

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
October 28, 2015  
MINUTES**

Chairperson Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Boynton, Kelley, Budd, Jackson and Thompson.

**Excused:** Franzoi and McKenna.

**Staff:** Director Akers, Deputy Director Best and Secretary Harman.

**Planning Representatives:** McKenna Associate, Sally Hodges.

**Audience:** Six (6).

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**Motion Boynton, Kelley second to approve the agenda of October 28, 2015 as presented. Motion Carried.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Motion Budd, Boynton second to approve the minutes from October 14, 2015 as presented. Motion Carried.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**ITEM # 1                   CASE# SPR 14-003**

**TITLE:                    THE APPLICANT, ATCHINSON FORD, IS REQUESTING PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN APPROVAL TO PERFORM FAÇADE AND SITE IMPROVEMENTS AS REQUIRED IN SECTION 12.02 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE 06-02-92, AS AMENDED.**

**LOCATION:                THE SUBJECT SITE IS LOCATED ON PARCEL TAX ID NUMBER V125-83-061-0002-701 AND V125-83-061-0003-002, ALSO KNOWN AS 9800 BELLEVILLE ROAD. THE SITE IS LOCATED ON THE WEST SIDE OF BELLEVILLE ROAD, BETWEEN TYLER AND I-94 NORTH SERVICE DRIVE. THE SITE IS IN THE C-2 EXTENSIVE HIGHWAY BUSINESS ZONING DISTRICT.**

Wade Hoppe gave the presentation for the applicant. In March of 2014 the applicant brought before the Planning Commission a proposed addition to the site. Due to changes necessary to accommodate storm water management, the applicant is not requesting the addition. Atchinson Ford is requesting to renovate the existing building and exterior façade to meet Ford requirements and match the Quick Lane building next door. Hoppe displayed color renderings and exterior façade material samples. The improvements also include restriping of the site and the revision of the vehicle display area to have no aisle.

Sally Hodges of McKenna Associates presented site plan review letter dated 10-20-15 recommending site plan approval subject to the twelve (12) conditions referenced in the letter.

The Fire Department review letter dated 10-23-15 approves the plan with the conditions referenced in the letter.

Commissioners discussed the vehicle display area, exterior façade materials, lighting, parking, restriping of the site, barrier free accessibility and landscaping. Because of no engineering, Planning Commission could consider final approval.

No comments from the audience.

**Motion Boynton, Kelley second to grant final site plan approval to perform façade and site improvements as required in section 12.02 of the zoning ordinance 06-02-92, as amended to Atchinson Ford located on the west side of Belleville Road address cited as C-2 Extensive Highway Business zoning district subject to the Fire Department review letter dated 10-23-15 and the McKenna Associates site plan review letter dated 10-20-15 excluding letters G and H, with the response to conditions submitted by Wade Hoppe of the project dated 10-14-15, the Planning Commission's approval of the building materials as presented and having them noted on the new site plans, approval of parking in excess of 120 percent, adjustment of the vehicle display area and the Planning Commission's approval of items D and F in the McKenna Associates review letter dated 10-20-15. Motion Carried.**

#### **ITEM # 2                      2016 MEETING SCHEDULE**

Director Akers presented the 2016 Planning Commission meeting schedule to the Commission. The meeting schedule per the Planning Commission by-laws is due in October, members are notified and the schedule is posted.

#### **ITEM # 3                      PLANNING COMMISSION BY-LAW REVISIONS**

Sally Hodges of McKenna Associates gave a presentation of updates to the Planning Commission by-laws. Commissioners discussed amended language changes to Article I – Objectives, Article 2 - Election of Officers and Article IV - Meetings. Also, the change of scheduling of the election of officers to the same day as the meeting schedule approval.

**Motion Budd, Boynton second to adopt the by-laws as presented and send to the Township Board for approval.**

**Roll Call:**

**Yeas: Kelley, Budd, Boynton, Jackson and Thompson.**

**Nays: None.**

**Absent: Franzoi and McKenna.**

**Motion Carried.**

**GENERAL DISCUSSION:**

**ITEM #1                      NOTIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW APPROVALS**

Director Akers discussed the administrative review approvals of T-Rex Arms located at 44800 I-94 North Service Drive and Purewater Properties located at 12300 Haggerty Road.

No comments from Commissioners or the audience.

**ITEM # 2                      DIGITAL DOCUMENTS & THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA)**

Director Akers gave a follow-up discussion on digital delivery of Planning Commission packets, what constitutes a public record under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the use of personal electronic devices. Planning Commission packets will continue to be delivered digitally however site plans will be printed out and available for pick-up by Commission members.

**Motion Budd, Boynton second to adjourn at 8:42 p.m. Motion Carried.**

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Harman  
Recording Secretary

October 20, 2015

Planning Commission  
Charter Township of Van Buren  
46425 Tyler Road  
Belleville, Michigan 48111

**Subject: VBT 14-003, Atchinson Ford Dealership Remodel, Site Plan Review #4, Plans Dated October 14, 2015**

Dear Commissioners:

Atchinson Ford proposes to reskin and remodel the existing new car dealership building at 9800 Belleville Road. The use would remain new car sales and service; parking, vehicle display and storage spaces would be restriped and arranged to improve traffic flow and site efficiency. We are excited about this upgrade to one of the Township's core businesses.

In May 2014, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on a previous plan that proposed to expand the sales and service building on the site, but at the applicant's request, no action was taken. A revised site plan has now been submitted which will not expand the building, only modify the façade, change the front entrance, remodel the interior layout and restripe the lot.

We have reviewed the plan for compliance with the Township's Zoning Ordinance, and sound planning and design principles. We offer the following comments for your consideration.

## COMMENTS

1. **Use.** The site is zoned C-2 Extensive Highway Business District. New car sales are permitted (Section 13.02.b.2). The use description states that the functions, operations and uses on the site will remain the same as existing. However to avoid questions in the future, Sheet DT, Existing and Proposed Building Use statement should include a list of included and excluded repair and servicing operations, not just label the operations as "major" repair.
2. **Dimensional Standards.** The building's south setback is an existing non-conformity (it is approximately 15 feet and the required minimum setback is 25 feet) that is not proposed to be changed. The parcel line dimensions are not all on the site plan and should be added. The fence surrounding the back lot encroaches on the shopping center site to the south; the applicant stated this encroachment is long-standing and no relocation is necessary.
3. **Parking and Circulation.**
  - a. The relevant parking standard is for "motor vehicle sales and service." The required number of parking spaces is calculated below:

Standard	Applicable Measurement	Number of Spaces Required
1 space per 200 sq. ft. of interior sales space	3,566 square feet	18 spaces
2 spaces per service stall	9 stalls	18 spaces
1 per employee at Quick Lane site (per special use approval for that site)	13 Quick Lane employees	13 spaces
	<b>Minimum Required:</b>	<b>49 spaces</b>
	<b>Max. Permitted (Min. + 20%):</b>	<b>59 spaces</b>
	<b>Total Proposed:</b>	<b>61 spaces</b>
	<b>Total Display Spaces:</b>	<b>400 spaces</b>

The parking calculations on Sheet DT must be revised to match Sheet SP101. The plan proposes to exceed the maximum 120% of the parking spaces required by Ordinance. We recommend that the Planning Commission approve the additional spaces since a significant portion of those spaces are to serve the site next door, and denying the increase would not decrease the amount of pavement on the site.

- b. **Barrier Free Spaces.** Three barrier-free parking spaces are required as part of the 61 parking spaces now proposed; only two are provided.
  - c. **Vehicle Display.** The angled display spaces in front of the building are very tight, with only 12 feet for access aisle behind them. At staff review, we agreed that the vehicle display could remain in this area without the Ordinance-required buffering since it is a pre-existing, nonconforming situation and the building is not being moved to the west as was proposed last spring. However, the Commission should consider whether this angled configuration (which may result in the display cars overhanging the sidewalk/public right-of-way) should be permitted. We recommend that the display in front of the building should remain as it is currently approved with no defined access aisle and with the cars oriented in a more random fashion that maximizes view of the vehicles without impinging on the sidewalk.
  - d. **Circulation.** The Planning Commission’s approval for the Quick Lane specified that overall circulation and the potential to eliminate one of the four curb cuts serving the two sites would be required to be addressed with the dealership site plan. This aspect should be addressed to the satisfaction of the Commission.
4. **Lighting.** A revised photometric plan has been submitted. The only new light proposed is an LED wall mounted unit and cut sheet information is on the plan, however much of that information is illegible. A clear copy of that cut sheet must be provided for review. Several of the light fixture types on the site are not focused straight down, but rather are angled as flood lights. While the photometric plan does not reveal an over-lighting situation, the Zoning Ordinance requires that all lighting must be focused down and not glare off site. This is an existing situation, and we encourage the applicant to work toward compliance. Also, there appears to be an error on the photometric plan in the vicinity of the southernmost fixture FX. The other FX fixtures are from 11 – 15 fc at the base, the southernmost fixture is less than 2 fc at its base. This discrepancy must be addressed.
5. **Landscaping and Screening.** Because this project is primarily addition of a new building façade with little footprint change, complete compliance with the landscape requirements of the Ordinance may not be practical and the Commission may approve alternatives. Our comments follow:

- a. **Landscaping Adjacent to Right-of-Way.** The Ordinance calls for a minimum 10-foot wide landscaped greenbelt along the site's Belleville Road street frontage with a continuous screen at least 30" high at planting (to reach a height of 36" within 12 months) or a 36" high screening wall. 1 tree per 50 feet of frontage is also required. The landscape plan proposes shrubs and perennials in the greenbelt along the north part of the site frontage and the applicant requests that no trees be required to protect the new cars from bird waste and tree litter.
- b. **Vehicular Surface Landscaping/Landscaping Adjacent to Residential Uses.** The Zoning Ordinance requires landscaping in and around parking lots, including landscaped islands every 20 parking spaces. However, most of the pavement on the site will be used for display/storage of vehicles for sale. It is not customary for dealerships to have extensive landscaping in their display/storage areas. A grass island is proposed at the south end of the display area in front of the building, and curbing should be added to protect it. Also, the site is adjacent to a residential use, and therefore screening is required by the Zoning Ordinance. As currently developed there is no unpaved space on the applicant's parcel for landscape screening, therefore we recommend that the applicant work with the condominium association to install shrubs or clusters of arborvitae along the chain link fence which would fit in this area and better screen the view through the fence. See pictures of the residential interface below.



- c. **Display Areas.** According to Section 4.40.3.e.2., auto display/sales areas must be screened from public rights-of-way by a building or by landscape screening. Many spaces labelled display are actually for storage of vehicle inventory and are at the rear of the site, screened by the building. The applicant proposes to install low level landscape screening for the north display spaces. Since the building location is not changing, there is little space for screening the display in front of the building; this area should be addressed as discussed in item 3.c. above.

## 6. Signs.

- a. **Existing Pole Signs.** The existing pole signs are non-conforming. Only one freestanding sign is permitted by Ordinance, and pole signs are not permitted. The smaller pole sign will be removed, decreasing the nonconformity by complying with the maximum number of such signs.
- b. **Total Sign Area.** The Ordinance permits this site to have up to a total 225 sq. ft. of signs; 326 sq. ft. is proposed, a surplus of 101 sq. ft. However according to the plan, the site contains 371 existing sq. ft. of signage, thus the proposal will bring the site into greater compliance with the Ordinance.

## 7. DDA/Belleville Road Standards.

This site is located in the Township's signature Belleville Road corridor, planned as a high-image attractive mixed use area. Considerable public investment has been made in streetscape plantings, decorative lighting, amenities and aesthetic improvements.

- a. The Planning Commission has consistently required new and renovated buildings along Belleville Road to reflect with the DDA's palette of red-brown brick, natural stone and limestone accents, and natural non-reflective facades. The new car dealership design includes thin stone, limestone accents and brick on portions of the building. The Belleville Road face uses a considerable amount of glass which is not typical along the corridor. The south side of the building is proposed to have brick that matches the Quick Lane building brick and smaller windows in proportion with the corridor palette. The color of most facade materials has been noted on the plan; however, the color of the thin stone that covers most of the front and north elevations must be labelled. Color and material samples must be presented for approval by the Commission.
- b. In the Township's commercial zoning districts every site must incorporate site amenities along the Belleville Road frontage. The applicant proposes a small paved seating area along the sidewalk. The detail for this feature must be to scale, the colors of fixtures and paving noted and to match the streetscape palette. A sidewalk connection from the public walk to the front door of the sales building is proposed; handicapped access should be provided at the building sidewalk.

## RECOMMENDATION

We recommend preliminary site plan approval subject to the following conditions being addressed prior to final site plan approval:

- a. The use statement should include a list of permitted and excluded repair and servicing operations, not just label the operations as "major" repair.
- b. The missing property line dimensions must be added to the site plan.
- c. The parking calculations on Sheet DT must be revised to match Sheet SP101 and the additional parking spaces proposed are subject to Planning Commission approval.

- d. Overall site circulation should be addressed to the satisfaction of the Commission.
- e. Site lighting items as listed in Comment 3 of our review.
- f. Commission approval of the modified frontage landscaping.
- g. Curbing to protect the grass island at the south driveway.
- h. Landscaping should be installed along the west lot line to better screen the dealership from the residential use; with approval of the condominium, that landscaping could be placed on the residential side of the lot line and enhance the existing buffer.
- i. The color of the thin stone that covers most of the front and north elevations must be labelled. Color and material samples must be presented and are subject to approval by the Commission.
- j. The detail for the public sitting area must be to scale, with the colors of fixtures and paving noted and to match the streetscape palette.
- k. Handicapped access should be provided at the building sidewalk.
- l. Approval of all agencies with jurisdiction

Respectfully submitted,

**McKENNA ASSOCIATES**



Sara J. Hodges, AICP, IAP2  
Senior Vice President

Cc: Mr. Craig Atchinson, Atchinson Ford, 9800 Belleville Road, Belleville, MI 48111  
Mr. Wayde Hoppe, 47032 McBride, Belleville, MI 48111

David C. McInally II  
Battalion Chief / Fire Marshal  
O: 734-699-8900 ext9416

Van Buren Fire Department  
46425 Tyler Rd  
Van Buren Twp., MI 48111



October 23, 2015

Director of Building and Planning  
46425 Tyler Road  
Belleville, MI 48111

Re: Atchinson Ford SPR-SLU 14-003

I have reviewed the plans by Atchinson Ford dated 05/13/14. The plan is re issued and submitted on 10/14/2015, Job number SPR/SLU 14-003 for the above referenced project. NFPA 1 Fire Code (2012 Edition), NFPA 13 (2007 Edition) and NFPA 101, Life Safety Code (2012 Edition), were the primary reference documents used for this review and I have the following items requiring further detail / attention:

1. The FDC connection will be a 4 inch Stortz fitting with a 30 degree downturn as required by the AHJ. **NFPA 13 6.8.1.2**
2. The Knox Box location will be verified prior to the installation on the building. The Knox box will not be installed to the recommended height of six feet and will be installed between the height of 4-5 feet from the ground. **NFPA 1 18.2.2.1**
3. All hydrants located on the site will be marked with a flag for easy identification purposes. **NFPA 1 18.5.7.2**
4. The hydrants described above will be protected from vehicle damage. **NFPA 1 18.5.5**
5. Hydrant clearances will be 36" around the circumference of the hydrant. **NFPA 1 18.5.3**
6. There will be 20 ft of clear access around the perimeter of the building. **AHJ**
7. Snow removal plans will not obstruct the clearance(s) around the fire hydrants, FDC or the perimeter of the building.

**Our Mission:** The members of the Van Buren Fire Department shall work together in a professional and caring way to protect life and property from the adverse effects of fire, trauma, illness and dangerous conditions. Our services will be provided in a fair, honest, and ethical manner with the highest respect and dignity to all.

With the above considerations, the plan set is approved as submitted.

The fire department requires involvement in the continuing plan review, inspection, and Certificate of Occupancy process and will require various inspections during the construction phases and immediately prior to opening to verify compliance with the appropriate codes. One set of as built construction drawings, schedules, and details, as it relates to construction, fire protection and response, will be required, as well as **a digital cad layout** of the building by this department prior to our final C of O inspection.

Review and approval by the Authority Having Jurisdiction shall not relieve the applicant of the responsibility of compliance with these codes.

Respectfully Submitted,

David C. McNally II

Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal