

**PLANNING DIVISION REPORT
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Of July 1, 2008**

RE: ID # 11133, Demolition Permit – 414 Grand Canyon Drive

1. Requested Actions: Approval of a demolition permit to allow the demolition of a former restaurant and construction of two retail/office buildings located at 414 Grand Canyon Drive.
2. Applicable Regulations: Section 28.12 (12) provides the guidelines and regulations for the approval of demolition permits.
3. Report Prepared By: Timothy M. Parks, Planner.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Applicant & Property Owner: Sara Investment Real Estate; 1612 N. High Point Road; Middleton; Dave Stone, representative.

Agent: Steve Connor, Bouril Design Studio; 6602 Grand Teton Drive; Madison.
2. Development Schedule: The applicant wishes to commence demolition and construction as soon as all regulatory approvals have been granted.
3. Location: Approximately 2 acres of land located 300 feet south of Mineral Point Road on the west side of Grand Canyon Drive, Aldermanic District 19; Madison Metropolitan School District.
4. Existing Conditions: Former Chi-Chi's Restaurant, zoned C3L (Commercial Service and Distribution District). The site is also located within Wellhead Protection zoning district for Well #16, which is located on the north side of Mineral Point Road west of Grand Canyon Drive.
5. Proposed Land Use: A one-story, 12,040 square-foot retail building and a two-story, 21,732 square-foot retail/office building with surface parking.
6. Surrounding Land Use and Zoning: The subject property is surrounded to the north, south and east primarily by a variety of commercial uses in C3L commercial zoning, including a Zimbrick Honda service center to the south, a BP-Amoco gas station to the north at Mineral Point Road, and a multi-tenant retail building located to the east across Grand Canyon Drive. Fire Station #2 is also located across Grand Canyon from the site. The western boundary of the property abuts a regional stormwater management facility and soccer fields, zoned A (Agriculture District).

7. Adopted Land Use Plan: The Comprehensive Plan identifies the subject site and the surrounding area south of Mineral Point Road for general commercial uses.
8. Environmental Corridor Status: The property is not located within a mapped environmental corridor. The adjoining regional stormwater management area is mapped within a corridor and is noted as both being public land and containing open water.
9. Public Utilities & Services: The property will be served by a full range of urban services.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW

This application is subject to the demolition standards of Section 28.12 (12).

PREVIOUS APPROVAL

On July 10, 2006, the Plan Commission granted approval of a demolition permit to allow the vacant former restaurant on the subject site to be demolished and a new two-story office building to be built.

ANALYSIS, EVALUATION & CONCLUSION

The applicant is requesting approval of a demolition permit to allow a one-story, approximately 11,000 square-foot vacant former Chi-Chi's restaurant to be razed to accommodate construction of two commercial buildings on the approximately 2-acre subject site, which is located south of Mineral Point Road on the west side of Grand Canyon Drive in C3L commercial zoning. The restaurant is situated near the center of the site and is surrounded by approximately 216 parking spaces accessed by two driveways from Grand Canyon Drive.

The two commercial buildings proposed to replace the demolished restaurant will include a one-story, 12,040 square-foot retail building to be situated along the southern property line of the site and a two-story, 21,732 square-foot retail/office building that will extend along the western line. Parking for 128 automobiles will occupy the remainder of the site, with one 30-foot wide driveway proposed to provide access to the property.

Plans for the two-story building along the western property line call for 10,954 square feet of first floor space that will primarily house retail uses and a 10,778 square-foot second floor with office uses. The building will be setback 30.5 feet from the western property line abutting the regional stormwater management open space. The building will face east and will include up to 8 storefront entrances for the first floor tenants as well as a central lobby entrance to provide access to the second floor tenant(s). Plans for the build-out of the second floor have not been

included but suggest that there will be ample window openings on all four sides of the second floor.

The one-story retail building will be set back 38 feet from Grand Canyon Drive and 10 feet from the southern property line and will include a storefront design along its northern elevation facing the proposed parking lot similar to the storefront façade of the western building. The storefront treatment will extend along the eastern facade and the southeastern corner in an effort to provide a street presence along Grand Canyon Drive.

Both buildings will share a similar architectural motif that features brick bases and vertical columns, with the remainder of the walls to be comprised of a combination of EIFS panels and architectural metal panels. Both buildings will feature flat roofs with parapets above the top floors and canvas awnings extending across the aluminum storefront windows and entrances. A landscaping plan for the proposed redevelopment calls for the planting of a combination of shade and ornamental trees between the two-story building and regional detention lands in addition to the inclusion of five tree islands within the parking lot and some perimeter plantings along the eastern edge of the site. The area between the northern edge of the 128-stall parking lot and property line is proposed to be preserved as lawn space in the interim pending a potential future redevelopment proposal for the gas station property to the north abutting Mineral Point Road.

The applicant has provided pictures of the interior and exterior of the building to be demolished and notes that the design of the building does not lend itself to reuse except as a similarly themed restaurant and that structural deficiencies exist that could make repurposing of the building infeasible. The existing 10,878 square-foot building appears to be in average to below-average condition for a building of its age based on a windshield survey of the site conducted by staff. Staff has no information that would indicate that the building is not structurally sound or capable of being rehabilitated or repaired but would note that the Plan Commission previously found the demolition standards to be met for the same building with a different proposed alternative use two years earlier.

The area surrounding the site is characterized by a variety of mostly auto-oriented commercial uses to the north, south and east of the site in the greater Park Towne commercial area generally located south of Mineral Point Road between West Towne Mall and the University Research Park. Nearby uses include a Zimbrick Honda service facility and Chuck-E-Cheese pizzeria due south of the site, a gas station to the north and a new multi-tenant retail facility located across Grand Canyon Drive from the site at the southeastern corner of Mineral Point Road, which was approved in August 2006 to replace another former restaurant. The southeastern corner of the site also sits opposite Fire Station #2 at the corner of Grand Canyon Drive and Grand Teton Plaza. The western edge of the subject site borders a large City-owned regional detention facility that is also used as a soccer park.

Staff believes that the proposed redevelopment of the property following the restaurant demolition will allow this site to continue to be economically productive for the foreseeable future and believes that the proposal can generally comply with the demolition standards. With this proposed demolition and the razing of another themed restaurant across Grand Canyon Drive from the site, which resulted in the multi-tenant building that houses a Panera Bread store and two other retail tenants, staff believes that a less auto-dominated land use pattern is beginning to take form in portions of the Park Towne area. While the proposed redevelopment includes ample surface parking for the retail and office tenants, it also includes an improved pedestrian orientation currently lacking in the existing building and in many other developments to the south and east.

The Planning Division recommends that the proposed redevelopment could be improved through the use of more four-sided architecture, particularly for the one-story retail building along the southern edge of the site. The building plans feature few windows along the southern elevation facing down Grand Canyon Drive. Staff believes that this walls the project off from potential patrons approaching the site from the south and requests that the plans be revised to include full, non-spandrel windows along the southern façade to break up the otherwise unvaried wall and to open the project up to the south. Staff also recommends that any utility pedestals and building mechanicals proposed along this wall be full screened. Staff also recommends that vision glass be incorporated into the western wall of the two-story building, which will be partially visible from Mineral Point Road across the greenspace to the west of the site. Planning staff will also work with the developer to incorporate a pedestrian pathway across the northern portion of the parking lot to connect to the sidewalk in front of the two-story building, either as part of this project or as part of a redevelopment proposal for the gas station to the north of the site.

A reuse and recycling plan was submitted as part of this application. Approval of the plan by the City's Recycling Coordinator will be required prior to issuance of a wrecking permit.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find that the demolition standards are met and **approve** demolition of single-family residence at 414 Grand Canyon Drive subject to input at the public hearing and the following conditions:

1. Comments from reviewing agencies.
2. That the plan set be revised per Planning Division approval as follows:
 - a.) that all utility pedestals and ground-mounted mechanical equipment be fully screened with materials complimentary to the building architecture;

- b.) that the south elevation of the one-story building and western elevation of the two-story building be revised to incorporate (vision glass, non-spandrel) windows along the first floors of those facades;
 - c.) that the landscaping plan be revised to include screening along the eastern edge of the parking lot adjacent to Grand Canyon Drive south the of the project driveway to mirror the plantings proposed north of the driveway.
3. That the applicant work with the Planning Division to incorporate a pedestrian walkway through the northern half of the parking lot on the subject site and additional landscaping along the northern property line. In the event that a walkway and landscaping cannot be provided on the northern half of the lot at this time, efforts should be made to incorporate a pedestrian walkway between Grand Canyon Drive and the sidewalk along the eastern wall of the proposed two-story building as part of any future redevelopment of the gas station property to the north.
 4. Note: Any future outdoor eating areas for any of the proposed first floor tenant spaces will require conditional use approval by the Plan Commission on separate applications.