

**PLAN COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION NOTES
August 20, 2018**

I. Call to Order

The Plan Commission Study Session was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by President Thomas Anderson at the Schererville Town Hall, 10 E. Joliet ST., Schererville.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. Roll Call

Roll Call was taken with the following members present: President Thomas Anderson, Vice-President William Jarvis, Secretary Gary Immig, Mr. David Jaroszewski, Mr. Drew Thomas, and Tom Kouros. Staff present: Town Manager Robert Volkmann, Planning Coordinator/Office Manager Denise Sulek, Recording Secretary Norma Hollingsworth Rico, Town Engineer Robert Csanyi, and Councilman Dave DeJong.

II. Commission Business

A. Napleton 2nd Addition, Lot 2 (Mercedes-Benz/Volvo Dealership)

General Location: 1349 U.S. 41

Petitioner(s): Linden Group Architects

Request: U.S. 41 Commercial Corridor Overlay District Development Plan Review

Grant Currier, President of Linden Group Architects, stated that this project has been going on for quite a few months; and that Jaguar will be moving out to a new location on Route 30 in April or May of 2019. Mr. Currier said that this will free up some space at the dealership and also enable Napleton to come into compliance with Mercedes-Benz. Mr. Currier added that Mercedes has been pushing for this dealership to have a service write-up area and a better touch point for customers and a more efficient way of serving the customers for service. Mr. Currier also stated that currently there are three brands that come into the south entrance of the building, basically coming into the shop area. Mr. Currier explained that this will allow a state of the art look for the Mercedes brand, create a service entrance, and also give a fresh look and a better footprint for Volvo by freeing up some space.

President Anderson asked for confirmation that they are putting in just under a 4,000 S.F. addition on the front which is the south-west part of the building. Mr. Currier said that was correct; and that basically all that they were doing was removing the existing show room and replacing it with a Mercedes-Benz branded show room. Mr. Currier added that the currently angled portion of the building will get cleaned up on the inside with new finishes, and new lighting. Mr. Currier stated that from a service stand point for Volvo, they are looking for segregation from the other brands as well; so they will create another service entrance on the north side.

Mr. Currier said that Napleton is anticipating servicing 20 to 25 Mercedes vehicles per day; and that Mercedes is a better seller than Volvo. Mr. Currier also stated that they have incorporated landscape features under the sign. Mr. Currier added that if you look at the front row of parking on Route 41 from right to left, they will create a landscape feature on the right side, complete the curb which is currently pavement, bringing sod around making it a nice entrance; and as you move north, they will remove a couple of parking spaces and incorporate a landscape feature at the base of the new Mercedes-Benz sign. Mr. Currier explained that the existing Volvo sign that is to the right of the existing show room will be removed to free up a parking space there; and the new Volvo sign will be in front of the building; and that the Jaguar sign will be removed. Mr. Currier added that the Mercedes sign will be relocated to the new front door of Mercedes.

Mr. Currier explained that from an interior stand point, there will be some remodeling with upgrades to the facilities and offices and service write up; and that they are also adding some landscape features at the south end where the transformer is located.

President Anderson said that he noticed the pylon sign stayed and that he would need to work with Ms. Sulek regarding how much signage is allowed. Mr. Currier said that the dealership would like to go as tall as possible; but that they know there is a code with which to comply, and that they are looking for some direction on what is appropriate. Mr. Volkmann said that when they did the Fiat Dealership, the Mercedes-Benz, Volvo, and Jaguar signs were shuffled with the Jaguar sign moving to the center; but they used the existing signage on site. Mr. Volkmann said he would look at their file; but didn't believe there was any new signage other than the Fiat sign. Mr. Currier referred to the packet and said that the tallest brand sign for Mercedes is 25'; but that he believed what is out there now is around 20'. Mr. Volkmann said it is an older sign and that they would have to do some research and see what is out there.

President Anderson said that he liked the concept and that it looks good, but that we need to make sure the signage is in line, otherwise they will need a variance.

Mr. Jaroszewski said he noted that there is one handicap parking space in front of the Mercedes Dealership; and that towards the Volvo, there is one set back by the existing Fiat Dealership. Mr. Jaroszewski asked if they would be doing anything for the Volvo Dealership. President Anderson pointed out another space by Volvo. Mr. Currier said they will be sure to re-run the numbers to make sure they have enough.

Mr. Jarvis said that the concept of the building looks great; but wondered why they were doing duplicate signs of the ones on the building and the pylon signs; and felt that it was redundant for such a small area. President Anderson said they need to work with Staff on the square footage.

Mr. Immig asked the parking was all for staff and customers or if the inventory parking was included. Mr. Currier replied that it included inventory parking, and that it is a tight site; and that Mr. Napleton has struggled over the years adding off-site remote parking. President Anderson said that most of the employee parking is on the south side of 67th Ave.; and that the issue came up when they were doing Fiat. Mr. Currier said that on the positive side, they no longer require the Jaguar inventory. Mr. Jarvis asked if they could provide how many Jaguars were previously inventoried; and Mr. Currier said he would get that number.

Mr. Volkmann asked when they anticipated coming to the Public Hearing. Mr. Currier replied the next date in September. Ms. Sulek pointed out that we would need everything broken down as far as parking and signage square footage. Mr. Volkmann said they would need to determine if a variance would be required for the signage.

III. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:14 P.M.