
**Z-2193
RMD PROPERTIES
HILLTOP PLANNED DEVELOPMENT
NB TO PDNR**

**STAFF REPORT
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REQUEST MADE, PROPOSED USE, LOCATION:

Petitioner, RMD Properties LLC by Bob Dahnke, is seeking to rezone 2 acres from NB to PDNR for a 1 lot commercial development with the initial purpose of housing two businesses not allowed in the NB zone: Dahnke Overhead Doors and Dahnke Building Services Inc. Future uses will include only those permitted in the NB district with the exception of a gasoline service station. The site is located on Sagamore Parkway West, west of Soldiers Home Road, on a portion of the former University Motors site in West Lafayette, Wabash 7(NE) 23-4.

ZONING HISTORY AND AREA ZONING PATTERNS:

The site in question is currently zoned NB as is the area to the east and west. Zoning south, across Sagamore Parkway, is GB. A number of planned developments are located to the east Wabash Gardens (Z-850), Castle Ridge (Z-1100), Vintage Square (Z-1337) and Tower of Ivory (Z-2147). Other planned developments to the west include City Hall (Z-2044), Sagamore Park Center (Z-2049), Westminster Village (Z-2168) and Wabash Village (Z-2176). Land immediately north of this site and south of the GB across Sagamore Parkway is solidly R1.

AREA LAND USE PATTERNS:

Petitioner's site makes up the east half of the former University Motors car dealership. A portion of the west half is presently operating as a legally non-conforming used car lot. Other commercial land use in close proximity along Sagamore Parkway includes restaurants, childcare center, banks, drug stores and retail/service businesses. Immediately beyond the commercial development associated with the Sagamore West corridor, both to the north and south, are large blocks of single-family residences.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION:

The entrance to this site is from an access road that serves all the businesses along the north side of Sagamore Parkway and runs parallel to the parkway from Covington to a point approximately 400' to the east of this property. The proposed site plan shows no change in the existing drive layout.

During Phase I use of the building, when the overhead door and contracting businesses would occupy the space, 22 parking spaces are shown on the west side of the building where there are presently six and 13 spaces on the south side (or in front of the building) where there is presently greenspace. The east side of the building would be

enclosed by chain link fence with slats to screen outside views into the paved construction yard.

During Phase II use of the building, when the contracting and/or overhead door businesses cease to exist, up to four businesses currently permitted in the NB district would occupy the space. Phase II site plans include a switch in parking from Phase I that would replace 16 spaces on the west side of the building with a loading/unloading area and create 14 new parking spaces, greenspace and sidewalks on the east side of the building with what would become the new commercial front façade.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND UTILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

Utilities located in a 20' drainage and utility easement along the north property line include overhead power lines, a 6" water main and 8" sanitary sewer line. There are two existing fences along most of the line between this property and the rear of residential lots to the north. A residential wooden privacy fence runs the entire width and a chain link fence surrounds the north half of petitioner's site once used to store vehicles. A type "C" buffer yard required of any NB zoned development abutting an R1 zone would be installed in the 20' drainage & utility easement with a note that makes the owner of the commercial lot responsible for re-installing any plant material removed or damaged if utility repair is necessary. The proposed landscape plan shows perimeter trees around the parking areas required by the West Lafayette Landscape Ordinance of all off-street parking lots. Additional shrubs not required by ordinance are shown along the east property line of this lot for screening next to the outdoor play yard of an adjacent Daycare center.

Phase II of the development plan includes parking lot improvements and building façade renovation on the east side of the building. The "Existing East Elevation" illustrated on sheet 2 shows a flat-roofed concrete-block building with three overhead doors. The "Future East Elevation" on the same sheet shows the same building with three business entrances and a note stating that while the elevations are only representative, "The exact architectural features, to be approved by the West Lafayette City Engineer, may include awnings and/or added roof overhangs with standard entrance doors and windows." Architecturally, the two elevations are very similar and the narrative includes no additional information about the appearance or quality of the final design. Technically the standards used in the final site plan are the same as would be required of an NB zone renovation except for the inclusion of shrubs along the east property line.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Petitioner proposes to consolidate his two businesses into the building that formerly housed the University Motors auto dealership show room and service department. The two uses Dahnke Overhead Doors (SIC 521, Retail Lumber & Other Building Materials Dealers) and Dahnke Building Services Inc. (SIC 15, Building Construction – General Contractor & Operative Builders) are both allowed by right in GB, I1, I2 & I3 zones. The general contracting use is also allowed in NB, NBU, OR, CB and CBW zones with the restrictions of no outdoor operation or storage of materials and equipment and with a maximum gross floor area of 5000 sq. ft.

Petitioner's original proposal was to allow the general contracting operation to occupy 2/3 of the building, approximately 12,406 sq. ft, and the overhead door business 1/3, or approximately 6,110 sq. ft. The draft narrative included a list of large pieces of construction equipment and heavy licensed vehicles to be stored along the north and east sides of the building inside a chain link fence. APC & city staff found the plan unacceptable as outlined because it would exceed the sq. ft. limits and outdoor storage of equipment restriction in NB districts that protect adjacent neighborhoods. Petitioner's eventual goal is to shift permitted uses to only those allowed in an NB district, however staff feared that if land uses normally confined to GB and I zones were permitted initially, the impact could have serious and lasting effects before the shift ever takes place.

Since hearing these concerns petitioner has cut back on the original plan through a series of letters to the city. In the latest plan, petitioner proposes to switch the space allotment and operate the general contracting business in 5,000 sq. ft. of the building and increase the space for the overhead door business to occupy the balance. The list of vehicles and construction equipment has been reduced to include employee vehicles, several dump trucks and flat trailers. All other vehicles and equipment would be stored at another location. A copy of this latest narrative will need to be substituted in the preliminary plan package prior to the public hearing so that the plans, if approved, reflect the final proposal.

APC and city staffs along with petitioner's development team have worked hard over the past several months to craft a proposal that fits the petitioner's needs, while still being worthy of consideration as a planned development. Except for the outdoor storage of any construction equipment or heavy licensed vehicles associated with the contracting business, staff is able to support a plan for the renovation and reuse of vacant commercial sites on Sagamore West that does not require rezoning NB property to GB. Given too that the plan would provide for a smooth transition from the two initial uses to only those permitted in NB, the future of this site is assured.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval, contingent on meeting all requirements of *UZO 2-27-10* for submission of Final Detailed Plans, signed off by those noted in that section to include:

1. All sheets (other than preliminary plat) that make up the approved Preliminary Plan;
2. PD construction plans per *UZO Appendix B2-2*;
3. A final plat per *UZO Appendix B-3-2* as applicable;
4. Appropriate performance bonds submitted with final detailed plans
5. Plant schedule approved by the West Lafayette Greenspace Administrator;
6. No outdoor storage of equipment or heavy licensed vehicles;
7. To replace narrative on sheet 2 with revised notes, dated 8/13/2004, prepared by C&S Engineering and agreed to by all parties;