



PROJECT REPORT

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Ted Shekell, Director of Planning and Zoning
DATE: February 17, 2009
PROJECT: P2009-04: True Vine Christian Center Church Planned Use Rezoning

Location: 5700 Old Collinsville Road

Applicant: Herb Roach on behalf of Sandra Rhodes, True Vine Christian Center Church

Owner: Herb Roach

Submitted: January 26, 2009



Project Summary

The applicant, Herb Roach on behalf of Sandra Rhodes of True Vine Christian Center Church, has filed an application requesting approximately 1.52 acres of land previously zoned "B-1(P)" Community Business District for use as a teen center, be zoned as "B-1(P)" Community Business District to permit the proposed use of a church worship center. The subject property is located at 5700 Old Collinsville Road. The applicant intends to convert the existing 10,000 sq. ft. facility into a church worship center, with approximately 8,000 sq. ft. being used for worship and open space and 2,000 being used as office and miscellaneous space. The church currently has approximately 30 members who attend regularly. The applicant plans to use the existing building without modification. Instead, they plan to simply add chairs in the large open area on the main floor to accommodate roughly 35 attendees.

Existing Conditions

Surrounding Zoning: North: B-1(P), East: MR-1(P), South: B-1, West: Fariview Heights
Surrounding Land Use: North: undeveloped, East: Autumn Pine subdivision, South: undeveloped, West: Casey's General Store

Applicable Ordinances, Documents and Reports

O'Fallon Comprehensive Plan: The O'Fallon Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map depicts the subject property as *General Commercial*, which is consistent with the proposed project. Churches are generally acceptable as a planned use in most zoning districts if they meet certain standards and performance criteria.

Zoning Ordinance and Planned Use Ordinance: The proposed church/assembly use is subject to Article IX Planned Uses of the Zoning Ordinance and requires a development plan. The property is also subject to the requirements of the B-1, Community Business District zoning district. Churches, as an assembly uses, are required to obtain planned use approval by the City Council if they are going into an existing space where the prior use was not a church, or if they are constructing a new church facility.

Public Notice: Public Notice of this project has been fulfilled in accordance with Section 8.03 and 8.04 of the City of O'Fallon Zoning Regulations. More specifically, the applicant has notified property owners within 250 feet of the subject property via certified mail of the filing of the zoning amendment. Additionally, the City has notified property owners within 250 feet of the subject parcel of the public hearing at least 15 days prior to the hearing and published notice of the public hearing in a local newspaper at least 15 days in advance. Proof of notification is on file with the City's Planning and Zoning Department.

Discussion Points/Issues

Land Use

The subject property is identified as *General Commercial* in the Comprehensive Plan, and churches are generally acceptable as a planned use in most zoning districts if they meet certain standards and performance criteria.

Commercial & residential uses surround the subject property on the east and west sides. The properties located to the north and south adjacent to the subject parcel are currently undeveloped.

The proposed use for the facility is for church assembly and worship activities. True Vine also operates a school in another community; however, according to the applicant they do not intend to move the school to this church facility.

The church membership is currently around 30 persons. Approximately 750 sq. ft. of the 8,000 on the main floor will be used for worship and assembly purposes.

Parking and Vehicular Access

Previously, the owner acting as landlord to the Teen Center tenant paved the gravel parking lot. The site currently has 86 parking spaces, including 4 handicap accessible parking spaces. Given that the City's Zoning Code requires parking ratios for churches to be one parking space for each 2.5 seats, effectively the church's maximum occupancy should be limited to 215. The attached letter from architect Ken Miller states the parking would allow a maximum occupancy of 250; however that is not correct, although he is correct in saying that additional parking would need to be obtained to permit an occupancy greater than 215.

An existing shared curb cut on Old Collinsville Road is centered between the subject property and the south adjacent property, and St. Clair County requires that this existing curb cut remain in its current location. No new curb cuts are proposed for the property.

Building Occupancy

The previous tenant, the Teen Center, was restricted to a maximum building occupancy of 300 due to the lack of a sprinkler system in the building. The physical size of the building could accommodate a much larger crowd than just 300; however, the building code would require a sprinkler system be installed to allow occupancy above that number.

Since the church will not be installing a sprinkler system, the building occupancy will be capped at 300 unless sprinkled. As noted above, the parking limitations on-site will limit the occupancy even further to 215, unless additional parking is obtained and approved by the City Council.

Sidewalks

A 4-ft sidewalk has been installed along the parcel's frontage on Old Collinsville Road.

Drainage

A stormwater detention basin is located at the southeast corner of the site.

Landscaping/Buffer Requirements

The buffer along the eastern property line that was approved on the final site plan for the Teen Center must be completed prior to the City granting occupancy of the building to the church.

Lighting

Parking lot lighting is adequate, creating one foot-candle of security lighting on the property yet not allowing more than one foot-candle of illumination at any residentially zoned property boundary or more than five foot-candles at any commercially zoned property boundary.

Building Elevations

No changes are proposed to the exterior building elevations. The existing elevations show a metal building on four sides.

Building Renovations

There are no modifications planned to the building at this time. They do not plan to occupy the small upstairs area and will occupy only about 750 sq. ft. of the downstairs space.

Trash Enclosure/AC Unit Screening

The proposed trash enclosure will be located near the northeast corner of the building. The proposed trash enclosure details indicate the three walls will be constructed with a wood privacy fence. The O'Fallon Zoning Code requires that screening fences shall be made of a durable, maintenance free material such as vinyl or masonry. Staff recommends that the trash enclosure shall be constructed with a vinyl fence and gate.

A 5-ft sight proof fence is proposed to screen the existing AC unit from Old Collinsville Road. Staff recommends that the fence be constructed of vinyl.

Signage

The church is proposing to use the existing pole sign structure at the front of the site. Prior to the installation of any commercial signage, sign permits must be obtained. It should be noted that the Church has already installed a sign face advertising their church in the existing pole sign cabinet. This was obtained without a sign permit. No additional signage is requested at this time. Any new signage must comply with the current sign ordinance. Also, the existing portable marquis sign should be removed as part of the planned use approval.

Noise

While operating as the Teen Center, the City received several noise complaints from the adjacent neighborhood about the music in the building and the parking lot. Given the metal nature of the building, noise may be an on-going concern to adjacent properties if not adequately controlled by the church. Any noise generated by the church should be contained within the site and should not create a nuisance for any neighboring properties.

Hours of Operation

The applicant proposes the following hours of operation: Sunday morning from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm noon and Wednesday evenings from 7:00 pm - 8:00pm.

Review and Approval Criteria: Section 9.050 of Article IX "Planned Uses" lists several criteria for evaluating planned uses. As presently designed:

- The proposed development meets the area-bulk requirements set forth in the applicable B-1 district regulations.
- That an identified community need exists for the proposed use.
- The proposed church is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, which includes Centerfield Park and St. Clair Bowl, and the residential neighborhood to the east.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the Planned Use rezoning to allow operation of a church at 5700 Old Collinsville Road with the following conditions:

1. The hours of operation for assembly uses will be Sunday morning from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm noon and Wednesday evenings from 7:00 pm - 8:00pm, with incidental use of the facility at other various times for office and administrative activities.
2. The church must obtain a sign permit for the sign face installed in the existing pole sign. The portable marquis sign must be removed immediately.
3. Any noise generated by the church must be contained within the site so as to not create a nuisance for any neighboring properties.
4. The maximum occupancy for the primary building shall not exceed 215 persons unless additional parking spaces are obtained and approved by the City Council. In no case shall the building occupancy exceed 300 persons unless the building is equipped with automatic sprinkler systems as provided by code; the authorized occupancy of 215 shall be posted. If the primary building is not equipped with an approved automatic sprinkler system, then the building shall have a fire-alarm system with off-site monitoring, security control of entrances sufficient to verify occupancy at all times, and an approved emergency evacuation plan.
5. All other requirements of the B-1 district, applicable building codes including sealed architectural plans, and other regulations of the City shall apply unless expressly waived herein.
6. Any violation of the conditions of this Ordinance shall be cause for revocation of the certificate of occupancy for this use and shall be deemed a violation of the this PUD zoning ordinance in addition to a violation of any other applicable ordinance and subject to all such additional remedies as may exist for such violations.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Project Application and Narrative

Attachment 2 – Letter from Architect Ken Miller

Attachment 3 – Preliminary Floor Plan and Landscape Plan

Attachment 4 – Zoning Map

Attachment 5 – Photos of Existing Building