.

Petitioner Gibbel replied that yes there is plenty of parking. Downstairs in the lower level, probably 35 years ago there was not handicap parking. In looking at the changes that have happened, there are now 20 or 30 handicap parking spaces for employees. The goal here is for guests or clients that need short term parking; it gives a sense of entrance and short term parking versus the tenants that will all park down below in order to not have the rain or sun on their car. The only people that will basically park on the top level will be visitors or SUV's with clearance restrictions.

Commissioner Ventura asked if the restaurant takes up a lot of the parking.

Petitioner Gibbel responded that basically Ditka's is on the other side and has plenty of parking because they will do valet parking down below. It is a nice blend to have the restaurant and the office because the times are different. Ditka's major traffic / parking is coming in the evenings and on weekends so there is plenty of parking to fit the Ditka's need.

Commissioner Ventura mentioned the confusion when trying to park with the Oakbrook Terrace Park District.

Petitioner Gibbel stated that the health club is in Parkview Plaza which is the neighboring building and that Mid America Plaza gives easement to them on Mid America Road. Parkview Plaza is also looking at their wayfinding and to make improvements also since they just changed ownership about a month or two after Mid America. Because it is an easement road, both properties are working together to improve the wayfinding for visitors.

Commission Donoval commented that they welcome all the improvements being done at the property and because of the design on the front; most people enter the building from the back.

Petitioner Gibbel replied that Architect Wright had the task of taking something that is there and finding a wayfinding for both parking and for clients to make it through into the building. The main goal that benefits everyone is to be able to lease that building as a class "A" building as well as keep the current major tenants.

Chairman Nobel asked if the building was fully occupied now.

Petitioner Gibbel said that currently they are at 87%. There are some small tenants that are anticipated to leave, but that is part of the overall market. As space is being leased, interior designs being proposed are presented.

Chairman Noble opened the floor for public participation.

Chairman Noble asked for any positive testimony or negative testimony.

Chairman Noble noted that there was none.

Chairman Noble closed the public portion of the hearing.

Chairman Noble asked if there were any additional questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Schneider asked that once the exterior is approved, what the time frame will be from start to finish.

Architect Wright responded that it will take several months to finish the drawings and go through permit submittal, and then several months to build it; so by the end of the year.

Commissioner Schneider made a comment for the record stating that their landscaping has a lot of flowers and color, but too many businesses come into Oakbrook Terrace and stick the same old little shrubs out there and have a few little purple flowers for a month and then they are all green. There is no color on these properties and this is something that should be looked into and changed in order to add some more color to these properties.

Chairman Noble asked if there were any additional questions from the Commissioners; there were none.

Chairman Noble asked the City Attorney Pacione if he had any comments.

City Attorney Pacione had no comments.

Chairman Noble asked for a motion to approve Case #18-1, the request by IPX Mid America Investors, LLC for the following relief in order to more accurately reflect the current conditions and proposed improvements at 1 & 2 Mid America Plaza ("Subject Property"):

1. An amendment to Ordinance 83-19, which originally granted a Special Use for Planned Development, and an amendment to ordinances amending the Planned Unit Development pursuant to 156.025 to allow modifications to the site plan, landscape plan, building elevations and signage plan, which would result in a loss of landscaped area totaling 647 square feet and adding 647 square feet of hardscape area to allow for the proposed improvements to the Subject Property.

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MOTION Commissioner Jackson moved and Commissioner Schneider seconded the motion to approve Case #18-1, the request by IPX Mid America Investors, LLC for the following relief in order to more accurately reflect the current conditions and proposed improvements at 1 & 2 Mid America Plaza ("Subject Property"):

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Chairman Noble asked if there was any final discussion; there was none.

Chairman Noble asked Building and Zoning / Planning and Zoning Secretary Bossle to take the roll call.

Ayes: Chairman Noble, Commissioners Schneider, Ventura, Jackson, Cardenas, Donoval, Smurawski
Nays: None
Absent: None

MOTION PASSED WITH A VOTE OF 7-0.

Chairman Noble asked Building and Zoning Administrator Dragan when the petition would be presented to the City Council.

Building and Zoning Administrator Dragan stated that The Letter of Recommendation will be placed on the May 23, 2017 City Council meeting agenda. The next meeting will be held on May 16th. Michelle will notify you as soon as the public hearing packets will be available.

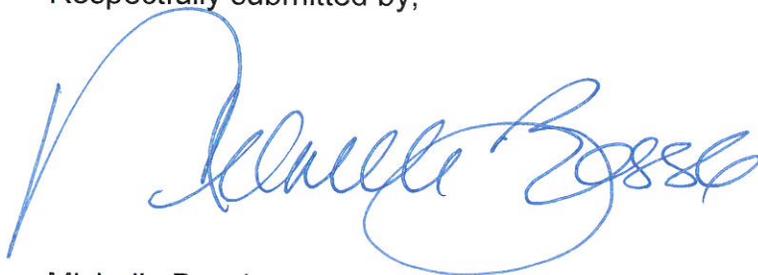
Chairman Noble asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION Commissioner Jackson moved and Commissioner Donoval seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY THROUGH A VOICE VOTE OF 7-0.

Chairman Noble adjourned the meeting at 6:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michelle Bossle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a large "B".

Michelle Bossle
Building and Zoning / Planning and Zoning Secretary