

**PLAN COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION NOTES
NOVEMBER 18, 2024**

I. Call To Order

The Plan Commission Study Session was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by President Tom Anderson at the Schererville Town Hall, 10 E. Joliet St.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. Roll Call

Roll Call was taken with the following members present: President Tom Anderson, Vice-President William Jarvis, Secretary Gary Immig, Mr. Myles Long, Mr. Robert Kocon, and Mr. Tom Kouros. Staff present: Director of Operations Andrew Hansen, Planning & Building Administrator Denise Sulek, and Recording Secretary Megan Schiltz. Absent were Mr. Chris Rak and Town Manager James Gorman. In the audience was Councilman Caleb Johnson.

II. Commission Business

A. First Federal Plaza Addition, Lot 2 (Proposed: 4-Unit Retail Bldg.)

General Location: 1924 U.S. 41 (F/K/A: Amarillo Roadhouse)
First Federal Plaza Addition, Lot 2

Petitioner(s): Jeff Brant

Request: U.S. 41 Commercial Corridor Overlay District Development Plan Review

Mr. Jeff Brant from Brant Companies stated that he was petitioning on behalf of Tam and James Huynh that were present in the audience. Mr. Brant said they were there to discuss the redevelopment of the existing Amarillo Steakhouse. Mr. Brant went on to say that they are proposing to redo the entire exterior of the building, starting with the demolition of the two towers that are existing on said building. Mr. Brant added that they would reframe the exterior with glass entry and doors, with the lower half to have a 3ft. perimeter of dark brick to upgrade the facility. Mr. Brant stated that to meet the requirements for the site plan, they are planning to add an 8ft. concrete walk to the front of the building and a 5ft. walkway in the rear. Mr. Brant continued to say they were proposing to upgrade the landscaping around the entire building and the perimeter of the property. Mr. Brant said the ordinance calls for a minimum of 44 parking spaces but plan to have approximately 78 parking spots. Mr. Brant added there would not be any changes to the drainage on the site and plan to only redo the exterior of the building. Mr. Brant went on to say that they would potentially subdivide the space into 4 spaces or less, depending on who the future tenants would be.

Mr. Anderson showed the other members of the board samples of the proposed colors for the exterior. Mr. Jarvis asked if the signage would follow the ordinance. Mr. Brant showed the signage plan and stated they would like the signage area of Units A, B, and D to be 35ft. with Unit C being 50ft. Mr. Brant added that they were proposing to do signage on the back of the building above each door as well because primary parking would be behind the building; those sign areas would be 20ft. each. Mr. Jarvis asked Ms. Sulek if that would exceed what is allowed. Ms. Sulek replied that along the front of the building the maximum allowed is 150 sq. ft. and the petitioner proposed 155 sq. ft. Ms. Sulek added that this property is located in the Overlay District so he would be having signage on both sides. Mr. Jarvis then asked if there were only one dumpster enclosure for all four units. Mr. Brant stated that there currently was a larger dumpster enclosure fenced in; adding that Torrenge Engineering made a better drawing of where it would be and that they would make sure that the dumpster would have an area that is adequate for all four tenants. Mr. Jarvis asked if the dumpster would be moved to the back of the building because a lot of times the lid would be left open and garbage begins to blow around. Mr. Brant replied that they could enlarge the dumpster that is in the fenced in area, but if the board wants it to be moved elsewhere they would do so. Mr. Jarvis stated that

he believed it would be better to have it located in the south west corner of the parking lot. Mr. Brant responded that if the commission wanted it moved over there he would do so. Mr. Anderson said the dumpster would be fenced in 8ft. x 11ft., so theoretically they could have a big dumpster or two smaller dumpsters; adding that his thought is of the people who would have to take out the trash that far back in bad weather. Mr. Jarvis responded that he is sure they would keep the parking lot plowed. Mr. Immig stated that it had accommodated the high volume needs of a restaurant but that it depended on what kind of future tenants there would be. Mr. Jarvis said not only that but if they leave the lids open garbage would be flying out, but that could be worked out amongst the neighbors. Mr. Jarvis then asked if they would want to reinforce the blacktop for when the garbage truck goes in because they would have to make a swing to get up to it. Mr. Brant replied that they would be happy to reinforce the concrete; plus there would be a concrete drive by the entrance to the dumpster area and believed there is currently concrete there but would be glad to accommodate that dumpster.

Mr. Anderson asked if they would be getting a new monument sign. Mr. Brant replied that they would be using the existing nonconforming monument sign on the north east end of the building; but planned to move the sign over to the south east corner. Mr. Jarvis asked if it would be digital. Mr. Brant said that it would not be. Mr. Anderson wanted to clarify that the sign is currently located on the north end. Mr. Brant clarified that the existing Amarillo Steakhouse sign was located at the north east corner and would like to move it to the south east corner, with landscaping all around it. Mr. Jarvis asked if they would be making a cross easement to the property directly south. Mr. Brant replied that they had not planned on doing any changes to the site plan other than what was existing there right now. Mr. Jarvis responded that he would take a look at it because it would be a good idea to keep people off U.S. 41 as much as possible. Mr. Anderson noted that at the north end there is two ingress/egress points but there is not any at the south end. Mr. Brant stated that there had never been one on the south end. Mr. Anderson was pleased with the landscaping plan on the south area, stating that it was much needed.

Mr. Jarvis asked if there were any uses yet. Mr. Brant replied there were no potential tenants at this time because they wanted to see what the requirements would be; that way once the project is complete they would have something that could be proposed to potential tenants. Mr. Anderson repeated that he was happy to see there was a landscape plan for the property. Mr. Anderson added that they were a little bit over on the signage for the building; but that the monument sign would meet the ordinance so he could live with it being a couple feet over. Mr. Jarvis asked if a waiver would be appropriate. Ms. Sulek responded that the board could either accept the U.S. 41 Development Plan or if they would need to get a variance. Mr. Anderson stated that they could accept the plan as it was being presented rather than make them go for a variance. Mr. Anderson said that they were requesting 4 units and that it could change; asking then if they had anticipated decreasing the number of units rather than increase. Mr. Brant replied that he assumed that it would be a decrease if anything.

Mr. Anderson stated that the proposed site had needed to be redeveloped for a while. Mr. Hansen asked if they would be getting new asphalt as well. Mr. Brant stated that he was unsure if they would redo the asphalt; or just to restripe it, seal it, or repair any areas that might have issues. Mr. Hansen said that the last time he was over there the asphalt looked bad. Mr. Brant stated that he hadn't been paying much attention to the asphalt because he had mainly been focused on the exterior for overlay requirements; adding that he would make sure the asphalt would be taken care of. Mr. Jarvis had Mr. Hansen pull the property up on google earth to see how the next property lines up, because there were always people zipping in and out of the Speedway. There was a discussion on having a cross access provided to go into Speedway; but that with the location it would not be feasible. Mr. Brant stated that the goal was to try and block the view of the gas station. Mr. Anderson said that there were trees and that in the landscape plan it would be right in that area. Mr. Immig asked if the building was older; this led to a discussion of all the different businesses that had been there. Mr. Immig asked if they would keep the same roof structure and just demolish the two towers. Mr. Brant stated that the plan was to demolish the towers but reframe the exterior on the front of the building. Mr. Brant went on to say that the pitch would not be there and that it would be square; but there would be a pitch on each end on the rear of the building. Mr. Kouros verified with the petitioner that based off of the picture provided, there would be entrances where the windows were located. Mr. Anderson stated that he liked the landscape plan, that the lot would definitely need to be worked on, and that the signage would work for them. Mr. Anderson then asked when they were looking to come back in for a public hearing. Mr. Brant replied December 2nd.

III. Adjournment

There being no further business, this meeting was adjourned at 6:24 P.M.