

## PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

**DATE:** July 28, 2014

**TIME:** 4:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chairman Porter, Commissioners Boettcher, Ballard, Davis, L. Olson, Hahn, Buelow and Fritz

**ABSENT:** Commissioner M. Olson

**STAFF PRESENT:** City Planner, Mark Moeller

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The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Vice Chair Hahn.

### Approval of Minutes – July 14, 2014

The minutes from the Commission's meeting of July 14, 2014 were reviewed and upon motion by Commissioner L. Olson and second by Commissioner Davis were unanimously approved as submitted.

### Revised Site Plan – Automotive Enterprises Inc.

Vice Chair Hahn called on Mark Moeller, City Planner, to provide a staff overview of this item.

Mr. Moeller stated that during the Commission's meeting of June 23<sup>rd</sup>, it had held a public meeting to consider a site plan for the proposed new GM auto dealership site to be located at the present Cornerstone Community Church property on Service Drive. Following review, approval of the plan was granted subject to two conditions including:

1. The submittal of a revised landscape plan for the planned "buffer" to be located along the westerly side of the development. This buffer is proposed to include a "berm" with associated landscaping. The purpose and intent of this berm being to provide a visual buffer between the auto dealership and the adjoining Johnstones residential development located to the west. The Commission had also requested that the developer consult with abutting residential property owners in developing the plan.
2. Submittal of a plan showing "where" required off-street employee parking will be provided for the new development. In part, this condition was based upon concerns from residents of the adjoining residential neighborhood that if employee parking was not provided "on-site", employees may park on streets within their neighborhood.

Given the previous, the applicant has submitted plans including:

1. An amended landscape plan, prepared in consultation with Winona Nursery. As noted, the plan now incorporates a diversity of "mostly" evergreen plant species. Again, these plants would be located on top of a planned 3 – 4 foot high berm to along the westerly side of the development. Mr. Moeller noted that if the Commission should approve of the landscape plan as presented, it was recommended that it be tied to a couple of conditions including:
  - The perpetual maintenance and replacement (when necessary) of plant materials shown on the plan. Additionally, any effort to remove the planned buffer would need to be preceded by Planning Commission approvals in accordance with review provisions of the site plan ordinance.
  - No plant materials may be placed within the 20 foot wide utility easement that flows parallel with/adjacent to the westerly property line of the redevelopment site. Mr. Moeller noted that in consultation with the developer, he had met with adjoining property owners in developing the landscape plan.
  
2. Mr. Moeller explained that per City Code requirements the minimum parking standard for auto sales/service facilities is one space per 800 square feet of building accessible to the general public. As proposed, the new building will include a gross area of 22,000 square feet. Of this total, building plans indicate that approximately 60 percent would include service repair, private office, parts storage, and other amenities that would generally not be accessible to the public. With this, the 1 per 800 sq. ft. standard would apply to the balance of 8800 square feet, or a technical requirement of 11 spaces. He noted that the revised plan shows a total of 26 parking spaces located between the proposed new GM dealership and existing building.

Along with the previous, the revised plan does reflect a larger stormwater detention pond footprint than was shown on the original plan and an expanded auto display area into Service Drive right-of-way. The larger pond is a result of more refined stormwater planning for the site, while the planned petitioners' use of Service Drive is a product of a license agreement recently approved by Council, for the action.

At this point, Chairman Porter entered the meeting.

Commissioner Fritz noted that during initial discussion of the site plan, the applicant had committed to moving dumpsters to the east side of the site. Although he did not see this on the amended plan, he asked if this was still being considered. He also noted that the new plan indicates 6 spaces added to current green space adjacent to the entrance into the dealership. Given that little green space was being defined as part of

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the new development, he asked if it was necessary to compromise this area for additional auto parking.

Andrew Dahl, representing Automotive Enterprises, LLC, noted that his company has tried to incorporate additional green space throughout the new development but has found this challenging on the basis that the site is somewhat small. Notwithstanding that, he noted that he would take a look at the area referenced by Commissioner Fritz, with an effort to maintain present green space in that area. Given the sites location on a hillside, he asked if display areas would be established on lawns as they are on the dealership across the street. Mr. Dahl replied that this was not the intent.

Commissioner Davis commended Mr. Dahl and the immediate neighborhood in coming together in ironing out differences relative to this site plan.

Commissioner Buelow asked if there was still a plan to construct a path along the west side of the site. Mr. Dahl replied that there was not. In part, this relates to the fact that if not owned by the City, his company would be responsible for long term liability and maintenance. Outside of that, he emphasized that should the City be interested in constructing a path in this location, his company would be more than willing to discuss it.

Following further discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Boettcher and seconded by Commissioner L. Olson to approve the site plan as submitted. The intent of this motion was to include those site plan conditions recommended by staff in the staff report.

When the question was called, the vote of the Commission was unanimous to approve the motion.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.



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Mark Moeller  
City Planner