



DATE: April 26, 2021

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
Dave Perrault, City Administrator

FROM: Jane Kansier, AICP, Planning Consultant, Bolton & Menk

SUBJECT: Planning Case # 21-004 – Public Hearing Required
Applicant: Dan Rae, Kensington Development Partners
Property Location: 3787 Lexington Avenue
Request: Amended Planned Unit Development and Site Plan Review

Budgeted Amount:	Actual Amount:	Funding Source:
N/A	N/A	N/A

Council Should Consider:

Motions to approve, table, or deny the following:

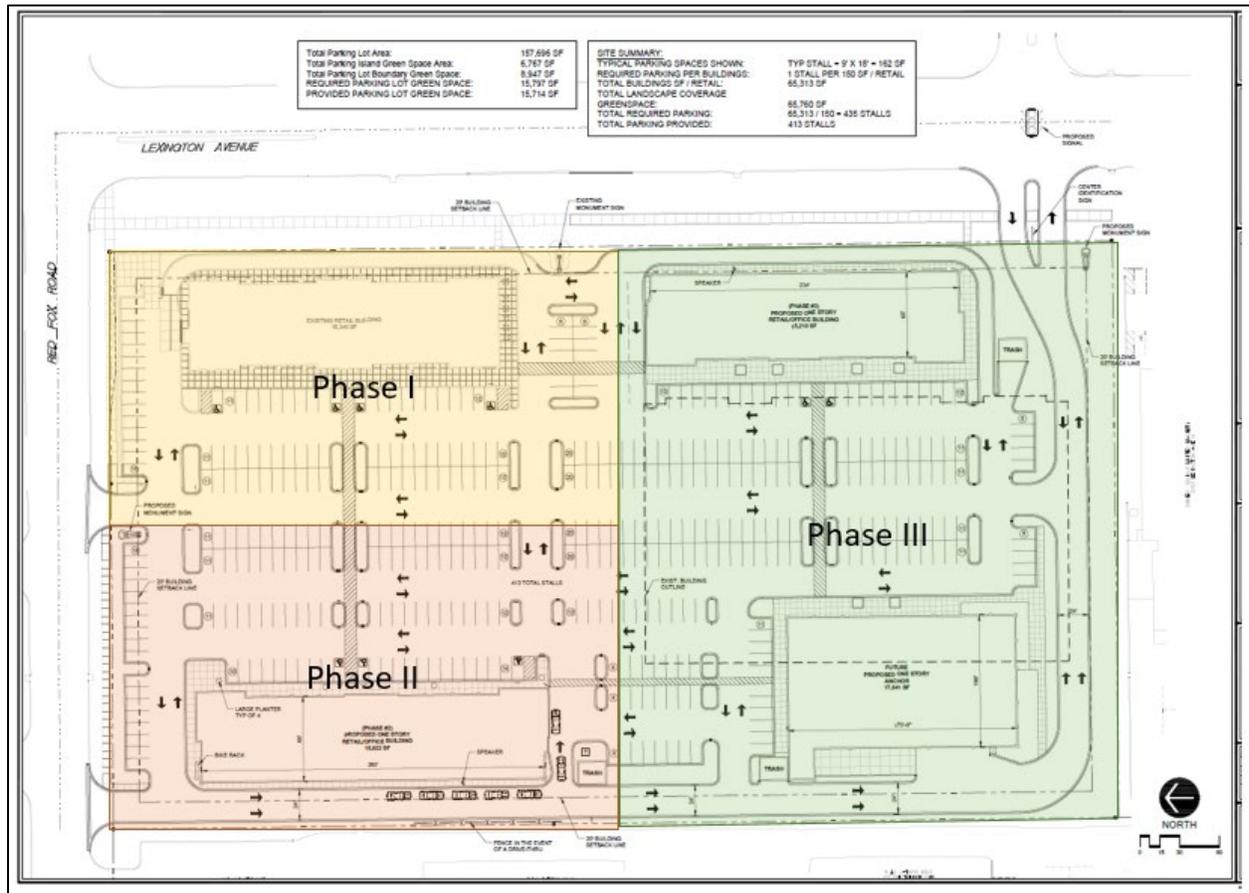
- Hold the required public hearing for Planning Case 21-004 for application for a Planned Unit Development and Site Plan for a project located at 3787 Lexington Avenue (“Subject Property”). The City Council will be asked to make a formal decision regarding the application under Agenda Item 10D.

Approval of an amended PUD requires an affirmative vote of four councilmembers.

Background

In 2013, the City approved a Master Planned Unit Development (PUD) for Roberts Management’s proposed Lexington Station redevelopment project, located at the southwest corner of Lexington Avenue North and Red Fox Road. The total project area is 7.57 acres and is comprised of three parcels. The proposed development would be completed in three (3) phases. Phase I of the redevelopment was completed in 2013-2014 and included the demolition of the former Blue Fox Restaurant and the construction of a 15,340 square foot multi-tenant commercial building with a drive through. Phase II consisted of removing the existing building at 1120 Red Fox Road and constructing a new 16,922 square foot multi-tenant commercial building with a drive through. Phase II was completed in in the fall of 2018.

The approved plan for Phase III or the Subject Site consists of a 15,210 square foot multi-tenant commercial building with a drive through and a standalone 17,841 square foot box retail building on 4.24 acres as shown below and in Attachment C.



1. Proposal and Use:

The Subject Site is currently owned by Roberts Management and contains an existing building that was constructed in 1980 and is approximately 63,000 square feet. The Applicant is proposing to amend the Master PUD to accommodate a standalone 43,000 square foot grocery store. The proposed grocery store would be new to the Minnesota market. However, at this time the Applicant is unable to disclose the name of the proposed user due to non-disclosure agreement (NDA).

2. Previous City Council Review

The City Council discussed this project at a Work Session on December 21, 2020. Minutes from the meetings are included in Attachment L.

Plan Evaluation

A PUD proposal shall identify any requested modifications from the applicable zoning requirements as well as the reasons why the modifications would be in the public interest and would be consistent with the purpose of the underlying B-3 District. Modifications to these

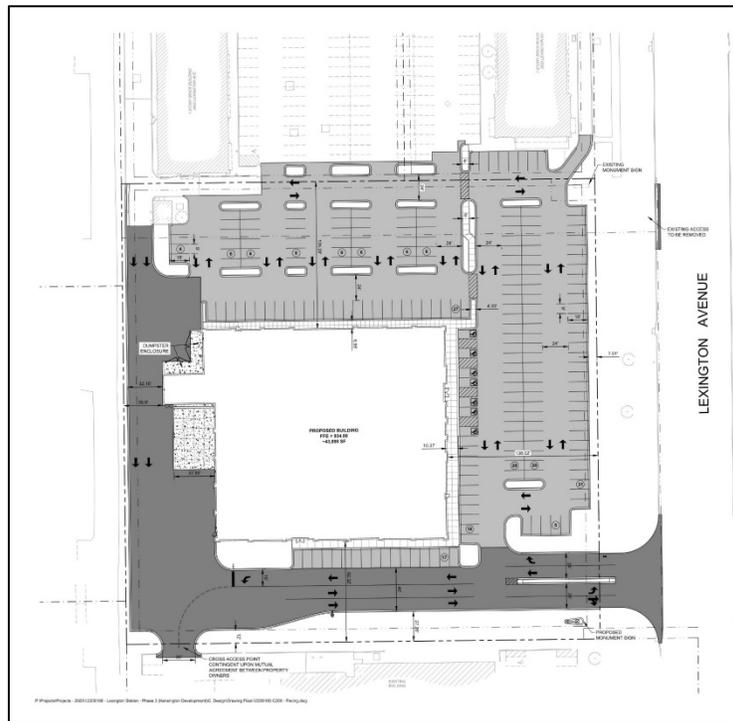
requirements may be granted by the City without a variance through the PUD process. A full evaluation of the proposal was presented to the Planning Commission on April 7, 2021. The memo to the Planning Commission on this case is provided in Attachment J. Draft minutes from the meeting are included in Attachment K.

1. Chapter 13, Zoning Code Review

A. B-3 District Provisions – Meets Requirements

Under the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, this site is guided as Retail Mixed Use on the land use plan and is zoned B-3. Retail sales and service are a permitted use within this district. The changes to the Master Plan that the Applicants propose are complementary to the use of the Subject Property.

The proposed site plan is shown below and is attached as Attachment D.



The table below provides the performance standards for the B-3 District and the preliminary analysis for the proposed development:

Ordinance Requirements	B-3 District Standards	Proposed Development
Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	0.8	Approx. 0.23
Maximum Structure Coverage	40%	23%
Minimum Landscape Lot Area	25%	Unknown
Minimum Front Yard Setback	50 ft.	140.5 ft.
Minimum Rear Yard Setback	20 ft.	37 ft.
Minimum Side Yard Setback	20 ft. (min)/ 40 ft. (total)	68 ft. (min) / 229 ft. (total)
Minimum Lot Area	13,000 sq. ft.	183,694 sq. ft.
Maximum Building Height	35 ft.	35 ft.

The proposed development meets the general district provision requirements.

2. Design Standards

A. Exterior Materials – Meets Requirements

At least seventy-five (75) percent of the exterior building materials should be made of brick masonry, tile masonry, natural stone or its synthetic equivalent, decorative concrete plank, transparent glass or any combination thereof. Trim and other accent or decorative features may be metal, wood, split faced block, EIFS, or stucco. Undesirable materials include simulated brick, vinyl or aluminum siding, sheet or corrugated metal siding, plain concrete blocks or panels, brightly colored metal roofing or canopies, pre-cast tilt-up walls, and mirrored or reflective glass.

The Applicant is proposing to construct the building to match and complement the design of the existing buildings of Phase I and II. The use of similar materials and design features will seek to harmonize the development and maintain the City’s focus on high quality and timeless materials. The transparency requirements for businesses within the B-3 District have been considered in the development and the proposal plan will use opaque windows in the anticipated service areas. The non-primary facades will utilize rock face concrete masonry unit (CMU), utilizing colors consistent with the brick building material on the non-primary façade of the retail building in Phase II and the previously approved material in the PUD.

The building would be 19 percent brick masonry, 10 percent glass, and 2 percent stone, for a total of 30 percent. Rock face CMU comprises 54 percent, Phenolic Panels are proposed for 12 percent and metal storefront is proposed for the remaining 4 percent of the total façade area. Examples of Phenolic Panels can be found on newly remodeled Target Stores as shown on the image below and in Attachment D. The Phenolic Panels are a flat panel reinforced with wood fibers with a decorative surface that is resistant to weather and sun.

Building elevations are shown in Attachment E. The applicant has submitted a materials board to staff. The figure below illustrates the proposed building materials.



B. Lighting – Meets Requirements

The Zoning Code requires exterior lighting to be consistent in type, design, scale, and color to create unity in the Districts. Exterior lighting for parking lots and buildings shall not be excessive and shall be directed at their intended purposes. The proposed plan includes wall mounted lights around the building, and area lights on 25' poles in the parking lot and drive aisles. The proposed lighting is consistent with the use and the surrounding area.

C. Screening and Fencing – Meets Requirements

Screens and fencing help minimize adverse impacts of public nuisances, such as noise. The proposed dumpsters are located on the northwest side of the building, and are enclosed with galvanized panels. The plans do not identify any rooftop mechanical equipment. Staff recommends including a requirement screening of any rooftop equipment be constructed and located so as to completely screen them from view of adjacent streets as a condition of approval.

D. Tree Preservation and Tree Selection – Meets Requirements

A Tree Preservation Plan is required as part of an application when City grading permit or erosion control permit is required. The Tree Protection Plan submitted by the Applicant shows that 30 caliper inches of significant trees are set for removal. The Ordinance allows 10% (3 caliper inches) to be removed without replacement. The remaining 27 caliper inches to be removed must be replaced at a ratio of 1 caliper inch for each 2 inches removed. The Applicant is required to replant 14 caliper inches. The proposed landscaping plan identifies a total of 15 caliper inches of replacement trees, and 134 caliper inches of new landscaping. The proposed replacement trees included a variety of deciduous and evergreen trees. As a condition of approval, staff recommends a landscaping letter of credit or escrow be required.

E. Snow Storage – Meets Requirements

Adequate area should be designed for snow storage such that clear visibility shall be afforded from the property to any public street. The Applicant is proposing to store snow in the southwest corner of the proposed site.

F. Parking Setbacks – Flexibility Requested

The City Code requires off-street parking spaces to be located a minimum of 20 feet from the right-of-way of any public street. Flexibility was granted for the parking spaces on the northern side of Phase I and II which are approximately nine (9) feet from the Red Fox Road right-of-way (ROW). The Applicant is requesting a similar reduction in parking setback from the ROW be granted due to wide County ROW on Lexington Avenue. The Applicant is proposing a 7.51 feet setback from the ROW. The approved Phase I drive through on the east side of the building adjacent to Lexington Avenue has approximately a three (3) foot setback from the ROW.

G. Number of Parking Stalls – Flexibility Requested

Per City Code 1325.06, there are general categories that determine the number of parking spaces that would need to be provided. Retail Sales uses must provide one (1) parking space for each 150 sq. ft. of gross floor area. The proposed plan would consist of a one-story 43,000 square foot grocery store and would require 287 parking spaces. The Applicant is proposing 207 parking spaces and 437 total for the development. The table on the next page breaks down the parking from the different phases and the approved PUD requirements.

Phase I and II Parking Requirements				
Land Use	Total Square Footage of Phase I & II	Required Stalls	Number of Stalls Provided	Parking Deficiency/Surplus
Retail - 1 space per 150 SF of gross sales floor space	32,262 sq. ft.	215	230	+15
Proposed Phase III Proposed Parking				
Land Use	Total Square Footage	Required Stalls	Number of Stalls Provided	Parking Deficiency/Surplus
Retail - 1 space per 150 SF of gross sales floor space	43,000 sq. ft.	287	207	-80
Approved Master Plan Parking Requirements				
Land Use	Total Square Footage	Required Stalls	Number of Stalls Provided	Parking Deficiency/Surplus
Retail - 1 space per 150 SF of gross sales floor space	65,313 sq. ft.	436	413	-23
Proposed Amended Master Plan Parking Requirements				
Land Use	Total Square Footage	Required Stalls	Number of Stalls Provided	Parking Deficiency/Surplus
Retail - 1 space per 150 SF of gross sales floor space	75,262 sq. ft.	502	437	-65

At this time, staff has not seen an interior floor plan and cannot determine the required parking as the proposed project could host a variety of uses (retail, office, and storage). Each use is subject to minimum parking requirements in the Zoning Code and could offset the parking deficiencies. The results of the measurements are shown in the following table. The study estimates the noise contributed by the project is below the state requirements. The report also notes there was a lot of traffic noise from Hwy 694 at the site, making it difficult to separate the existing BSC noise from the traffic sources. To account for that, the study combined that level with the new noise from the chillers.

H. Freestanding Signs – Flexibility Requested

Properties in Sign District 5 are allowed one freestanding sign measuring up to 100 square feet in area and not exceeding 16 feet in height. The Applicant would like to utilize the monument sign standards previously approved in the original PUD. The approved monument signs measure 26 feet in height and have a total sign copy area of 171.9 square feet (see Attachment F).

I. Wall Signs – Flexibility Requested

Properties in Sign District 5 are allowed wall signs up to 80 square feet. The Applicant is requesting flexibly for a 90 and 180 square foot sign above the main entrances to the building (east elevation facing Lexington Ave) and a 90 square foot sign on the north elevation (facing previous Lexington Station phases and Red Fox Road).

J. Traffic Study and Lexington Avenue Access

A traffic study has been prepared (see Attachment G). This study is currently being reviewed by the city's traffic consultant. The study reviewed existing operations within the area, evaluated traffic impacts to the roadway network, and recommended improvements to the proposed development site. SRF and the Applicant are aware that the County intends to reconstruct Lexington Avenue between County Road E and I-694 in 2022, and included that in the evaluation. In summary, the proposed development is expected to generate approximately 165 a.m. peak hour, 398 p.m. peak hour, and 4,592 daily site trips. Results of the year 2023 build operations analysis indicate the Lexington Avenue/Target Road intersection cross-street approach movements are expected to have significant queuing and delay as an unsignalized intersection. The proposed eastbound approach vehicle queuing storage is limited (approximately 100 feet). Infrequently, when this storage is filled, queues are expected to extend into the parking lot, which may infrequently and for very brief periods of time, block parking maneuvers to and from the southernmost parking stalls along the east face of the proposed building. With a future traffic signal, the site eastbound queues are expected to be reduced significantly, however, they may continue to infrequently and for very brief periods of time, extend beyond the limited storage during the p.m. peak hour.

A new access driveway in alignment with the Target service road is proposed to be constructed during the project. The existing driveway on Lexington Avenue that serves Phase I and Phase II is a temporary access point that is scheduled to close. The proposed new access driveway at the southern end of the site is approved as the sole permanent access off of Lexington Avenue. The proposed new access/intersection would include a traffic signal. The proposed traffic signal is included in the Ramsey County Lexington Avenue reconstruction project that is anticipated to start in 2022. The Applicant has also worked with Ramsey County to determine the alignment of the right-turn lane from Lexington Avenue into this site, and have reached an agreement about this alignment.

The construction of a signal at this intersection would remove the existing full access into Big O Tires and Arby's site as a new median would be constructed to the south of the new signal, restricting left turn movements. The proposed access in the Big O Tires and Arby's site would become a south bound right in and right out. The City is generally not in a position to remove access from the Big O Tires and Arby's site to benefit the proposed development, and because of that, staff requested the Applicant to consider adding an access from Lexington Station third addition into the Big O/Arby's site. However, the proposed access into the Big O Tires and Arby's site becomes moot if the County moves forward with the Lexington Avenue project as they have the authority to revoke the full access into the Big O Tires and Arby's site. The applicant has also identified a cross access point in the southeast corner of the property for potential access to the site to the south. This access is contingent upon a mutual agreement between the property owners.

Public Notice and Comments

A Notice was published in the Pioneer Press on April 16, 2021. A public neighborhood notice was prepared by the City and mailed to property owners within 1,000 feet of the subject property.

Attachments

- A. Application Narrative
- B. Location Map
- C. Approved Master PUD Site Plan
- D. Site Plans
- E. Building Elevations
- F. Monument Sign Plan
- G. Traffic Study
- H. Engineering Comment Letter
- I. Lexington Avenue Reconstruction Plans
- J. Planning Commission Memo
- K. Draft Planning Commission Minutes
- L. December 21, 2020 City Council Work Session Minutes