

**MINUTES
CITY OF ST. CHARLES, IL
PLAN COMMISSION
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2020**

Members Present: Chairman Wallace
Vice Chairman Kessler
Tom Pretz
James Holderfield
Jeffrey Funke (virtual)
Peter Vargulich
Suzanne Melton
Jennifer Becker

Members Absent: Laura Macklin-Purdy

Also Present: Ellen Johnson, Planner
Ciara Miller, Economic Development Planner
Court Reporter

1. Call to order

Chairman Wallace called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Vice Chair Kessler called the roll. A quorum was present.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Presentation of minutes of the September 22, 2020 meeting of the Plan Commission.

Motion was made by Mr. Kessler, seconded by Mr. Pretz and unanimously passed by voice vote to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2020 Plan Commission meeting.

5. 1023 W. Main St. (Mohammed Shahid Ali)

Application for Concept Plan

The attached transcript prepared by Planet Depos Court Reporting is by reference hereby made a part of these minutes.

6. Additional Business from Plan Commission Members or Staff - None

7. Weekly Development Report

8. Meeting Announcements

a. Plan Commission

Tuesday, October 20, 2020 at 7:00pm Council Chambers

Tuesday, November 3, 2020 - Cancelled

Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 7:00pm Council Chambers

Minutes – St. Charles Plan Commission

Tuesday, October 6, 2020

Page 2

- b. Planning & Development Committee
 - Monday, October 12, 2020 at 7:00pm Council Chambers
 - Monday, November 9, 2020 at 7:00pm Council Chambers

9. Public Comment

10. Adjournment at 8:15 p.m.



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Transcript of 1023 W. Main Street

Date: October 6, 2020

Case: St. Charles Plan Commission

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BEFORE THE PLAN COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF ST. CHARLES

-----x
In Re: 1023 W. Main :
Street, Application for :
Concept Plan :
-----x

HEARING
St. Charles, Illinois 60174
Tuesday, October 6, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Job No.: 272059
Pages: 1 - 70
Reported by: Joanne E. Ely, CSR, RPR

1 HEARING, held at the location of:

2

3 ST. CHARLES CITY HALL

4 2 East Main Street

5 St. Charles, Illinois 60174

6 (630) 377-4400

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13 Before Joanne E. Ely, a Certified Shorthand
14 Reporter, and a Notary Public in and for the State
15 of Illinois.

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Transcript of 1023 W. Main Street
Conducted on October 6, 2020

1 PRESENT:

2 TODD WALLACE, Chairman

3 TIM KESSLER, Vice Chairman

4 JENNIFER BECKER, Member

5 JEFFREY FUNKE, Member, via Zoom

6 JAMES HOLDERFIELD, Member

7 SUZANNE MELTON, Member

8 TOM PRETZ, Member, Member

9 PETER VARGULICH, Member

10

11 ALSO PRESENT:

12 ELLEN JOHNSON, Planner

13 CIARA MILLER, Economic Development Planner

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRMAN WALLACE: This meeting of the
Plan Commission will come to order.

Tim, roll call.

VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Becker.

MEMBER BECKER: Here.

VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Pretz.

MEMBER PRETZ: Here.

VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Holderfield.

MEMBER HOLDERFIELD: Here.

VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Vargulich.

MEMBER VARGULICH: Here.

VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Melton.

MEMBER MELTON: Here.

VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Wallace.

CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Here.

VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Kessler, here.

CHAIRMAN WALLACE: All right. Please join
us for the Pledge of Allegiance.

(The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

CHAIRMAN WALLACE: All right. Item 4,
presentation of the minutes of the September 22nd,
2020, meeting of the Plan Commission. Is there a
motion to approve?

Transcript of 1023 W. Main Street
Conducted on October 6, 2020

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: So moved.

2 MEMBER PRETZ: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: It's been moved and
4 seconded. All in favor.

5 (Ayes heard.)

6 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Opposed.

7 (No response.)

8 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: All right. Item 5 --
9 oh, before we go further, I just want to recognize
10 that the mayor of the City of St. Charles sent out
11 a memorandum regarding face coverings and social
12 distancing at meetings just to remind us that we
13 continue to practice per CDC guidelines; and if
14 anyone has any questions, there's further
15 information on the City's website.

16 Item 5 is 1023 West Main Street, Mohammed
17 Shahid Ali, application for a concept plan.

18 For those of who you aren't familiar --
19 oh, I'm sorry. I also want to say before we begin
20 this -- I also need to say if anyone is
21 participating via Zoom and wishes to make a
22 comment, you can comment via the Q and A button at
23 the bottom of the screen. Type your comment in
24 the box. The comment will be read to the chamber

1 during the public comment portion of the hearing.

2 If you'd like to make your comment out
3 loud, please wait until the public comment portion
4 of the meeting, press the button on the bottom of
5 the screen to raise hand. Once your hand is
6 raised, staff will recognize you and ask you to
7 unmute your mic. Your mic will remain unmuted for
8 the duration of your comment. Once you have
9 finished, staff will remute your mic. If
10 additional questions, you'll need to re-raise your
11 hand.

12 All right.

13 MS. JOHNSON: I believe Commissioner Funke
14 has joined us via Zoom, if you want to confirm
15 that he is here.

16 MEMBER FUNKE: I'm here.

17 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: All right. Thank you.

18 Anyway, I'm sorry, back to 1023 West Main
19 Street. This is an application for a concept
20 plan. The purpose of a concept plan review by the
21 Plan Commission is to give a potential applicant a
22 chance to present plans in a concept format before
23 actually making a formal application to the City.

24 The concept plan review will occur

1 tonight; and after tonight, the City will not take
2 any further steps. It's up to the applicant
3 to make -- or to file an application for
4 development.

5 Any questions regarding that? All right.

6 And what we will do is if the applicant
7 would like to make a presentation. The plan
8 commissioners will ask questions and make any
9 comments and provide feedback for you.

10 So are you ready to go?

11 MR. ALI: Yes. Eric is going to present
12 from ECA Architects.

13 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Okay. If you could
14 just -- when you're speaking, if you could just
15 stand at the lectern and state your name and spell
16 your last name for the court reporter.

17 MR. CARLSON: Okay.

18 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: And also state your
19 address.

20 MR. CARLSON: Okay. And per the
21 guidelines, are we okay without a mask up there?

22 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Yes.

23 MR. CARLSON: Hello, My name is Eric
24 Carlson. That's C-a-r-l-s-o-n. I'm with ECA

1 Architects, 24 North Bennett Street in Geneva.

2 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Okay.

3 MR. CARLSON: Thank you, first of all, for
4 the meeting tonight and the ability to get some
5 feedback from you.

6 The site is on the corner of 11th and
7 North Avenue. It's a previous gas station site.
8 Mr. Ali purchased the property in 2016. It had
9 been not in operation at the time when he
10 purchased it. He ran that station for about three
11 years, three-and-a-half years and wanted to do
12 some upgrades to that.

13 At that time he took out the tanks and
14 cleaned up the site, got the EPA approval on the
15 tank removals, and is now looking to redevelop the
16 property into a nicer gas station with the
17 apartment component on the second floor of that
18 gas station/convenience store.

19 I'm not necessarily going to get into a
20 ton of the specifics on the property. We can
21 handle those in questions. I'm assuming you've
22 all looked through the very detailed report, and
23 there's a lot of zoning variations that we're
24 requesting in terms of setbacks, landscape

1 reduction, and a handful of other things as well.
2 They're all noted on the sheet and the sidebars up
3 here, as well as the report.

4 This is the existing site, existing
5 building. It's here. It's a very small building.
6 There's kind of a landscape retaining wall along
7 here, and the pumps were previously located along
8 North Avenue.

9 So much of that is staying the same in the
10 new development. The building is getting bigger,
11 parking is getting more defined into the area
12 where that landscape area was and the retaining
13 wall was, and the tank is being relocated
14 underneath that parking, right underneath these
15 three stalls, the trash enclosures as well as the
16 handicapped stall.

17 We're proposing moving the tanks a little
18 bit further north from where they were previously
19 located by a foot or so. It's not significant,
20 but just to give a little more traffic flow across
21 the front of the building.

22 Here, we're proposing widening the drive
23 ever so slightly along 11th here on the cut just
24 to give it a little bit more easy access into the

1 site just because it's a little bit tighter there.

2 We have done some turning templates here.

3 This is the fuel tank. The tanker comes in
4 typically -- it's a tight site again for that,
5 especially with the proposed canopy. The tanker
6 is going to kind of come into the site, back up,
7 unload the fuel, and then exit back out onto North
8 Avenue. It's a little bit of a fun maneuver there
9 for the tanker truck, but that's kind of what
10 they're used to anyway.

11 Similar thing with the garbage truck,
12 although the garbage truck can swing through and
13 make the turn. The trash enclosure again kind of
14 tucked in the corner over here for the garbage
15 truck to stop and pick up the trash and then
16 continue out to North Avenue.

17 Fire trucks, same kind of template there.

18 As you can see, the site is pretty
19 limited. We're packing it pretty full with the
20 building and parking.

21 I know landscaping is one of the items
22 that's been -- that was commented on in the
23 report. The only thing I can say to that is
24 currently we'll look to try to maximize wherever

1 we can put that. There's a little grassy area
2 here in the corner. That will be enhanced.
3 There's a little area over here by the sign that
4 we can add a little additional landscaping.

5 One of the other items that was in the
6 report was the request to consider closing the
7 westerly access point into the site. With Mr. Ali
8 running that site for three-and-a-half years, he
9 feels that that's a pretty important access point,
10 even though in theory I know the idea was that
11 they can come in here on 11th Street and kind of
12 make a quick two turns into the site.

13 He thinks that that might be a little
14 problematic with just the flow of that traffic.
15 If you minimize this, this becomes an in-and-out
16 access point; and then because of the tight site,
17 it doesn't leave a whole lot of room for
18 additional mobility on the site. With it being so
19 tight, any mobility is important.

20 So to be able to come in and have a quick
21 access from the easterly direction onto the site,
22 get your gas, and then continue to exit out on the
23 eastbound traffic was pretty important.

24 And you would -- on occasion, you would

1 have somebody that does come in the opposite
2 direction and then try to -- if you've got people
3 coming in this way and going out that way, that
4 could be problematic. So I think the preference
5 is to not close it off, but, obviously, we'd look
6 for some opinions on that.

7 The character of the building -- the
8 character of the building, you know, we try to
9 maintain kind of a residential feel for the
10 building itself. Obviously, the C store would be
11 on this first level here; and, again, we're
12 proposing an apartment, a single-unit apartment on
13 the second floor.

14 The initial thought on that is Mr. Ali's
15 son is going to be running the gas station
16 full-time. So it would be a living quarters for
17 him while he operates the store. That's kind of
18 really the intent for that as well as some
19 additional storage for maybe some excess supplies
20 that could be stored up in the apartment unit and
21 used in the store later when needed.

22 So that's the more immediate use of that
23 apartment. It's not necessarily to rent out. We
24 do have parking available on the site for that

1 use, and, again, if it's him managing the store
2 and living in the apartment, it's still just one
3 parking stall anyway that's being used. But even
4 on a future standpoint, if the property gets sold,
5 somebody else could do the same thing.

6 A lot of the gas stations, especially
7 small, independent gas stations would like the
8 idea to be able to live upstairs of where their
9 business is because it just can make sense to
10 them from an economic standpoint, but even beyond
11 that, it's still a residential area.

12 There's a lot of mixed-use buildings along
13 North Avenue that have some commercial with
14 residential above them. So we still think it
15 would be a good use. I know there were some
16 questions on that from some of the letters that
17 were received from neighbors, but we'll certainly
18 entertain some comments on that apartment as well.

19 That's about all I have from a basic
20 building and site component. So if anybody has
21 got questions, comments, we're anxious to hear
22 them.

23 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Okay. Plan
24 commissioners, questions?

1 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Yes. So it's a
2 single unit, one-dwelling unit.

3 MR. CARLSON: Yes.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: How big is that?

5 MR. CARLSON: It's about 11- to
6 1200 square feet.

7 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay. It's not
8 going to be an active rental unit, did you say?

9 MR. CARLSON: Not initially, although I'm
10 not necessarily going to commit to somebody else
11 buying it and wanting to rent it out, or if his
12 son gets married and has kids and stuff like that,
13 then he might need a bigger place. So I'm not
14 going to say that it's not possible.

15 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay.

16 MR. CARLSON: But it's not the initial
17 intent.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: And would you ever
19 widen the curb cut on 11th? Is that the intent?

20 MR. CARLSON: I'm sorry?

21 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: You said you're
22 going to widen the entrance at 11th --

23 MR. CARLSON: Just a little bit.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: -- or would you

1 have to increase the width of the curb cut?

2 MR. CARLSON: No. I'm just straightening
3 this out a little bit just to make it a little
4 easier for these cars to get in, so just a real
5 small triangle right there.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: And there is a
7 retaining wall that is north of the property line
8 by -- along the width of where the building is
9 and existing there.

10 And so that retaining wall is going to be
11 moved back to the property line?

12 MR. CARLSON: Correct.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: And what is the
14 intent? I mean how are you going to build that?

15 MR. CARLSON: We don't know exactly the
16 height. I haven't done a topo out there yet, but
17 it will either be a concrete or a retaining stone.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Is it right on the
19 property line?

20 MR. CARLSON: It's pretty close. It will
21 be about a foot away. We're staying about a foot
22 from the property line. Like right now, for
23 example, I don't know if you can see my mouse
24 here, but at the existing building, there's a

1 retaining wall on this one side as well as this
2 side.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Right.

4 MR. CARLSON: So we'll basically continue
5 right along that line.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: It's likely you'd
7 have to get in to the other property to build a
8 retaining wall of any height.

9 MR. CARLSON: We'd would be sensitive,
10 yes. Yeah. We'd have to look into it and see how
11 we could do that. I mean we can go to zero lot
12 line foundations and such that we can look to
13 accommodate something like that so we don't need
14 to impact that; otherwise, there might be some
15 discussion about an agreement for some
16 enhancements to the property.

17 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Because there's
18 trees along there too.

19 MR. CARLSON: Yeah, there is.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Those trees on
21 that property line, are they on this property or
22 the neighbor's property?

23 MR. ALI: The three trees, which are on my
24 property --

1 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: On that.

2 MR. ALI: Yeah. Just the trees on it.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Then there are
4 trees on their property as well; right?

5 MR. ALI: Yes.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay. Straddling
7 the --

8 MR. ALI: Straddling. So the neighbor is
9 pretty much -- we have a working relationship with
10 the neighbor.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: You've spoken with
12 the neighbor?

13 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Why don't you come on
14 up since we're on Zoom.

15 MR. ALI: We have a working relationship
16 with the neighbor. The neighbor lady is really
17 good.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay.

19 MR. ALI: So we maintain a -- so.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: You have spoken
21 with her about this plan?

22 MR. ALI: Not yet, but we might have to
23 send the letters to them. There was probably a
24 letter sent to them as well.

1 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Okay. And have
2 you spoken to any of the neighbors around that
3 property?

4 MR. ALI: Yes. A lot of the neighbors I
5 have spoken to they really like the gas station
6 and the quick access and convenience store in
7 there. The gas station was there for almost close
8 to 100 years now, and people love for me to open a
9 gas station there. And everybody was asking --

10 MEMBER HOLDERFIELD: Excuse me, please.
11 Could you speak more into the microphone?

12 MR. ALI: Yeah. So we have spoken to a
13 lot of neighbors. They want us to keep the gas
14 station the way it is, a small neighborhood kind
15 of a gas station.

16 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: It seems that the
17 objections are not to the gas station but to the
18 dwelling unit above.

19 MR. ALI: Yeah. The main purpose of the
20 dwelling unit is we wanted to use it as a storage
21 and a condo unit for the person who is the
22 operator/owner. It's going to be only a
23 single-bedroom condo. We are not giving it for
24 anything but as it is right now.

1 The main reason I want to develop it in
2 that fashion is because the storage downstairs is
3 limited. As you can see, it's only 1300 square
4 feet. If you want to stock up on anything, you've
5 got to use the upper floor to stock. Plus
6 somebody can live in there.

7 The idea behind that is because the
8 property is owned by son's trust. He's 33 years
9 old. He's autistic. So we're thinking that we
10 might train to run his own business and live up
11 there. That's the main intent. Right now we are
12 not trying to rent it out. That's our main
13 intent. I mean we're going to use it for storage
14 too, and we have designed the parking so only one
15 car can be for that unit.

16 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Why did you remove
17 the tanks? Why did you have to remove --

18 MR. ALI: The tank -- the entire
19 infrastructure is almost like 40 years old. In
20 order to rebuild the site, we have to remove the
21 tanks out. Because of the new EPA regulations
22 coming in, it was not worth for us to reinvest
23 without taking the tanks out. Because we want to
24 invest in the property for the next 30 years at

1 least. With the new infrastructure coming in, it
2 will be -- the total investment will be somewhere
3 around 15 to 20 years.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Did you have to do
5 any remediation of the soil there?

6 MR. ALI: Everything is done.

7 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: I mean did you
8 have to haul out contaminated soil?

9 MR. ALI: Yes. It was all done. Starting
10 in November, the entire contamination is out. We
11 have already submitted for all the approvals in
12 there, for the remediation in there.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: You did actually
14 haul out soil.

15 MR. ALI: Yes. So everything is taken
16 out. So with respect to the site, it's fully
17 clean. No contamination is in there.

18 MEMBER VARGULICH: I'm sorry. To follow
19 up, did you receive an NFR letter?

20 MR. ALI: We submitted for NFR. Because
21 of the COVID, we're still waiting for an NFR, but
22 the environmental company that I'm working with
23 for cleaning, they said we can still go ahead and
24 proceed with the construction. We don't have to

1 wait anymore. So IDOT, because we are on North
2 Avenue, there is some IDOT approvals that we
3 needed prior that NFR. So we got those approvals,
4 and the NFR is going to be forthcoming.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: All right. Well,
6 I know this is the time for questions, but I'm
7 going to make a couple comments right now.

8 I've lived a block away from there for
9 about 40 years. So it is convenient to have a gas
10 station there; and frankly, I'm pleased to see
11 that you're interested in developing that
12 property. There's not much else --

13 MEMBER HOLDERFIELD: Tim, I can't hear
14 you.

15 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: I said I'm pleased
16 to see that you're interested in developing that
17 property, and I don't object to the dwelling unit
18 above simply because I think that's pretty much
19 how most of the small businesses have started
20 everywhere. We've approved mixed-use in
21 subdivisions over on Prairie, over on Prairie
22 Street, downtown. I mean we are champions of
23 mixed use. So this is just a single-unit mixed
24 use. That's perfectly fine.

1 I am concerned about that curb cut. I can
2 tell you, having lived there as long as I have,
3 that is not a safe curb cut. I know that it seems
4 like it's convenient, but you'll have more
5 conflict of cars coming off of Main through that
6 curb cut and pulling in from 11th Street, than you
7 will if you close that curb cut.

8 I believe that that curb cut should be
9 closed, and I think that you could use that corner
10 then to enhance landscaping that you aren't
11 otherwise able to install because of the setbacks
12 on the property.

13 I know how big the curb cut is on -- the
14 east curb cut. Having that wide open all the way
15 across which, essentially, it is, you have cars
16 entering all along the property line there. It
17 happens all the time. It's happened for years
18 with the gas station that's there.

19 So I'm very familiar with how the traffic
20 will work there. I think that really needs to be
21 closed. I think it's a --

22 MR. ALI: You're talking about the north
23 Avenue entrance?

24 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: I'm talking about

1 the western-most curb cut on Main Street.

2 MR. ALI: Main Street.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Yeah.

4 Western-most curb cut.

5 MR. ALI: The main reason we want that
6 curb cut is because the gas station has a quick in
7 and quick access out.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: I understand that.
9 Most of the problem is that you're going to have
10 conflicting traffic coming in all the way along
11 that. They came off of -- they turn left through
12 there. They turn right through there from the
13 west entrance, and they come in off of 11th
14 Street. And it's constantly been a problem for
15 years and years and years. I've seen it. I know
16 what you may think it can do, but I will tell you
17 what it does do; and then in addition to that, you
18 can use that corner then for landscaping.

19 I hope that, you know, we'll be able to
20 take a peak at some of the design guidelines for
21 the building. The building could -- the building
22 could look a little better; but having a new
23 structure there and having it developed, it's
24 going to enhance the neighborhood. So if you can

1 work through all of the details, then I think it's
2 an okay project.

3 MR. ALI: Thank you for your feedback, but
4 I just wanted to give you one pointer, especially
5 in the morning time between 5:00 and 9:00, the
6 entire traffic is eastbound coming in. That
7 access is mostly used in the morning and in the
8 evening.

9 And the 11th Street access is only used by
10 the persons who are living in the neighborhood.
11 So I have seen for the last three-and-a-half years
12 the access point coming from the east side going
13 eastward, most of the time they use that access.
14 The proposed access coming in, that would be
15 another access.

16 So if I tear that out, probably I will
17 lose business, considerable business with the
18 people who are making a quick in and quick out.
19 That's the selling point of my gas station is
20 quick in and quick out.

21 If you look at other gas stations, people
22 go in there. Their store is right there. They
23 park and go inside the store; but most of the
24 customers that come in this gas station, they

1 drive in the car right up, you know, to the pumps.
2 They come in for a couple of minutes, out, and
3 they are gone.

4 So if I cut that station up, probably that
5 would be -- I've got to really redo the entire
6 plan; and the moment if I cut that out, people
7 will try to come in Main Street -- sorry -- 11th
8 Street in, and taking left to 11th Street and
9 anybody coming behind that is driving, one car,
10 and two pass along. So there's always pumps
11 behind.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: I've seen more
13 accidents in that parking lot than I've seen any
14 accidents on Main Street, and I think that's
15 because of those two curb cuts. So I don't agree
16 with you.

17 MR. ALI: Thank you.

18 MEMBER BECKER: I have a couple questions.

19 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Yes.

20 MEMBER BECKER: If we can discuss the
21 parking situation in relation to where the tank
22 is. Is it customary to site required parking over
23 the tank. What happens when the tanker comes in
24 and people are parked over it? There's nowhere on

1 site for them to go.

2 MR. ALI: The tanker comes in once in a
3 week. So before they come, there's just a couple
4 of cars in there. So we know exactly when the
5 orders of people and when they're going to come.

6 MEMBER BECKER: So if there are customers
7 then, you'd have to have them move?

8 MR. ALI: Yeah. We have to have them move
9 and not park on that site at that particular time
10 before we can put in the gas.

11 MEMBER BECKER: And where will they go?

12 MR. ALI: Right on the pumps, where the
13 pumps are, parking on the pumps.

14 MEMBER BECKER: Okay.

15 MR. ALI: Most of the customers who are
16 coming to the gas station, they don't use the
17 parking lot to park because they park right on the
18 pump.

19 MEMBER BECKER: But there will be a
20 convenience store.

21 MR. ALI: There will be a convenience
22 store. Whoever comes to the convenience store,
23 most of the time they park here by the pumps.
24 Hardly anybody -- hardly any people use the

1 parking lot at the gas station.

2 MEMBER BECKER: And one of those spaces
3 will be required for the dwelling unit; correct?

4 MR. ALI: Yes. One of the spaces, the
5 operator/owner, he uses this parking right now.
6 There is one car anyway for the employee, whoever
7 is running the store.

8 MEMBER BECKER: And what are your hours
9 for operation for the pumps right now?

10 MR. ALI: The hours of operations are 5:00
11 in the morning until 11:00 at night. That's not a
12 24-hour store anyway. We will never get to
13 24 hours. It's somewhere -- normally on the
14 weekend, we are open until midnight; otherwise, we
15 close at 10:00 o'clock, 10:30, or 11:00 o'clock we
16 will be closed.

17 MEMBER BECKER: Okay. Thank you.

18 MR. ALI: And weekends we start a little
19 bit later. We don't open at 5:00 in the morning.
20 We open at 6:00.

21 This is a neighborhood store, not a very
22 busy gas station in there. We love the customers
23 around there. People come that live in the
24 neighborhood.

Transcript of 1023 W. Main Street
Conducted on October 6, 2020

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1 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: All right. Other
2 questions?

3 MEMBER MELTON: I have a question.

4 Is the access to the apartment from the
5 exterior, or are there any internal stairways to
6 the apartment?

7 MR. ALI: I'll let you answer.

8 MR. CARLSON: Just an exterior access.
9 That's what we have now.

10 MEMBER MELTON: Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: All right. Other
12 questions?

13 MEMBER VARGULICH: Yeah. It appears that
14 there's no parking on the west side of 11th
15 Street. It's signed right now, and you have a
16 couple other spaces that are handling the retail
17 and the apartment. But let's say maybe not this
18 year, but if you changed or something changed with
19 your son and he wasn't the operator and you
20 decided to rent the unit, where would guest
21 parking be without impacting the retail?

22 MR. ALI: Within the three parking spots.
23 There will be one parking spot on the end, or they
24 can mix any use it. Right where the tanks are,

1 there will be one parking lot, and we have
2 construction.

3 MEMBER VARGULICH: So it would be -- I
4 don't even know if the data is super close on
5 this. So if somebody using one of the parking
6 spaces and there's only three spaces available and
7 one of which is handicapped, and there is one
8 parking space for the apartment, then where does
9 the visitor park? Are they going to park on the
10 street, and does that create issues with respect
11 to some things that have been raised in letters
12 that have been sent from your neighbors?

13 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: That's what we do
14 now. We park on the street.

15 MEMBER VARGULICH: Okay.

16 MR. ALI: The 11th Street is not that
17 busy. I've seen a lot of guests park on 11th
18 Street, whoever comes to the houses too. And
19 sometimes people, the neighbors also come and park
20 in the gas station. So we are here, and we have
21 that.

22 MEMBER VARGULICH: All right. I have some
23 additional comments or questions on the site plan.

24 I think that on the site plan, there's a

1 note near the northwest corner related to removing
2 the light pole. I think what you're pointing to
3 is the City's light pole; and because of the curb,
4 there's very limited space between the pole and
5 the back of the curb. So I would just ask that
6 you develop this further, that you guys look at
7 that and make that so pedestrians can effectively
8 walk east to west.

9 And if there needs to be a little
10 pavement, if you will, on your property to
11 accommodate that, limited but it does happen. I
12 see plenty of people walking along Main Street,
13 but that could happen without removing the City's
14 pole since that's illuminating Route 64. There's
15 a pole that's currently there, and it looks like
16 it's illuminating your property. I'm just
17 pointing that out.

18 MR. ALI: There is one City light, but the
19 pole belongs to us too.

20 MR. CARLSON: There's two poles.

21 MEMBER VARGULICH: There's two there,
22 yeah. Correct.

23 MR. CARLSON: The City wanted it to stay,
24 and then the other one, that would go.

1 MEMBER VARGULICH: Understand.

2 MR. CARLSON: The canopy would be right
3 there.

4 MR. ALI: Because the canopy will provide
5 me good light in there; but if you want to keep
6 the pole, we can keep it. That's not a problem.

7 MEMBER VARGULICH: No, just the City's.

8 MR. ALI: The City's will be there. We
9 are not touching that.

10 MEMBER VARGULICH: Okay. With respect to
11 the sign, I would ask that you move it to the
12 opposite corner from where it is now. Number one,
13 I think that it feels like it's off your property,
14 and it's kind of in the face of your neighbor.
15 And if that was the way it looked when you bought
16 the property, that's fine. But since you're
17 redeveloping the property, I would ask that the
18 sign go to the northwest corner.

19 And I think that notwithstanding some of
20 the pavement issues and access issues that have
21 already been discussed at that corner, I think
22 there's room for some landscaping around the sign
23 that won't necessarily limit your ability to move
24 in and out of the site, whether or not you close

1 the western entrance or not, and I would encourage
2 you to study that further.

3 To me you haven't shown any reason other
4 than an operations discussion, which we could have
5 a debate about, but none of the movements that
6 you've shown in your traffic or your turn studies
7 show that you need that spot to be open at the
8 northwest corner on Main Street. So I think those
9 are things that should be studied further.

10 You're deficient on landscape area, and I
11 think Commissioner Kessler is kind of, in fact --
12 if you have an opportunity, I think, if you move
13 the sign to that corner, that it is better for the
14 property. I think as you've noted that there's a
15 sight triangle, but I do not think the sight
16 triangle impacts the issue there, whether it's
17 landscaping or the sign, because I think there's
18 enough room to set it outside the sight triangle,
19 but that is an important thing for people pulling
20 out onto Main Street.

21 I also think that you have fencing along
22 the south property line proposed, and you also
23 have a two-story structure. So it seems that for
24 the length of the building, whatever that is,

1 74 feet, 75 feet for the length of the building,
2 you probably don't need the 8-foot fence.
3 Because, otherwise, you're going to have an
4 8-foot; and then 2 feet later, you're going to
5 have the back of the building. So is it possible
6 to consider -- and if this is a PUD, there's all
7 sorts of reasons to talk about this -- eliminating
8 the fence there, but adding a fence along your
9 eastern property line from the building up to the
10 location where you're proposing the vacuums.

11 So now the neighbor to your east is
12 screened from the parking and the activities that
13 are there. So relocating some of that fence, if
14 you will, and maybe putting it to better use along
15 the eastern property line.

16 I think overall architecturally things can
17 develop further. I'm not opposed to the general
18 appearance of the building that you're proposing.
19 I'm not opposed -- I'm not against the apartment
20 above, whether it's for your son or some future
21 tenant, as long as parking can be correctly
22 addressed. So I don't have any problem with that.

23 I think given the limited nature of the
24 site and the fact that you're needing lots of

1 exceptions, whether the canopy and all these other
2 things, I think that you taking the architecture
3 feel further, and I would ask that you consider
4 changing the fence along the south and east to
5 something more that looks like the building. So
6 it extends the feel of the architecture, and it
7 wraps the property.

8 And possibly over your trash enclosure,
9 maybe put a roof that picks up the character of
10 the building. Clearly, there needs to be
11 ventilation and, you know, all of those
12 appropriate things, but I think those would be
13 ways that it becomes more of a statement rather
14 than a series of pieces that are stuck together.

15 And I would also consider putting a small
16 little canopy, cantilevered or not, over the
17 vacuum station. Again, the idea of bookending the
18 site, building in the middle, the fence extends
19 south and west and east from the building, and
20 then you have something that ties those things
21 together.

22 I don't know if you're having some sort of
23 corporate relationship with Clark, Mobil,
24 BP/Amoco, or is this going to be a totally

1 independent station?

2 MR. ALI: We are partnering with Parent
3 Petroleum who are in St. Charles.

4 MEMBER VARGULICH: I'm sorry?

5 MR. ALI: Parent Petroleum. We are
6 partnering with Parent Petroleum who is in
7 St. Charles.

8 MEMBER VARGULICH: Yes.

9 MR. ALI: So we will drop by and get
10 supplies for the gas station. It's going to be a
11 Clark, most likely a Clark, stay the same.

12 MEMBER VARGULICH: Okay. And then again
13 with the limitations on landscaping, I think that
14 a way to kind of set the apartment entrance and
15 separate them, even though it's a very tight site,
16 would be to change some of the pavement that's out
17 in front. There is kind of a triangular area, and
18 change that into a planting area, maybe a raised
19 planting area.

20 It wouldn't impact the ability to get in
21 and out of the convenience store, and it would
22 kind of separate the apartment entry and give it a
23 little more separation. I think that would add --
24 if there's some low planting at the northeast

1 corner that's available. Again, this can just be
2 perennials or grasses, but something during the
3 growing season that has some sense of greenery.

4 I know you need a lot of pavement to get
5 this project done, but I think I would look for
6 opportunities as well as maybe on the -- the same
7 thing on the west side of your trash enclosure.
8 If there's 2 to 3 feet that you can plant there
9 just along whatever that wall is that faces 11th.
10 Again trying to soften these elements to the
11 extent possible without going real far.

12 I would also ask that you install a street
13 tree. There's always -- in my opinion, there's
14 always reasons for street trees. Put a street
15 tree on 11th Street directly west of your trash
16 enclosure.

17 And a couple of final requests is that
18 there would be some large architectural planters.
19 These could be freestanding, not built in, but
20 could go between the pumps. So there would be two
21 of them. I think we have three sets of pumps;
22 right?

23 MR. ALI: Yes.

24 MEMBER VARGULICH: So you have six total,

1 six nozzles, but three locations. So they could
2 go in between there, and you could do seasonal
3 plantings -- flowers, bulbs, Christmas stuff,
4 seasonal things. Once again, it would add details
5 and appearances on a very limited site that would
6 help to give it some interest.

7 And again, working through the geometry of
8 the site with respect to the northwest corner, I
9 think that -- I understand that there's a limited
10 amount of space between the pumps and the property
11 line along Main Street. I think it shows 16 feet
12 or so.

13 I would ask that you consider adding a
14 3-foot fence along there which would basically
15 follow the property line, and that it has more of
16 an artistic character, maybe something laser cut.
17 Again, wanting to add something that adds an
18 aesthetic interest, understanding without taking
19 away your very limited amounts of pavement.

20 So it would be something that would take
21 up 8 inches right along the property line; and
22 that if that could be done maybe 30, 40 feet long.
23 Whether you have both access points at the end of
24 the day or whether you lose the one on the

1 northwest portion along Main Street is still yet
2 to be determined, but I think these are things
3 that could add to the project.

4 I, like Jennifer, have concerns about the
5 whole idea of the tanks underneath the parking
6 spaces, understanding that you still have to have
7 fuel delivered, and there's challenges with that.
8 But having to have parking spaces voided, or, you
9 know, for some length of time. If the truck is
10 late, it could be an hour or two; and now you have
11 people parking and shifting and doing lots of
12 things, that those contribute to congestion and
13 potential accidents that Commissioner Kessler is
14 talking about.

15 So can you address where you put the tank?

16 MR. ALI: On the issue of the tanks coming
17 in right now, if you look at the gas station for
18 the last three-and-half years, we don't have a
19 defined parking spot. But the tanks do come in
20 and manage that along with everybody else, and
21 people still fuel gas, and things are going on
22 smoothly.

23 And the same thing we're going to make
24 sure we tighten the delivery of the tanks during a

1 certain time frame. Because at the end, we
2 don't -- our gas station closes at 11:00 o'clock.
3 We don't want the tanks to come after
4 11:00 o'clock to the parking lot because we want
5 to respect our neighbors. Whenever that comes in,
6 it makes noises for the next hour or in our case
7 for half an hour.

8 That's the reason we normally get the
9 tanks towards the end of our shift around 8:00
10 o'clock or 7:00 o'clock or early morning. That's
11 the time when we try to manage that. So we can
12 certainly adjust the parking and manage that
13 during the time period in order to minimize the
14 impact on the parking.

15 MEMBER VARGULICH: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: All right. Before we
17 take any further questions, I do want to just
18 relay that there are two additional letters that
19 we received that were not included in the memo --
20 in the concept plan materials.

21 One is a letter received today from
22 Heather Gebhardt.

23 "Dear Planning Commission:

24 "We received a notice of public meeting

1 regarding the project, 1023 West Main Street,
2 located on the southeast corner of West Main
3 Street and South 11th Street.

4 "We are not in favor of having a gas
5 station and convenience store in that mentioned
6 location, and we are very much object to having a
7 second-floor residential unit attached to it. The
8 previous gas station drew foot traffic through the
9 neighborhood along with some unsavory looking
10 individuals.

11 "To back that up, we are aware of at least
12 one robbery occurring where the gas station
13 attendant was assaulted over the synthetic
14 marijuana, spice, that was being sold there.
15 Along with the synthetic marijuana, the gas
16 station also sold glass pipes.

17 "Furthermore, there is an insufficient
18 amount of parking space at the gas station to
19 accommodate a residence. We strongly object to
20 having a residence above the gas station for this
21 reason. There have been many instances of
22 vehicles being parked on our street associated
23 with a mechanic shop across 64. We are concerned
24 that having a residence associated with a gas

1 station would lead to more vehicles parked along
2 our street; thus, impacting on our property value.

3 "Please take our concerns into
4 consideration."

5 And there is a second -- several more.

6 There is one that we received on Friday,
7 October 2nd. This is from Bobbi Daly.

8 And it says, "I received a letter
9 regarding the proposal for the above. I'm not
10 opposed to the gas station and convenience store
11 since those have been on the site for many years,
12 but I am opposed to constructing apartments at
13 that location.

14 "I believe it would be too much for the
15 surrounding neighborhood to have apartments
16 located in that small space with very little
17 parking availability for tenants except on the
18 surrounding city streets. I feel that the tenants
19 would be crammed into the apartments, and they
20 would not have the best living conditions by a gas
21 station and convenience store.

22 "Thank you for the letter and the chance
23 to participate in expressing my opinion about this
24 proposal."

1 I have a letter from Lynne Ellberg
2 received Monday, October 5th.

3 "I am writing in response to the letter I
4 was sent to me about the 1023 West Main Street
5 proposal.

6 "I am for the gas station and convenience
7 store but not for the upstairs apartments. Is
8 this apartment for the people running the gas
9 station, and how many bedrooms is it?

10 "Please let me know that you have received
11 this."

12 There is one from Linda Brink dated today.

13 "Commission Members,

14 "I am unsure if I will be available to
15 attend the meeting. I would greatly appreciate it
16 if my statement could be read.

17 "My name is Linda Brink. I own the
18 property south of the gas station. I am strongly
19 opposed to the new plan. I have lived at this
20 property for over 30 years and have had to deal
21 with the fumes and extreme noise from the
22 previous station. The noise from customers' cars
23 was often so loud that it rattled my windows.
24 Adding an additional pump would just make the

1 situation worse. The fuel truck that came to fill
2 the tanks would arrive after midnight, waking
3 everyone in my household.

4 "If this proposal goes forward, it would
5 mean that the front of my house would face the
6 back of someone's apartment and an 8-foot fence.
7 Today at least, I can see some of Route 64. If
8 the developer would like to consider purchasing my
9 property, I would be happy to discuss it."

10 All right. Any further questions from
11 Plan Commissioners?

12 MEMBER FUNKE: I have a question.

13 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Okay.

14 MEMBER FUNKE: For the architect, is the
15 site 100 percent impervious?

16 MR. CARLSON: I'm sorry. I didn't hear
17 the last part. Is it 100 percent what?

18 MEMBER FUNKE: Impervious. It looks like
19 you're encompassing the entire site with a
20 building or concrete.

21 MR. CARLSON: Yes, most of it. There are
22 very small portions of it that are not.

23 MEMBER FUNKE: Okay. What's the code
24 for -- I mean, do you need to provide pervious

1 material in certain areas?

2 MR. CARLSON: I don't believe so.

3 MEMBER FUNKE: Okay.

4 MR. CARLSON: There's landscaping
5 requirements which we're looking for relief on,
6 but I'm not aware of any specific impervious
7 requirements.

8 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Ellen, can you comment
9 on that?

10 MS. JOHNSON: Yeah. There's a requirement
11 that 15 percent of the site be landscaped. There
12 would be a variance on that item. From a
13 stormwater perspective, it's an existing
14 condition. So I think it's -- I can't speak to
15 whether or not any sort of stormwater plan would
16 be required. That might be the case, but it is
17 looked at as an existing condition on the site.

18 MEMBER FUNKE: Okay. And I take issue
19 with the landscaping. I think the -- you know,
20 you should have a nice landscape plan that shows
21 our area. Landscaping on Main Street would be
22 nice, and pervious areas to drain some of the
23 water.

24 The building -- right now I think I read

1 that it is a foot off the property line, the south
2 property line?

3 MR. CARLSON: Right.

4 MEMBER FUNKE: So my concern there is it
5 just adds to -- first of all, how are you going to
6 build it? Are you going to have to put
7 scaffolding or something on the neighbor's
8 property.

9 In the future maintaining that site, I
10 mean, typically, if you're going to have windows
11 on that side, I mean, you know, there's typically
12 a minimum of 3 feet that, you know, natural light
13 and vent, you know, for bedroom windows or living
14 room windows should be set back off of the
15 property line.

16 So if there is anything you can do where
17 you can set that building back even more off the
18 property line to create that setback so you can
19 access that site, so you can take care of those
20 elevations, I think would be nice.

21 Right now you're showing one stair to the
22 apartment. Do you not need to two exit stairs
23 from the top floor, the second story?

24 MR. CARLSON: It's a single-tenant

1 apartment, one-bedroom apartment. So it can be --
2 there's no ADA requirements for that in that
3 scenario.

4 MEMBER FUNKE: Say that again.

5 MR. CARLSON: It's just like a regular --
6 I see what you're saying. You would need a
7 second -- an egress, like a bedroom egress or
8 something from the window perspective.

9 MEMBER FUNKE: And looking at your -- my
10 concern is if you put a second entrance in there,
11 which, you know, would -- you know, commercial on
12 the first floor and residential on the second
13 floor, you're going need a second exit. So
14 you're going to need to exit that somewhere or
15 even exit the bedroom.

16 So setting the building off -- 3 feet off
17 the property line, that gives you room for that
18 door or what have you on that side, so they're not
19 exiting to the gas station or into the parking lot
20 area.

21 MR. CARLSON: Good point.

22 MEMBER FUNKE: My other question is it
23 would be nice to see what type of materials you're
24 going to be using. I don't see anything called

1 out, and if you can use, you know, maybe --
2 depending on how much landscaping you have, I
3 mean, I would use warmer material for the
4 architecture.

5 And Commissioner Vargulich brought up a
6 good point about kind of combining things to make
7 the gas station and the main building, you know,
8 the architectural components have, you know,
9 symmetry of some sort. You know, right now it
10 looks like you put a residence on top of a
11 commercial building.

12 So if you can work on that, and, you know,
13 make sure you call out the materials and make sure
14 we can see the building so we know what the
15 neighbors are going to see to the south and to
16 the east.

17 MR. CARLSON: Okay. Thank you.

18 MEMBER FUNKE: That's it. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: All right. Any other
20 questions? Yes.

21 MS. MILLER: Chairman, we did have two
22 questions come in on Zoom I just wanted to read
23 both from Heather Gebhardt.

24 The first question being is the second

1 floor a single or multi-residence?

2 The second question is: What neighbors
3 did he speak to? Several of us are against the
4 gas station returning to that location and are not
5 happy with the impact to the property.

6 MR. ALI: The first question, I believe,
7 we said earlier, It's going to be a one-bedroom
8 apartment anyway for the use for the person who is
9 running the store; or in this case, if my son is
10 running it, he will be staying there.

11 The second question, I don't know exactly.
12 A lot of customers who are regular in my gas
13 station want a gas station there. So when I was
14 trying to wrap things up back in November, I got a
15 thank you from a lot of customers who are living
16 right across on 11th Street. All my neighbors,
17 they say, Hey, we are in favor of building a new
18 gas station here.

19 So that's the intent right now. If you
20 want, I can certainly collect some signatures in
21 order to prove that fact; but we are in the
22 neighborhood. We like the neighborhood very much,
23 and we want to develop that property as a gas
24 station. That's the best we can do right now.

1 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: And just so everyone
2 knows, if and when there is an application for
3 this, there will be a public hearing process where
4 everyone can be heard on this. Certainly, anyone
5 who wanted to be here tonight, but there will an
6 actual application and a public hearing.

7 All right. Any other questions?

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Okay. I think there
10 were just two questions that I had that were
11 raised.

12 When does the tanker usually come to
13 refill the tanks?

14 MR. ALI: It depends. Because of the
15 complaint from our neighbor we are not -- for the
16 last three years -- initially, it used to come at
17 night after the gas station is closed; but in
18 order to minimize the effect on the neighbors, we
19 told them just to come before 8:00 o'clock always.

20 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Okay.

21 MR. ALI: So between mornings, 7:00; and
22 evening, 8:00. Unless it's very 911 that we need
23 fuel immediately, then only it will come during
24 midnight; otherwise, we put a stop to that.

1 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Okay. All right. And
2 that was the only thing that I had.

3 Oh, the other thing that I had was on the
4 signs. I know that this property has a history of
5 having a lot of signs. Much to my dismay, I don't
6 think that the City has been diligent enough in
7 enforcing its sign ordinances, but I guess I would
8 ask for your comments on that.

9 MR. ALI: Which signs specifically?

10 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: You know, 10 signs that
11 have been on the property, advertisements. I
12 can't remember specifically, but I have noticed
13 just driving by there myself that there have been,
14 you know, various different signs on the property.

15 MR. ALI: There is only one sign that we
16 rented out, which paid about \$60 a month for us
17 right across on the building. It's like a small
18 sign.

19 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Okay.

20 MR. ALI: It keeps on changing.

21 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Well, yeah, I would
22 just say that anything, you know, obviously, when
23 the application is submitted to ensure that
24 there's something in there about how it would

1 comply with the sign ordinance.

2 MR. ALI: Sure. There was an incident we
3 had with the lighting on the building, frame
4 lighting during Christmas, and we wanted to keep
5 it all along. The City objected to that, and we
6 turned that off.

7 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Yeah.

8 MR. ALI: The other one was -- I believe
9 that's the only variation we had, and we moved it
10 off.

11 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Okay. All right. I
12 appreciate your responsiveness.

13 MR. ALI: But, again, if we can't
14 accommodate that because we are renting the sign
15 out. The company is putting the sign.

16 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Sure. Sure.

17 MR. ALI: If the City doesn't want us to
18 rent it, we will take it out.

19 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: I appreciate your
20 responsiveness to that and to the tanker issue.

21 MR. ALI: Because I personally worked
22 there. I used to work there. I own the store,
23 but I used to work there. Every time there --
24 most of the time, at least four or five times,

1 absolutely. So I know the ins and outs of it.

2 As the safety of the neighborhood, I
3 really appreciate the neighbors' feedback, and I
4 try to work with my neighbors all the time because
5 I'm here to stay, with the neighbors.

6 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Yeah.

7 MR. ALI: Without their business, I am
8 nowhere. So at the end of the day, it's a small
9 neighborhood. So if I am not good to my
10 neighbors, nobody is going to walk into my store.

11 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Sure.

12 MR. ALI: There's no point in being there.

13 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: All right. Any other
14 questions or comments? I know that we've already
15 given a lot of feedback, but I guess I'll just ask
16 if anyone -- I'll just go down the line; and if
17 you just want to kind of wrap it up with anything
18 that hasn't already been said.

19 MEMBER BECKER: Well, I think that the
20 redevelopment is a great goal; but my opinion is
21 you're trying to put too much on the site, and
22 that's leading to your need for all the
23 variations.

24 I think it's apparent that landscaping is

1 important to us, and I think that by adjusting the
2 coverage of the building and maybe taking away
3 things that -- or reconfiguring them on site,
4 you'll be able to achieve some of the goals.

5 Because in the end, this is a planned
6 development, and the goal is you give something to
7 get something; and I haven't seen anything that is
8 of public need other than your desire to build the
9 site out to its max. So that's my opinion.

10 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: All right.

11 MEMBER PRETZ: Well I haven't said very
12 much.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Unusual.

14 MEMBER PRETZ: I will say that I truly
15 believe that the site is too small to accommodate
16 what you're proposing, and as is I would not
17 support it. However, depending on how well you
18 took down your notes on that, I believe that my
19 fellow commissioners have stated a number of
20 different things that they would like to see done
21 with your design, placement, materials, on and on,
22 that I think that's kind of your yellow brick road
23 that you get to.

24 So I would look forward to seeing how well

1 you did with your notes and what you come up with
2 to present, coming back to answer each of the
3 commissioners' concerns. Because I think when you
4 start taking in curb cuts and all of that and the
5 canopy and the architecture, I think that -- and
6 in response to maybe what Jennifer just said as
7 far as having not seen anything coming forward to
8 really benefit the community, I think that if you
9 present correctly and bring back the right
10 materials, that could be the benefit that comes
11 back to St. Charles by the beauty and by, you
12 know, the service that it will provide to the
13 community, especially with all the neighbors
14 there.

15 So I'm open. I'm closed as to what you're
16 presenting. I am open, though, to see what you're
17 going to come forward with. I think you have a
18 lot that you're going to have to do, and so I wish
19 you well in all that part, and look forward to the
20 next time that we see you when you're coming
21 forward with your development.

22 MR. ALI: Thank you for your feedback.
23 We'll try to accommodate the best we can. He's
24 taking notes, so.

1 MEMBER HOLDERFIELD: I haven't said much
2 either.

3 MR. ALI: Yes.

4 MEMBER HOLDERFIELD: I kind of agree with
5 Tom. I'm in favor of the project moving forward,
6 but the proposal has many issues in regard to
7 complying with codes and regulations that you are
8 going to have to work with. I realize there's
9 very little wiggle room. It's kind of as
10 challenging as it gets.

11 My chief concern is with the two-story
12 building. It increases the square footage from
13 the existing building, which is 448 square feet to
14 one that's 1,434 square feet. I visited the site
15 today and walked around it and looked at it. I
16 tried to envision this two-level building in this
17 small lot, and it's really overwhelming.

18 The best fit here, I think, is to make the
19 elevations for the convenience store fit in with
20 the residential R2 that your neighbors are against
21 or with actually, I should say with. And I think
22 in that regard either, you know, look a new hip
23 roof or a gabled roof that's compatible with other
24 residences around there.

1 I like the idea of a canopy, but frankly,
2 I don't see how it's going to work. Once you set
3 back -- and you're at six. So that may never
4 work. In the event that it does, that that can be
5 justified, I'd kind of like to see the canopy
6 reflective of the architecture of the main
7 building with the hip roof. I just want a nice
8 compatible fit with the neighborhood.

9 MR. ALI: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: I'm somewhat in
11 disagreement with some of the things that have
12 been said. I was not very favorable on the
13 proposal when I first looked at it, but I must
14 admit that my mind is changed. I wasn't in
15 agreement with the residential use, but the more
16 that I've learned about it, I think that it's an
17 interesting creative use for the property.

18 I think the unfortunate reality is that
19 this is small, and you're trying to fit a lot into
20 that size of a lot. And, you know, that's part --
21 the same as everyone else, that's kind of what I'm
22 struggling with, as I'm sure you're struggling
23 with.

24 And one thing I do not agree with is

1 closing off the second entrance along Main Street.
2 I agree with what you're saying about the entry
3 and exit. I think that's, essential, for this
4 particular use; and I think that if that was
5 closed off, it would unnecessarily make people
6 detour down 11th Street to use that entrance.

7 I don't really know that that serves --
8 it's a small and somewhat dangerous lot anyway,
9 and I don't really see that would improve the
10 safety. And I think just for the sake of
11 increasing landscaping space, I mean, I don't -- I
12 just don't really see it.

13 But I do think that there are some things
14 that can be done to improve the way that it fits
15 in with your neighborhood architecturally. You
16 know, if there are opportunities to gain some
17 landscaping otherwise, creatively, I would
18 encourage you to try to do that as much as
19 you can.

20 Other than that, I -- you know, good luck.

21 MR. ALI: Thank you.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: Well, like
23 everyone here, I agree and disagree with some of
24 what's been said; but overall, as a long-time

1 neighbor, I'm all for this development. This site
2 needs to be improved. It's always been convenient
3 to have a gas station and a convenience store
4 within walking distance.

5 Regarding the residential unit above, I'd
6 like to point out that on 12th and 13th Street,
7 there are residential units on both corners.
8 There's parking only on one side of the street,
9 and we accommodate. That's not an issue. So
10 adding a residence on this corner creates a
11 condition that's virtually no different than 12th
12 or 13th Street.

13 It is a small site. I know that there are
14 some challenges you're going to face. That's why
15 I brought up the retaining wall on the property
16 line. You're certainly going to have to encroach
17 on the neighbor to the south for some of your
18 construction and, as Commissioner Funke pointed
19 out, any kind of maintenance.

20 So perhaps the building needs to be
21 smaller perhaps. It needs to be realigned with
22 the property lines. I strongly disagree with
23 leaving that free-flowing curb cut from 11th
24 Street all the way to the east end of the

1 property, which is, essentially, what you would
2 have because there's no control on cars coming in
3 and out left or right.

4 If you do have cars coming in from 11th
5 Street, they conflict with the cars coming in from
6 the western-most entrance. So I've watched this
7 for years. It's not an easy parking -- even as a
8 neighbor, you have to wait to see what cars are
9 doing before you actually pull into that site.
10 It's not an easy site to get in and out of.

11 I think any free-flowing curb cut without
12 any kind of, you know, traffic controlling
13 measures to control the flow are a mistake,
14 especially on a high speed roadway like that.

15 We've watched what's happening over west
16 of there, particularly at the -- particularly at
17 that liquor store on 14th Street. That's a huge
18 problem because there's no curb cut there. Cars
19 are coming in off of 14th. They're coming in left
20 off of Main Street. They're coming in right off
21 of Main Street. It's constantly a problem over
22 there. So I think you're going to have the same
23 condition.

24 As far as, you know, the appearance of the

1 building, I'm not particularly thrilled with the
2 rendering you've submitted. And while I'm not
3 firm on every building needs to look the same in
4 the neighborhood, it can look different. I don't
5 think that that's particularly attractive, but I
6 understand it's just a rendering.

7 And I do have some concerns about the
8 landscaping. I think that that's been a huge
9 detriment to that piece of property for a long
10 time perhaps because it's just old and tired; but
11 doing something with that curb cut, that
12 western-most curb cut would allow some additional
13 landscaping in that corner, and I know that some
14 people don't agree that that's necessary, but that
15 block could use it.

16 I do agree that that sign should be moved
17 from the -- the pole sign from the east side of
18 the property should be moved because it appears
19 and has always appeared to be on the property to
20 the east, and it looks like it belongs to the
21 house.

22 MR. ALI: I have to agree.

23 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: That thing should
24 move.

1 MR. ALI: Yes. And to be honest, I know
2 the neighbor across our sign is basically
3 shadowed. We lost our sign because of the
4 address. So we'd like to be move the sign on the
5 other side.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: But I'll stop
7 there. I'm eager to see what you come back with
8 in your application. Like Mr. Pretz said, you got
9 a lot of information here tonight. Take it to
10 heart, come back with something because we want to
11 see you develop.

12 MR. ALI: Thank you.

13 MEMBER MELTON: All right. I don't want
14 to repeat much of what was said, but I do want to
15 say that I am in favor of the project. I think
16 it's, you know, currently -- I don't want to call
17 it an eyesore, but perhaps that's what I'll call
18 it. I do agree that there's history here. It's
19 been a gas station before. I think it goes a long
20 way back. So I think, again, I'm in favor of
21 that.

22 I don't want to repeat much of what has
23 been said, but the thought around trying to make
24 this property blend in with the rest of the

1 neighborhood. I think there's a lot of
2 opportunity for landscape. Even Peter's ideas and
3 suggestions for planters, just something to soften
4 it up I think would go a long way with the
5 residents.

6 I will also say I was originally opposed
7 to the dwelling upstairs; but understanding it
8 more now, I honestly think there might be a value
9 to having the owner of this gas station living
10 there kind of, you know, 24/7, so to speak, So I
11 think there's a value to that.

12 So I also look forward to you coming back
13 and see what you have.

14 MR. ALI: Thank you.

15 MEMBER VARGULICH: Well, I, like the other
16 commissioners, want to see something happen with
17 the property, and I think this is a good start. I
18 think, obviously, we all feel that there's some
19 things that we'd like to see considered,
20 hopefully, do differently. At the end of the day,
21 it's your proposal.

22 But, hopefully, the input we've given you
23 is something that you can find constructive as a
24 way to get our input, hopefully, address some of

1 the neighbors' concerns. I think you've tried
2 from an operation standpoint. So I'm happy to
3 hear that, you know, as far as fuel delivery and
4 things like that. I think your current storage is
5 about 500 square feet or something like that.

6 MR. ALI: Yes.

7 MEMBER VARGULICH: And so this is, you
8 know, three times what you have now.

9 MR. ALI: No. Right now we have only one
10 bathroom, but the new specification wants two
11 bathrooms in here. So the store is not expanding
12 that much. That's the new rules coming in. So we
13 are still limited on space. We wanted to expand
14 the best we can do.

15 MEMBER VARGULICH: Yeah.

16 MR. ALI: But within the lot, this is the
17 best we can do because if we expand north/south,
18 then you're cutting into the flow of traffic for
19 easy access into the gas station. So that's the
20 reason we have to expand between east and west.

21 That was the main -- Eric can tell you how
22 many drawings we did. It's almost, like, 10, 15,
23 times because that's a small lot. Whether we
24 develop it as a residential or a commercial, it

1 would go through challenges and planning and
2 development no matter what.

3 We said let's give it a try anyway, and I
4 know we worked with Ellen a lot since a year.
5 Based on all the input we are getting right now,
6 we'll certainly go back to the drawing board and
7 try to incorporate as much as possible.

8 MEMBER VARGULICH: A consideration with
9 respect to your pump location that might help with
10 circulation and other things. It might impact the
11 square footage of the building if you move the
12 pumps -- it appears that if you move the pumps
13 east, and it might cause your building to lose
14 that little bump-out to the north; but if you move
15 the pumps east, and maybe or maybe not kept the
16 vacuums, you might be able to drive circulation
17 that far, which would then allow you to open up
18 some land to the west side to start to address
19 some of the landscape setbacks and landscape areas
20 that we all feel is important.

21 But it does have a little bit of an impact
22 on whether you keep or not keep the vacuums. I
23 don't know how important those are operationally
24 neighborhood-wise, but I think that from a shift

1 standpoint, it might help create some things that
2 you don't currently have now.

3 Because you have a fair amount of pavement
4 between the end of the eastern pump and your
5 property line, and a lot of it is just
6 circulation. If you lost the vacuums, you might
7 actually be able to do some of these other things
8 that we feel important. You need to look at that.
9 Maybe the vacuums can be relocated to another
10 corner.

11 MR. ALI: We will look into that.

12 MEMBER VARGULICH: Yeah. That could be
13 something that would help.

14 MR. ALI: Anyway, we are taking notes, so
15 hopefully --

16 MEMBER VARGULICH: It's a very difficult
17 site with lots of moving parts, lots of, you know,
18 setback impacts. I'm sure you can't accommodate
19 everything that we've suggested and still meet
20 some of your business objectives you're after.

21 MR. ALI: That would definitely be the
22 south and east, we want to accommodate those
23 neighbors and try to impact them the best we can
24 without restriction and stuff like that.

1 MEMBER VARGULICH: Thank you for coming
2 forward.

3 MR. ALI: Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Jeff, did you have
5 anything?

6 MEMBER FUNKE: Yeah. I just wanted to --
7 you know, everything I said before, and to the
8 architect. Eric, you've got a great opportunity
9 here. If you think about all of the history of
10 the gas station and, you know, the beginning of a
11 small scale gas station.

12 If you look, you know, into the history of
13 the gas station from the topology to the different
14 types of architecture that were created with gas
15 stations, I think you can come up with something
16 that could be very creative, that could be, you
17 know, paint this corner. This is a prominent
18 corner. It should have prominent architecture.

19 And, you know, the ability to create
20 (inaudible) would be great and incorporate some of
21 that -- you know, if you're taking away that --
22 you know, making the site solid, and you can
23 create some material and some things and bring in
24 landscaping, you know, to draw your eye away from,

1 you know, the cars that are, you know, lined up at
2 the actual pumps.

3 You know, and look at some of the history
4 of the gas station, and you can see the canopies
5 that are incorporated into the building and the
6 different types of architecture from craftsman
7 style to art deco to modern. There's some great
8 precedence that you could look at that could, I
9 think, take this building to another level.

10 I think you went to Ohio State; correct?

11 MR. CARLSON: I did.

12 MEMBER FUNKE: Yeah. I think we graduated
13 together. So I know you've got it in you.

14 MR. CARLSON: I was looking forward to
15 seeing you here tonight.

16 MEMBER FUNKE: I'm sorry. My wife tested
17 positive for COVID.

18 MR. CARLSON: Well, then I'm glad I didn't
19 see you tonight.

20 MEMBER FUNKE: I didn't really want to
21 bring it in. I'm in quarantine.

22 Thank you. Good luck with the project,
23 and I look forward to seeing what you present
24 next time.

1 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: All right. Thank you,
2 gentlemen.

3 MR. CARLSON: Thank you all.

4 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: And that concludes
5 Item 5 on our agenda.

6 Item 6, any additional business from Plan
7 Commission members or staff?

8 (No response.)

9 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: No. Item 7 weekly
10 development report, meeting announcements. Keep
11 in mind that the November 3rd meeting is canceled.
12 Go out and vote.

13 We still have items on October 20th;
14 correct?

15 MS. JOHNSON: We do.

16 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: All right. Any public
17 comment?

18 (No response.)

19 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Is there a motion to
20 adjourn?

21 VICE CHAIRMAN KESSLER: So moved.

22 MEMBER BECKER: Second.

23 CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Moved and seconded.
24 All in favor.

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(Ayes heard.)

CHAIRMAN WALLACE: Opposed.

(No response.)

CHAIRMAN WALLACE: The City of St. Charles
Plan Commission is adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

(Off the record at 8:15 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF SHORTHAND REPORTER

I, Joanne E. Ely, Certified Shorthand Reporter No. 84-4169, CSR, RPR, and a Notary Public in and for the County of Kane, State of Illinois, the officer before whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and correct record of the proceedings, that said proceedings were taken by me stenographically and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my supervision, and that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this case and have no interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my notarial seal this 11th day of October, 2020.

My commission expires: May 16, 2024



Notary Public in and for the
State of Illinois