



## MINUTES

### MEETING OF VILLAGE OF FRANKFORT PLAN COMMISSION / ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

February 22, 2024 –VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

432 W. NEBRASKA STREET

- Call to Order:** Chair Schaeffer called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM
- Commissioners Present:** Nichole Schaeffer (Chair), Brian James, Johnny Morris, Jessica Jakubowski, Will Markunas, David Hogan, Dan Knieriem
- Commissioners Absent:** None
- Staff Present:** Community & Economic Development Director Mike Schwarz,  
Planner Amanda Martinez
- Elected Officials Present:** None

#### A. Approval of the Minutes from February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Chair Schaeffer asked for questions or comments regarding the minutes. There were none.

**Motion (#1):** To approve the minutes from February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, as presented.

Motion by: Hogan

Seconded by: Knieriem

Approved: (6-0-1, Jakubowski abstained)

#### B. Workshop: 145 Industry Avenue – All Purpose Storage

Amanda Martinez presented the staff report.

Jared Gingrich, PE, the civil engineering consultant for the applicant approached the podium. He mentioned that they started this project in 2021. He explained the grading and drainage challenges for the site, which necessitate the need for the retaining wall.

Tim Wilkins, the applicant, approached the podium.

Chair Schaeffer asked if there were any initial questions or comments from the other commission members.

Commissioner Hogan asked if the proposed self-storage would be all indoors and if there would be any outdoor storage. He also asked if the units will be climate controlled.

Tim Wilkins replied that all storage will be indoors and would not be climate controlled. Storage Express will manage the site.

Commissioner Hogan asked if they plan to re-pave the existing site.

Tim Wilkins replied yes that they recently completed paving the existing site a few months ago. He added that they have already done more than \$1M in improvements to the property thus far.

Commissioner Morris asked if the existing site will be fenced.

Tim Wilkins replied yes. He added that this site will have about 32 security cameras.

Commissioner Morris asked about landscaping phasing.

Tim Wilkins replied that they would do the whole project at one time.

Commissioner James asked if they would consider adding landscaping along the frontage of the existing site.

Tim Wilkins replied yes, they would be willing to do that.

Commissioner Jakubowski stated that she did not have any initial questions.

Commissioner Knieriem started that he did not have any initial questions.

Commissioner Knieriem asked about the improvements to the existing site.

Tim Wilkins replied that they just finished some of the improvements, including pavement repairs and painting the existing buildings.

Commissioner Knieriem asked who is renting these units in terms of the typical customer.

Tim Wilkins replied that their data indicates that there is a mix of customers based on need. Some customers are individuals, and some are companies or professionals that need to store records.

Commissioner Knieriem asked when the existing self-storage buildings were built.

Tim Wilkins replied that he estimated that these were built in the 1980s or 1990s.

Commissioner Knieriem asked why they looked at Frankfort.

Tim Wilkins replied that their studies for Frankfort indicated that there are 4.3 square feet of storage needed per capita.

Chair Schaeffer asked for more information on the future Special Use Permit request for retail that staff noted in the staff report.

Commissioner Knieriem asked what tasks the employee would perform at the facility.

Tim Wilkins stated that the employee would sell boxes, packing tape, and other items, etc. in the small office space.

Commissioner Knieriem asked if any units would have power.

Tim Wilkins replied no, not on the inside of the units. He added that any such power inside the units could attract people wanting to live in the units, which does happen from time to time. He added that the exterior building lights are fully cut-off, meaning that no light pollution would occur on the adjacent properties.

Commissioner Knieriem noticed that the building site drops off to the east.

Jared Gingrich stated that they need to raise the property so it can drain toward the road where the detention pond would be located. The pond would then drain back to the east via pipes and an overland flow route if necessary.

Commissioner Knieriem asked for more information about the detention pond.

Jared Gingrich replied that there is a continuous flow to the pond.

Commissioner Knieriem asked if the proposed buildings would be constructed as slab on grade.

Tim Wilkins replied yes.

Chair Schaeffer suggested that if there were no additional initial questions for the applicant or project engineer, the commission could discuss the topics that are presented in the staff report one by one.

Chair Schaeffer asked the other commission members if there were any issues with the proposed use.

There was consensus that the proposed self-storage use is fine.

Commissioner Knieriem asked if they also own the storage facility by Navarro Farm. He also asked if there would be an employee residing on site.

Tim Wilkins replied no, they do not own that other facility. He added that there will not be a caretaker residence at the existing and proposed facility.

Chair Schaeffer asked staff about the request for the fence detail and gate.

Amanda Martinez stated that the applicant provided an example photo but no details and that the site plan should show the new fence and gate at the existing site.

Mike Schwarz stated that the applicant will need to submit a fence detail with the material and color noted.

Jared Gingrich stated that they plan to enclose the buildings with a consistent fence which would not be chain link material. He noted that there are existing chain link fences along the property lines that appear to belong to the adjacent property owners.

Chair Schaeffer asked staff about the variation for the parking.

Amanda Martinez replied that staff recommends that they show the parking stall locations on the site plan.

Chair Schaeffer asked the other commission members if there were any questions or comments regarding the required loading berth. There was consensus based on the nature of the use that no specific loading berth is necessary.

Chair Schaeffer asked the other commission members if there were any questions or comments regarding the trash enclosure requirement.

Jared Gingrich stated that they are considering several options, including possibly using one of the indoor storage units to contain one or more dumpsters.

Tim Wilkins stated that they typically use one unit as a maintenance unit where they could also place a dumpster.

There was a consensus that using a unit to store the dumpster would be most ideal, especially since it would deter patrons from leaving larger trash outdoors.

Chair Schaeffer asked the other commission members if there were any questions or comments regarding the proposed retaining wall.

Commissioner Knieriem stated that based on the site grading it seems strange that they are seeking to place the detention basin closer to the street when the site wants to naturally drain to the east.

Jared Gingrich explained that they did propose an earlier layout like that with staff but it would have required a request for a building setback variation from the 125-foot setback from the centerline of Center Road.

Commissioner James asked the applicant if there are two gates for the security fence.

Tim Wilkins replied yes. For the public hearing, they will show the two gate locations on the site plan along with the parking stall locations.

Jared Gingrich stated that the north gate would be automated. The south gate would be a crash gate. The existing access point on Industry Drive would have another gate.

There was some discussion about traffic demand.

Tim Wilkins stated this is a very low impact use.

Commissioner Jakobowski asked how customers would open the access gate(s).

Tim Wilkins replied that there would be a mobile phone app.

Commissioner Jakobowski asked why they are not doing climate control for the storage units.

Tim Wilkins replied that they love climate control, but it does not “pencil out” economically for their investment.

Chair Schaeffer asked if they are amenable to the landscaping comments from staff.

Jared Gingrich replied yes.

Tim Wilkins stated they will provide new landscaping along the existing frontage on Industry Avenue as well.

Commissioner Markunas suggested to keep the western frontage along Center Road with the most landscaping but maybe spread out the additional landscaping in the other areas of the site as previously discussed.

Chair Schaeffer asked staff if there is any issue with complying with the maximum impervious surface coverage.

Amanda Martinez replied no.

Chair Schaeffer asked the applicant if they are okay with paying the cash-in-lieu of constructing the required multi-use path along Center Road.

Tim Wilkins replied yes.

Chair Schaeffer asked the other commission members if there were any questions or comments regarding the proposed building architecture.

Commissioner James asked the applicant if he wanted the new self-storage buildings to match the existing self-storage buildings.

Tim Wilkins replied no.

Amanda Martinez asked the commission members if they are okay with the proposed faux stone panels on the western building.

There was consensus among the commission that this material was acceptable based on the type of use and zoning district.

Tim Wilkins stated the material is actually real stone cut thin and applied as a veneer. He stated that they can provide material samples.

Chair Schaeffer stated that the photometrics meet Village requirements. She asked the other commission members if there were any questions or comments regarding the proposed lighting. There were no comments from the commission.

Amanda Martinez reiterated that staff requested a decorative base for the proposed light poles.

Chair Schaeffer asked which light pole.

Amanda Martinez stated all nine free-standing light poles.

There was some discussion about the design of the light pole bases. Staff will work with the applicant on an appropriate decorative light pole base.

Chair Schaeffer asked staff about signage and whether or not it will comply with the Village requirements.

Amanda Martinez explained the staff comments on the proposed free-standing sign as the current proposal does not meet Village requirements.

Tim Wilkins stated that because Storage Express will manage the facility, they are going to completely change the sign that was provided in the agenda packet. They are fine with making the revisions to address staff comments.

Commissioner Markunas suggested that they work with staff on the signage comments.

Chair Schaeffer asked if goose neck lighting is proposed on the signage.

Tim Wilkins stated that he prefers ground lighting aimed upward at the sign as opposed to an internally illuminated sign.

Chair Schaeffer stated that is what the commission prefers.

Commissioner Morris asked what drives the business hours of operation.

Tim Wilkins replied that the local market drives the decision on opening and closing hours. He added that for this location, which is close to many other small businesses, including contractors, the earlier opening hours allow those individuals to stop by their storage unit early enough in the day to be at their job site.

Commissioner Morris asked about anticipated traffic to and from the facility.

Tim Wilkins replied that they will not have a lot of traffic.

Tim Wilkins stated that he prefers 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. hours of operation as opposed to 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Chair Schaeffer stated that she is comfortable with the Village's standard 11:00 p.m. closing time as the closing time for this type of use.

Commissioner Knieriem asked if the proposed hours are the gate locking hours.

Tim Wilkins replied yes.

Commissioner Morris asked if he was a customer who rented one of the units and he had to be there late, after the 11:00 closing hours, would he be able to get out.

Tim Wilkins replied yes, he would be able to exit through a gate in the security fence.

Chair Schaeffer asked the applicant and his project engineer if they are comfortable with the tasks presented through the workshop discussion.

Tim Wilkins and Jared Gingrich replied yes.

### **C. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **D. Village Board & Committee Updates**

Mike Schwarz noted that the following projects were approved by the Village Board at its meeting on February 20, 2024:

- Text Amendment for accessory structures (with the sliding scale maximum size for an accessory structure changed from 1,000 square feet to 500 square feet)

**E. Other Business**

There was no other business.

**F. Attendance Confirmation (March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024)**

Chair Schaeffer asked Commissioners to please let staff know if someone cannot attend the next meeting.

**Motion (#13):** Adjournment 7:25 P.M.

Motion by: Markunas

Seconded by: Jakubowski


The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote (7-0).

Approved March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024

As Present

As Amended

  
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Nichole Schaeffer, Chair

  
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Secretary