

PLAN COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION NOTES
September 10, 2018

I. Call to Order

The Plan Commission Study Session was called to order at 6:21 P.M. by President Thomas Anderson at the Schererville Town Hall, 10 E. Joliet St., Schererville, IN.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

President Anderson stated that the Pledge was already recited at the Plan Commission meeting.

B. Roll Call

President Anderson stated that the Roll Call remains the same as the Plan Commission meeting.

II. Commission Business

A. Johnson Addition (A/K/A: Earl's Heating & Cooling)

Proposed: Contractor's Offices/Climate Controlled Storage and Business Offices

General Location: 5050 W. Lincoln Hwy.

Petitioner(s): Kenneth Christensen

Request: U.S. 30 Commercial Corridor Overlay District Development Plan Review

Mr. Ryan Marovich from DVG Team 1155 Troutwine Rd., Crown Point, IN. represented the Petitioner. Mr. Ken Christensen, the owner, and Mr. Ted Rohn, the architect for this project were also in attendance. Mr. Marovich stated that they were here two months ago with the site plan; and that they have altered it slightly by removing the additional building area on the north side of the site, and by adding additional parking. Mr. Marovich stated that in their packet they have included a landscaping sketch, some of the architectural renderings, and the proposed signage rendering.

President Anderson asked if the first floor would be for Earl's Heating & Cooling. Mr. Marovich replied that the office building in front will be for rental and that Earl's would be in the back part of the building.

Mr. Jarvis asked if there were any proposed uses of the office building; and added that it is a very nice looking building, but that he felt they would run into a parking situation. Mr. Marovich replied that there is nothing concrete yet and that the realtor is still working on tenants. Mr. Rohn said that it is intended to be low volume office space and that there is no retail involved at all. President Anderson said he is counting 24 parking spaces total. Mr. Volkmann said that was the minimum.

Mr. Rohn explained that right now Earl's is in the house-looking building which will be torn down; and that Earl's will relocate to one of the back buildings behind there. Mr. Rohn said that the new building will be along Route 30 which will be for the new tenants.

President Anderson asked if the 1650 S.F. storage area was new. Mr. Marovich said that the two middle sections that are oriented north and south were there, and that there was an additional area where the north parking area is that has been removed. Mr. Rohn added that the building directly behind the new office is an existing building; and that they are adding on to the front and rear of it. President Anderson stated that the 1440 is existing which is staying, the house is coming down, and a two-story building will go in the front with a storage area in the back. Mr. Rohn said that there are drawings for the monument sign as well. Mr. Rohn added that it will be located in the same location as it currently is.

Mr. Jarvis asked if the 1440 would be Earl's Heating & Air. Mr. Rohn said that was correct, that they were moving behind. Mr. Jarvis said the next building behind says service/storage; and asked them to define the service part of that. Mr. Marovich said that he believed it would be contractor's businesses similar to Earl's, such as electrical, or

plumbing contractors. Mr. Jarvis said that they are going to put in other contractors and that it wouldn't just be for storage. Mr. Rohn said that was the intent. Mr. Jarvis said they would have possibly six proposed businesses; and if they divide up the service building there could be seven. Mr. Rohn said potentially; but with that building footprint ideally it would have two offices. Mr. Jarvis said that everyone loves a Schererville address, and with this being right on U.S. 30, he could see this exploding and taking off, and that is why he wants to know what is going to happen there.

Mr. Christensen said that most likely they would end up moving and expanding to what he needs into that one part. Mr. Jarvis said he can see that especially if he wants to keep his trucks inside. Mr. Jarvis said he was hoping that was where he would be going, because they wouldn't be generating any more traffic. Mr. Christensen said he needs more space. Mr. Jarvis said if there was another electrical contractor or roofing contractor added to that area, that it could get real tight real fast. Mr. Christensen said they were discussing possibly heated storage. Mr. Jarvis said that would be their choice, but that he was concerned whether he was going to get another contractor. Mr. Christensen said that Mr. Rohn hadn't really communicated with him on that.

Mr. Jarvis said he loves the way this looks compared to what is out there now. Mr. Jarvis said that they have done a lot with it and gave them kudos on that; but that the proposed building is exceptional. Mr. Jarvis asked if they had considered talking to U-Haul and getting some cross easement parking. Mr. Christensen said that when they were here the first time to get their occupancy, the guy that owned it was planning on doing that. Mr. Christensen said that U-Haul is a national company and that even though his liability insurance would cover going through there, U-Haul is not easy to move on it.

President Anderson said that the 18' x 12' monument sign seems a little big. Mr. Volkmann said it is excessive and over the allowed size for 500' of frontage. Mr. Volkmann added that they could put in a combination sign, but it would only be 12' wide and only 8' high. Mr. Jarvis asked if there would be tenant spaces on that sign. Mr. Christensen replied yes. President Anderson stated that they would either have to cut that down some or go for a variance on the signage. Mr. Rohn said that they would work with Landmark Sign; and that their goal is to have a sign that complies and not have to do for a variance. President Anderson said a variance could open a whole new can of worms. President Anderson said it is a nice looking building, but they need to get the sign knocked down a bit. Mr. Jarvis agreed.

President Anderson asked if there were any comments from Staff. Mr. Volkmann said it is a lot going on with a small site. Mr. Jarvis asked if they had discussed acquiring any of the property to the west for parking with that neighbor. Mr. Christensen replied yes; and that if need be, she would let them lease part of it or purchase part of it. Mr. Christensen added that it is a complicated issue. Mr. Jarvis said that he knows it is a triangle shaped piece; but that it would really enhance this development if they acquired that parcel. Mr. Christensen said that there is the potential of getting more parking if they need it. Mr. Jarvis said that would sound a lot better.

President Anderson asked what their time frame was. Mr. Christensen said it would be spring time; and that there was no way they would break ground before then. President Anderson asked if there were any other questions. Mr. Jarvis stated that if they could acquire the property to the west, it would be very helpful. Mr. Rohn said that Mr. Christensen's approach has been to do that; but it is not an easy thing. Mr. Rohn said they want to assure that Mr. Christensen doesn't stall his business plans; and that you can tell from the site plan, they made contingencies so that they could expand and appropriate a bigger site. Mr. Jarvis said that it would enhance his business goals; and that anyone that looks at that will be concerned with parking.

President Anderson advised them to get with Ms. Sulek regarding the sign requirements.

III. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 P.M.