

**REQUEST FOR ACTION
CHASKA PLANNING COMMISSION
APRIL 11, 2018**

Subject: Former Hot Spot and Michael's Cycles - Concept Plan

Applicant: Alliance Contracting, Inc. and RDS Architects

Locations: North of Walgreens and east of Highway 41

Case No.: PC No. 2018-10

Synopsis: The applicant is requesting approval of a concept plan that would allow them to redevelop the former gas station site (650 Chestnut Street North), Michael's Cycles site (700 Chestnut Street North), and CDA parking lot site (710 Chestnut Street North).

Prepared By: Elizabeth Hanson

Staff Recommendation: Approval of Concept Plan, with listed conditions

BACKGROUND

The building at 650 Chestnut Street North has housed various businesses over the years. Its latest business was the former Chaska Hot Spot gas station. The site has been sitting vacant for the last few years. The gas station canopy and underground storage tanks have since been removed.

The building at 700 Chestnut Street North has also housed various businesses over the years. Its latest businesses were Michael's Cycles and Snap Fitness. It now sits vacant.

Goals

The applicant's goals for this concept plan are as follows:

- Understanding of Chaska and its motto to be the "Best Small Town in Minnesota".
- Understanding of the site and the improvements to remove blight and make the site usable again.
- Understanding of design and how it relates to its context.

Existing Conditions

The overall site area is 1.15 acres and consists of three lots (CDA parking lot at 0.15 acres, Michael's Cycles lot at 0.65 acres, and the Hot Spot lot at 0.35 acres). There are two buildings that currently occupy the general site. The main accesses are on the west side of the site to gain access off of Highway 41.

CURRENT REQUEST

The request this evening is for Concept Plan approval to redevelop the overall site. The existing buildings will be demolished and replaced with three separate commercial buildings. Parking will be provided on the west and south sides of the site. Parking will also be provided on the east side of the northerly proposed building, which is designated for use by the CDA apartment.

Adjacent properties

The site is bounded on the north by Walnut Street and a multi-use residential/commercial building, to the west by Highway 41 and the Curling Center, the south by Walgreens, and the east by the CDA Apartment building (The Brickyard).

Use

The use of this site is consistent with the approved zoning for the property (C-2 – General Commerce and PMD-10 – Planned Multi-Use District). The applicant has only determined one end user for the site (Dunkin Donuts), however, will be making improvements to attract other potential users that serve the needs of the community.

Site Layout

The plan is to continue to use the existing accesses into the site from Highway 41. The northerly building proposed is situated on the corner of Walnut Street and Highway 41, the middle building is situated more to the east of the site, and the Dunkin Donuts building is situated on the southerly portion of the site. A drive-thru is proposed as a part of the Dunkin Donuts building, providing access at the southerly-most portion of the site.

It has been noted that the design team for this project explored multiple orientations for the development including two buildings or three. The parking lot was studied on the west and east sides of the proposed buildings. The conclusion of these studies showed that the layout is best optimized by placing the buildings on the east side of the site. The reason for this is that there is more room for parking, and the proposed building frontage now aligns with the Walgreens building to the south, creating a consistent streetscape view.

Staff Recommendation/Analysis

Staff does not see any major issues with the layout of the site as it appears to flow nicely. However, it was noted during initial conversations that the ideal layout would be to push the buildings up to street-level to provide that traditional downtown feel. The applicant has noted that doing this would reduce the parking even further, and make it more complicated to incorporate the drive-thru component for Dunkin Donuts. Parking has continuously been an issue in downtown, and as such, Staff would prefer to achieve a layout that provides enough parking for the uses on site. The proposed layout will also be consistent with the Walgreens layout to the south. The proposed building on the northern-most portion of the site is appropriate in optimizing the corner by being pushed out to the edge. This will also provide space between the building the CDA apartment for the CDA's parking.

Building Materials & Design

Three new buildings are proposed as a part of this plan. The two existing buildings on site will be demolished. The southerly most building proposed is planned to be a Dunkin Donuts. The middle building is planned to be a multi-tenant building and the northerly building will be a single tenant. All three buildings will be single-story. Suggested design language includes:

prominent use of brick in a color that recalls Chaska's rich history of brick production, anodized aluminum storefront and window systems, stucco in a mix of earth-tone colors, cementitious panel siding and lap siding.

Staff Recommendation/Analysis

Staff believes the applicant has done a good job in studying the surrounding context for this site, as it relates to design. The buildings are showing a staggered layout, which helps create a more varied design/layout for this site.

The City of Chaska has certain building design and material requirements for commercial buildings. A portion of it is stated as follows:

"Office, Commercial, Public and Institutional buildings shall use at least three (3) Class I materials and shall be composed of at least seventy (70) percent Class I materials and shall not exceed thirty (30) percent Class II or Class III materials."

The buildings are proposing a majority of the building to be constructed of a brick, which is a class I material. The applicant must show in the preliminary submittal how they meet the City's Building Design/Materials ordinance by calling out each material on the elevations and their percentage make-up.

The applicant has provided a well-rounded preliminary analysis of the building materials and details being used to complement historic downtown Chaska. The brick proposed on all three buildings is planned to be a Chaska brick color. Staff is favorable of this action and will note that the color and blend will have to be approved by staff. The details on each building will have to be evaluated separately and in more depth during the preliminary submittal. The applicant will be required to provide elevation drawings showing the details proposed.

North Building:

This building will be a single tenant building. It will have high exposure being located on the corner of Walnut Street and Highway 41. Because of this staff will emphasize the importance in providing 360-degree architecture. Or, in other words, have a consistent design and material composition throughout.

The applicant is showing in their concept that details will be added to the cornice area to mimic a historical element found in downtown Chaska. Staff is favorable of this action. The building is also showing awning brackets over some of the windows to be consistent with other buildings in downtown. Staff finds this element to be more contemporary in nature but could fit in well with the historic elements on the building.

Also, due to its location on a corner, decorative fencing will be required to match up with the other downtown corner sites in Chaska. The applicants will have to show a detail on this in their preliminary submittal.

Middle Building:

The middle building will be a multi-tenant building. Its overall design provides a staggered layout, which staff is favorable of. The staggered-ness reduces long linear masses, and helps provide a more varied design. More window openings are provided because of this action.

The overall look of the building will be similar to the north building in materials and design. Brick, decorative cornices, and awning brackets are shown.

This building's rear (east **façade**) will face the adjacent apartment. They will be using a cementitious lap siding on the east **façade**, which staff finds appropriate given its minimal exposure and adjacent residential use.

South Building (Dunkin Donuts):

The south building will be a Dunkin Donuts with a drive-thru. The design of the building is showing a prototypical design for the Dunkin Donuts chain with some minor elements tying into historic downtown Chaska. The building will be incorporating a Chaska brick color and brick details to emphasize Chaska's historic qualities. Staff would emphasize looking into more possibilities with this building to tie in to historic downtown more. One area to look at would be the cornice area along the top of the cementitious portions to see if more detail can be provided. Staff will continue to work with the applicant on possible solutions.

The drive-thru is situated on the north and east sides of the proposed building. Access to this drive-thru will be obtained from the shared drive between Walgreens and Dunkin Donuts. Stacking is provided for up to seven (7) cars before it interferes with interior traffic. Staff is hopeful that this is an adequate amount of stacking, however, will have the applicant provide a summary in their preliminary to ensure this is the case.

Signs are shown on the building's drawings. Staff would emphasize the importance in providing sign designs that are complementary to historic downtown signs. Exposed neon, halo illumination or gooseneck lighting are just a couple elements found in complementary downtown signs.

Setbacks

The required setbacks for the site are as follows:

BUILDING SETBACKS	
Direction	Setback
Highway 41	75 feet from centerline
Interior Property Lines	10 feet

PARKING SETBACKS	
Direction	Setback
ROW	10 feet
Interior Property Lines	5 feet

Parking/Access/Circulation

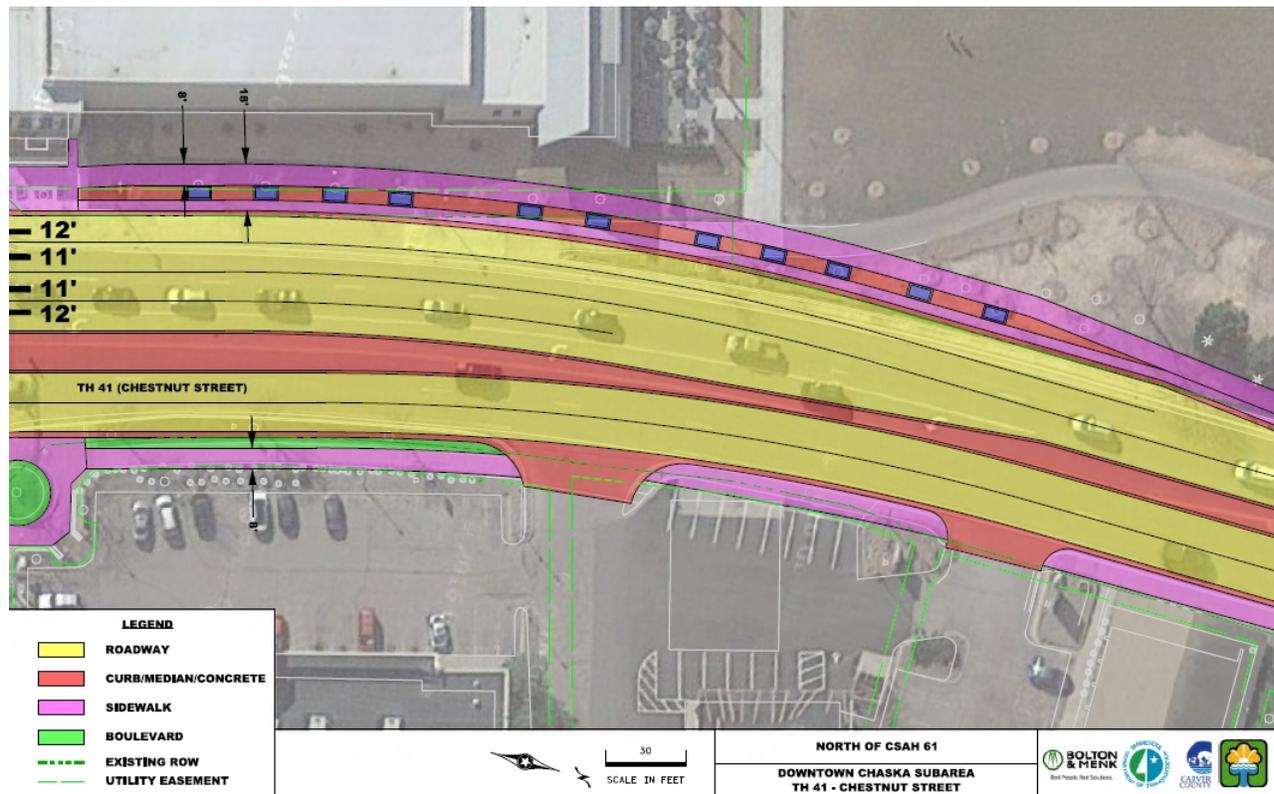
50 parking spaces are proposed as a part of this project. The following chart summarizes the overall parking demand on the site, based on the approximated sizes of the conceptual uses.

Uses	Approx. Size	Code Req.	Est. Parking Req.
Retail	10,822 sf	1ps/200sf	54 parking spaces
		REQUIRED	54 parking spaces
		PROVIDED	50 parking spaces

According to this table the applicant is not meeting the required amount of parking spaces needed for the use. Parking spaces will be provided on the west and south sides of the buildings. The proposed parking lot layout will provide adequate drive aisles and a more appropriate buffer between the road, sidewalk and parking.

The project is proposing to use existing entrances and exits to and from the site. These entrances are situated off of Highway 41 on the west and Walnut Street on the east; the northerly access on Highway 41 will be an independent access to the project site, the southerly access will be a shared access between Walgreens and this project site. A private drive that runs east to west provides the access off of Walnut Street North. Vehicular connections are also available to access Walgreens to the south.

It should be noted that MnDOT will be making improvements to Highway 41 in the future and therefore the applicant should coordinate with MnDOT to ensure Right-of-Way/Drainage/Access needs are resolved/addressed prior to their preliminary application with the City. An exhibit of the proposed improvements is shown below:



Staff Recommendation/Analysis

Staff is happy to see that the parking lot layout will be improved. The flow of the area seems to make sense and provide smooth traffic. The applicant is showing a streetscape design

between the parking lot and Highway 41 that aligns with and resembles the Walgreens site. The design incorporates a tree boulevard that separates Highway 41 and the sidewalk. These incorporations will enhance the boulevard of this area and provide an appropriate buffer between the site and busy road. Staff would like to point out that the tree boulevard area should be at least six feet in width and the sidewalk should be eight feet in width to match up with the adjacent Walgreens site. It will also be important that the applicant coordinate with MnDOT on the future improvements that will be done to Highway 41 so that important variables such as access/drainage/right-of-way needs are figured out sooner than later.

The number of parking spaces is short by 4 spaces. Staff is confident that the applicant can provide a workable solution to meet parking counts. If not, then a parking summary will need to be provided that indicates the number proposed will work between all three buildings.

Landscaping

The concept plan is showing landscaping to be added to the site. A mix of new trees and shrubs will be added between the parking lot and Highway 41 as well as within some of the planting beds that are in the parking lot. It will be important to provide adequate landscaping and enhancements in the green areas provided as these areas are limited. It will also be important to show consistency with Walgreens lot in terms of boulevard landscaping. Currently the Walgreens site shows trees between the sidewalk and the highway and shrubs between the parking lot and the sidewalk. The applicant is showing a tree boulevard, however there does not appear to be shrubs in between the sidewalk and parking lot.

Landscaping will have to meet the City's ordinance in terms of quantity and size. The applicant will be required to submit a landscape plan with the preliminary submittal to show how they meet this ordinance.

Sidewalks and Pedestrian Places

Sidewalks are proposed to intersect this site and provide access to the three buildings and their parking. A sidewalk is proposed on the west side of the site to connect into the Walgreens site and sites to the north. The existing westerly pedestrian connections are currently 8 feet wide. It would be required to continue this dimension through this proposed site.

Another item of note is the provision of pedestrian places as a part of this proposal. Currently there are no pedestrian places proposed on the plans. Staff would advise the applicant to look into the incorporation of a patio, or seating area, near Dunkin Donuts for patrons to use; perhaps in front of the building by pushing the building back several feet. This would also be appropriate to evaluate for the front of the multi-tenant building. Staff would advise the applicant to incorporate and comment on the gathering spaces they will be able to provide when they come back for preliminary.

Lighting

Any lighting proposed for this plan should be fully screened and face downward. Lighting shall also be designed to be sensitive to the historic context and scale. Gooseneck lighting is traditional in historic downtowns and would be seen as a favorable option. The applicant must provide specs for any new lighting.

Monument Sign & Trash Enclosure

The existing monument sign and trash enclosure do not appear to be a part of this proposal. New trash enclosures are proposed on the east side of the site behind the proposed buildings. Details on these enclosures will be required during preliminary submittal.

A monument sign has not been proposed or identified at this point. Staff would encourage the applicant to provide sign information during their preliminary submittal.

Utilities

Water and sewer are available to serve this site.

Stormwater

The applicant will work with the City and MnDOT to determine if the drainage plan proposed for the site will suffice.

Next Steps

The applicant will have to apply for preliminary site plan, preliminary plat and rezoning for this overall site. Rezoning will likely rezone this area to a PCD (Planned Commercial District). A final site plan and final plat application will be the last step after preliminary approvals are obtained.

How to Review in Preliminary and Final

Being sensitive to the comments brought up in the last Planning Commission meeting, I want to take this opportunity to open the door of feedback on how to best review this proposal. It was noted that you wish to review and make motions on buildings separately even though they might be on the same site.

During this Concept Plan level we feel that it is appropriate to look at/review the site/proposal as a whole. During Preliminary and Final it is an option to separate the buildings/sites out for review. For example, the Dunkin Donuts building/site can be looked at separately from the other two buildings, or all three buildings can have their own review/motion. However, staff believes that due to the connectivity of this site and buildings, it is very much appropriate to evaluate this project as a whole versus separating it out.

CONCLUSION

Staff is happy to see that the vacant buildings and sites at 650 and 700 Chestnut Street North are taking steps to receive improvements. Staff will continue to work with the applicant to ensure the site and buildings become a visually pleasing amenity to the community and downtown once again.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION REQUESTED:

Motion to recommend approval of the Concept Plan for 650 & 700 Chestnut Street North (PC#2018-10), subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Approvals shall be based on the following graphic exhibits:**
 - a. Project Narrative, submitted by Matt Borowy, dated March 24, 2018.**
 - b. Concept Plan (pgs 1-7), submitted by RDS Architects, dated March 13, 2018.**
- 2. Compliance with section 9.11 Building Design/Materials and Site Design.**

3. Provision to design the buildings to tie in with historic downtown Chaska.
4. Provision of curb and gutter to be provided in parking lot design.
5. Provision of tree boulevard along Highway 41 to be at least 6 feet in width and to be located in between the sidewalk and Highway 41.
6. Provision of sidewalk to be at least 8 feet wide and to be located in between the tree boulevard and parking lot.
7. Provision of boulevard landscaping to be consistent with Walgreens site.
8. Provision of a material board showing the proposed material selections.
9. Provision of lighting specs to be historically accurate in scale and design and to be submitted with preliminary site plan submittal.
10. Provision of a decorative fence to be incorporated on the northerly lot and a detail to be included in the preliminary submittal.
11. Decorative fence to be painted to match Walgreens fence.
12. Provision that signs will meet Section 10 of the zoning ordinance, and to be historically compatible.
13. Provision of trash enclosure details to be included in the preliminary submittal.
14. Provision of pedestrian gathering places, such as patio(s) or seating area(s), provided on site.
15. Provision that the Chaska brick blend is reviewed and approved by Planning staff prior to application.
16. Building fire suppression system to be implemented if required by Fire Department.
17. Compliance with applicable zoning requirements, in particular Chapter 9 (General Requirements).
18. Provision that applicant coordinates with MnDOT on Highway 41 needs for Access/Drainage/ROW prior to preliminary submittal.
19. Provision that an access permit is obtained from MnDOT.
20. Provision of a drive-thru analysis for Dunkin Donuts evaluating its typical needs to operate efficiently, to be provided during preliminary submittal.