

**MEETING:** Site Review Committee  
**SUBJECT:** Office Building  
**ADDRESS:** 2454 U. S. Hwy 30  
**PRELIMINARY SITE REVIEW**

**LOCATION:** Zoom  
**DATE:** February 10, 2022

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Beth Shrader, Planning Director  
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Carley Lemmon, Asst. Planner  
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Vicki Thrasher, Building Commissioner  
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Tim Stites, Fire Department  
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Nate McGinley, Valparaiso City Utilities  
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Tony Fahel, Water Reclamation Dept.  
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Mike Jabo, Engineering Director  
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Mike Jessen, City Administrator  
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**PRESENTERS:**

Kevin Coros, McMahon Associates, Inc.  
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Nick Schacki, North 30 Venture, LLC  
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The following is a summary of discussion at this meeting.

**OPENING:** The Site Review Committee met to discuss the proposed office building to be located at 2452 U.S. Hwy 30/Morthland Drive. Lemmon stated that site review is not an approval. Rather, it is a preliminary discussion of the requirements and issues to be considered by the developer or owner. It is possible it will need to come back before site review or to seek other approvals.

**EXPLANATION OF PROJECT:** This is an existing building, and it was previously a carwash that closed approximately 2 years ago. Coros stated that the client wants to do a small building addition. The building will be used as a professional office building. Slight modifications to the site will be required, mainly to the parking. Coros mentioned that because of the carwash use, there is an excessive amount of asphalt area on the site. They are proposing the addition of a small strip of continuation sidewalk along the west face of the building and some additional parking stalls to take advantage of some of the unused asphalt area. A small amount of asphalt will be added in the southeast corner to connect to the north/south access drive on the east side of the property. Asphalt will also be added at the northeast side where the parking lot is located. Coros advised that more impervious area will be removed than added. The

green space number will go up after the site is cleaned up and unnecessary drives that were used for the carwash are removed. Coros stated they are assuming that the existing pond on the site will be adequate since more green space is being proposed. Coros is aware that there is proposed new construction on the property to the west and there may be some involvement concerning the pond. Schacki said they will be doing an addition to the building, updating the façade, and extra site work for the parking that will be added.

**STAFF COMMENTS:**

**JABO:** Since Bill Laird and Matt Zurbruggen are not available for this meeting, it will be necessary to follow-up with any comments they may have. Jabo asked for the square footage of useable floor space. Schacki indicated the square footage is approximately 11,000 sq. ft. Jabo mentioned that this area has become very popular for development. Engineering would be interested in a minimalistic traffic impact study for the traffic that this use will generate. If people want to go east, they will have to go to the traffic signal at the entrance in front of Strack & Van Tils. In light of the development next to this site and what will be added by this site and cars from Stracks, traffic can tend to backup. Shrader interjected that we will need information concerning trip generation. Coros conveyed that the carwash experienced numerous cars going in and out of the property on a daily basis. Even though they are adding more parking stalls, the clarification can be made that there will likely be much less traffic from this office site than what was generated by the carwash. Shrader asked when the carwash closed. Schacki believes it closed between 1-1/2 to 2-1/2 years ago. Jabo said office is a different use. In an office setting, people tend to arrive in a shorter compressed period of time and leave in a shorter compressed period of time as opposed to a carwash with people trickling in and out. There were probably morning and afternoon peaks, but it is a consistent amount of traffic coming and going. The office building is a different land use, and it operates differently. Jabo clarified that he is not asking for an exhaustive, expensive traffic impact study but he feels we need to be cognizant of the impact on the frontage road. Coros said the property next door has already done a traffic study and it provides information on what will be going in and out of the site. Could this study be used? Jabo said this study could be used and the study being done for the property to the west could be used. The information for this office site could be plugged into those studies. Schacki stated that he did not want to spend a lot of money for information that is already on the table. Jabo said they could do a trip generation and plug it into what is being projected. Jabo conveyed the concern is the traffic signal at U.S. 30. There are three new uses going into the area. Everyone wanting to go eastbound on U.S. 30 will probably want to go through the traffic

signal or it will get all snarled up and traffic will not even be able to go east on the frontage road. Coros asked if the City has any plans to extend the access road to the west. Jabo stated he hasn't heard anything concerning plans for an extension. Jabo mentioned that he does not like frontage roads, but maybe this is something that should be looked at in the future. Jabo asked if they have discussed drainage with Engineering. Coros said he has talked to Matt Zurbriggen. Coros explained that there will be more green space on the site than what is there currently. Zurbriggen did want to see the numbers. Coros mentioned the numbers are shown on the drawings. Zurbriggen advised that if there are any additional comments due to the development to the west, he will contact Coros. Jabo stated that any comments concerning storm water will be deferred until Engineering has an opportunity to take a more in depth, detailed look at it.

**FAHEL:** Fahel asked for clarification on the central area of the floor plan. Schacki identified this area as all cubicles. Fahel asked if there are any known tenants at this time. Schacki confirmed there are tenants, and they are professional offices. Fahel requested submittal of an internal plumbing plan. Schacki conveyed that there are existing restrooms on the north end, there is an existing restroom next to IT, the existing water meters are on the northeast side. They removed a bank of restrooms, but a small restroom will be added in the lobby. This is the only new plumbing. Fahel inquired about the plumbing associated with the carwash. Schacki mentioned there were floor drains, etc. that have been capped. There was a trough that ran through and drained out into the grease pits. They salvaged everything associated with the restrooms but everything else was terminated or capped. Fahel asked what will happen with the grease pits. Coros stated there are a couple of options available. The grease pits can be capped, they can be flowable filled or completely removed. Coros indicated that this has not been discussed yet. Fahel asked if the pits have been cleaned out or is there still grease in them. Schacki stated if the pits still contain grease they will be cleaned out. Fahel stated that Water Reclamation would like to see them capped at a minimum to be cut off from the sewer completely but removing them would be even better. Water Reclamation certainly does not want anything like this getting into any storm sewer or sanitary sewer. Coros mentioned that plumbing will be handled with internal components. Nothing will be added externally.

**MCGINLEY:** The plans do not reflect any water or sewer service information. McGinley assumes there must be some sort of re-piping necessary for the sanitary sewer if the triple basin separators and grease pits will no longer be used. McGinley asked if something can be shown on the prints so that Utilities and Water Reclamation can look at what is being proposed to reroute the sewer

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back to the existing lateral. Coros stated this can definitely be provided. Sheet C1.0 shows a set of six grease interceptor manholes towards the northeast corner of the building. Coros mentioned they will definitely get into a little more detail showing the capped ends as well as the reconnections. McGinley said this will help Utilities and Water Reclamation better understand how these will be decommissioned and how the new lateral will be serviced from the facility back to the sewer main. McGinley advised there is a 2" meter for this facility and a 4" service used by the carwash. McGinley asked if a 2" meter will be required. Schacki indicated the meter will be downsized. Schacki said since the use will change to office and there will just be regular sanitary waste water, can the grease interceptor pits be cleaned out and repurposed or do they need to be demolished. McGinley deferred comment on this to Tony Fahel. Fahel indicated the preference would be to remove them because of the residual grease. Fahel said he is unsure if they can just be cleaned. Fahel suggested they look at routing around them as a potential solution. Coros said as stated before at a minimum they would need to be capped. The ultimate decision would be up to Schacki on how he wants to handle the grease interceptors. McGinley said if they could perform some sort of bypass around the interceptors, decommission them in place and capped them off this will probably be sufficient. Fahel agreed with this solution. Coros said this can be shown on the plans. McGinley conveyed that it will be necessary to work with Shaun Shifflett to schedule the meter change. Shifflett can be reached at 219-472-6174, ext. 1322 or [sshifflett@valpo.us](mailto:sshifflett@valpo.us). Since this service has been off for so long, it will be necessary to contact Shifflett to schedule a backflow test to ensure the backflow is working properly. Schacki said it will all be new piping and backflow.

**STITES:** All initial inspections required during the construction phase must be scheduled and coordinated through the Building Department. After occupancy is granted, the facility will be subject to annual fire inspections. Contractors performing any work on the fire life safety systems will need to contact Stites prior to beginning any work. Stites mentioned that access appears to be okay.

**THRASHER:** This project will require a Construction Design Release from the State of Indiana before the local Building Permit can be issued. The Building Permit application, Site Work Permit application, and Zoning Clearance application can all be submitted with the plans to the Building Department. Submittal of a PDF copy of a full set of plans will be necessary. All contractors must be registered with the City before permits can be issued. Any signage will require a separate permit.

**SHRADER:** Shrader requested a before and after on the same plan showing where the lot coverage will change so we have the total lot coverage calculations. Coros stated that Sheet C1.0 shows the existing coverage areas

and Sheet C2.0 shows the proposed coverage areas. Shrader asked if they anticipate any variances. Coros stated that there do not appear to be any variances at this time. Most of what is there is existing. However, if City staff sees something, it can certainly be discussed. Shrader mentioned there is no landscape plan; however, there is a site note that the Class B bufferyard required along West or Morthland is noted. Shrader is presuming this is not existing. Coros said this is correct and they have not engaged in a landscape service at this time. McMahon no longer does landscape plans but there will be a plan as part of the set. Shrader inquired if any trees will be removed. Coros advised that from the site topography no trees will be taken down. Everything being reconfigured is in a free and clear area. Shrader said in the back along the residential area they need to take a look at where the bufferyard is required to see if the existing plant material meets the bufferyard standards or if additional plant material may be required to beef it up. As stated previously, this is becoming a popular area. Signage heights and standards are very important. Monument signs are capped at 6 ft. along the Morthland Overlay District; however, it can be mounded up to get a little additional height. Shrader asked if there will be any changes to the lighting scheme. Schacki said for right now they will be using existing. Where the expansion is located there are wall packs along the west side of the building. These will obviously be extended out. Wall packs will also be extended out on the north of the addition and all the way along the west side of the addition. Shrader cautioned them to be aware of the lighting standards. Lighting should not trespass onto adjacent properties above the levels allowed. Along West Street there seems to be an easement that gives the City the right-of-way we would expect for West Street. It will be necessary to follow-up with Engineering on this easement. It appears the easement was established in 2014. Typically, in an easement we want to see specific language that gives the City what we need to make improvements in that area. If it does not, we may want to look at either a new easement or a different dedication. Jabo interjected that a fee simple dedication would be preferred. Coros said he and Schacki can discuss this issue, but this will probably be to Schacki's benefit. Coros asked if the City would be fine with the 40 ft. that is there now or would the City want more area. Shrader said it appears to meet what was acquired in the past but is not totally prepared to answer this question. Generally, we like a 50 ft. but we have to take this on a case-by-case basis. There is a very shallow distance between West and Morthland. Coros asked if we had gotten a 50 ft. dedication from the new property to the west. Shrader stated she does not know. Currently this office is downtown and on the V-Line route. Shrader asked if they would be able to tell her what percentage of people coming to this location used the V-Line. The V-Line does reach this new location. Shacki said this was not

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shared with him. They wanted their own individual building with parking. Shrader asked if it would be possible to get this information. Schacki said he will ask the tenant.

**LAIRD/ZURBRIGGEN:** Is the storm water lift station in working condition? As stated earlier, neither Laird nor Zurbruggen were able to attend this meeting. They will provide any additional comments they may have at a later date.

**LEMMON:** Lemmon indicated this property is located in the Commercial General Zoning District and is also within the U.S. 30/Morthland Drive Signature Corridor. Office is a permitted use in the Commercial General Zoning District. Lemmon asked if the dumpster enclosure is existing or new. Schacki said this is an existing location. A new enclosure will probably be added. Lemmon stated that referring to Section 2.406 for the solid waste collection standards will be necessary. A wall one foot taller than the refuse container is required. Article 3, Table 3.505 has the non-residential bulk requirements. For an office use, the front yard setback requirement is 20 ft.; the side yard setback is 10 ft; rear yard setback is 10 ft. It appears these requirements can be easily met. The signage standards for the commercial district are in Article 5, Section 5.303. The requirements for parking are noted correctly (3 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. for general office). The parking calculation should not include restrooms, storage areas, or utility areas. There appear to be enough accessible spaces for the range of parking. If any future additional lighting is considered, it will be necessary to refer to Section 9.501 for non-residential lighting standards. The section does explain potential conflicts with the residential property to the north. The requirement for parking lot landscaping is 1 large tree per 8 spaces and 1 shrub, perennial, or ornamental grass per 4 spaces. Information concerning the U.S. 30/Morthland Drive Overlay District is contained in Section 11.305. this section will note all landscaping standards, setbacks for commercial (15 feet), lot coverage (maximum lot coverage is 75%), minimum LSR is 25%. Lemmon said it will be necessary to refer to the following sections of the UDO: Section 11.502 - building dimensions; Section 11.503 – architectural features; Section 11.506 – transparency; Section 11.507 – building materials. Lemmon noted that EFIS is included as part of the building elevations. Schacki said they are exploring different options for materials. Lemmon conveyed that EFIS is allowed but there are limitations. The City prefers drainable EFIS for facades of non-residential buildings that are visible from public right-of-way. It is used as an accent material. It can only be installed above the floor level of the second story or no less than 12 ft. above grade for one-story buildings and shall not exceed 30% of the facade. It shall not be installed in any pedestrian contact areas. If EFIS is not visible from the public right-of-way, drainable EFIS can be installed in pedestrian or vehicular areas. A 20 lb. or greater strength reinforcing mesh shall

be installed to a height of no less than 12 ft. above the predominant grade. Lemmon asked if any additional mechanical equipment will be included on the roof or on site. Schacki indicated the existing roof-top units will probably be swapped out and one or two will be added to the addition. Lemmon suggested they refer to Section 11.508 for the required screening standards. A Zoning Clearance will be required.

**JESSEN:** Jessen provided no comments on the project.

**ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED:**

- Landscaping Plan
- Right-of-Way
- Detailed Site Plan
- Backflow Prevention Test
- Contact Shaun Shifflett – Meter Downsize
- Submit Internal Plumbing Plan
- Site Improvement Permit
- Confirm the Storm Water Lift Station is in Working Condition
- State Design Release
- Building Permit
- Submit 1 Paper Copy and 1 PDF Copy of Plans
- Contractors Registered with the City
- Signage/Fencing Permit
- Zoning Clearance