

Mr. Capka asked why they seem to have so much parking and JPMorgan Chase representative, Seth Burke, came forward to explain that they know they are over parked but there will be 13 spaces for employees inside of the branch and if they each are speaking with a client or customer, they feel it is necessary to have the additional 13 spaces. Regarding turning left out of the parking lot onto Center Ridge, he said that may be a difficult turn to accomplish. Mr. Burke said that most will go to the light on the side street to exit.

Mr. Bishop moved to open the public hearing. Mr. Capka seconded.

4 Ayes – 0 Nays
Passed

There being nobody in attendance from the public, Mr. Bishop moved to close the public hearing. Mr. Capka seconded.

4 Ayes – 0 Nays
Passed

Mr. Bishop moved to grant preliminary and final approval for a new commercial bank with a drive-thru as a conditional use subject to Chase Bank, 20780 Center Ridge Rd. subject to the granting of a variance for lot size. The drive-thru requires a minimum lot size of one acre and the proposed development has less than one acre. Mr. Capka seconded.

5 Ayes – 0 Nays
GRANTED

4. WESTGATE APARTMENTS – 20325 Center Ridge Rd. –Preliminary Review PUBLIC HEARING – Change of Use from an Office Building to a Multi-Family Apartment Building in a General Business Zoning District. Mr. Ben Brannon and Bob Fridrich of Geis Companies came forward to discuss the project.

Mr. Brannon explained that they went to Design Board for a preliminary review and have implemented the comments they made regarding landscaping, which they submitted. The biggest adjustment they made was with regard to the Planning Commission's comment about the unit mix. They incorporated more 1-bedroom units and dissolved some 2-bedroom units. The studio unit mix is now down to 10%. They eliminated parking around the perimeter and incorporated an amenity space with a concrete curb that includes planters, a community garden, some seating areas with exterior grills, as well as a general corn hole activity location. Toward the entry to the site, they included some tree spaces and some heftier planter conditions to buffer the space from Linden Rd.

Mr. Bishop said that he thinks they may want to modify this to pre-preliminary review because it is still a little bit lacking in the presentation for a preliminary review. He said that the new landscape plan looks like it is the same submission as was given 2 weeks ago, which means that

the landscape plan has not been adjusted to the site plan showing 46 parking spaces. Mr. Bishop said that they need everything to line up so there is a record of what was agreed to. The site plan needs to match the landscaping plan, etc. Mr. Brannan said that their original submission was the landscape plan that is in the packet and they submitted the revised site plan for this review following the Design Board comments. Mr. Bishop said that the site plan lacks dimensions on the drive lanes and the parking distance to the building wall. He said that they should strike the comment on the site plan that says, "Parking layout and organization is existing and to remain," because that is not what they are doing. He asked if they are creating a front entrance because Design Board implied that they would like to see more of a statement at the front of the building but he does not see that they have done that. Mr. Brannan said that they decided to add a pretty lengthy concrete curb and eliminated some parking spaces around it to make it more architecturally prominent. They haven't proposed a cladding to the main entry but they would like to hear the opinions of the Commission before they go further there. Mr. Bishop suggested that they really should want to rebrand the building from office to residential. A residential building should have some type of statement at the front so people know it is clearly a residential building, which is the Commission's goal. He asked if they will be doing with the door at the west corridor because it looks like it's an egress door and he doesn't know what the intent of it would be. Mr. Brannan said that it would be a means of access to the amenity court and not a secondary entrance. He said they typically get a rendering of what the details of the elevations are going to look like.

Mr. DeMarco thanked the applicant for the efforts they have made and for going to the Design Board for their feedback. He is thankful they took into account the conversation they had last month regarding the perimeter parking and potentially eliminating that because it does a lot to give some buffer between this building and the other buildings. He said that this still feels a little bit forced in his opinion. The east and the south property sides seem pretty soft because there is a less dense use to the south and to the east. However, to the north, there is basically a curb from one parking lot to the next. He asked if it is their intent to detach from the nursing home property to the north. Mr. Brannan said that they feel they are separating themselves from the property to the north with the amenity area. Mr. DeMarco said that he feels like there is more that they can do with adding detail to the curbing area so they can understand exactly what it is and not just the intent of what it is. It still feels to him that it is still going to be pretty open between this property and the northern property. He said that the Design Board minutes say that they want this to be a pedestrian friendly location and destination and he feels like they are not there yet. He appreciates all of the softening they have done close to the street but creating the focal entry point that Mr. Bishop mentioned is hugely important for this building, given the condition it is in and the design of what it was. The question is how do you draw people to the site? At this time he does not know that it feels like they are doing that. He echoes Mr. Bishop's comments regarding consistency across the plans because if they are going to have a public hearing, the people who need to see this have not seen the site plan yet. A brief discussion was had relating to how they can bring relief to the façade because it is very flat. Mr. Fridrich said that in order for this project to check the economic feasibility box as they look at rentable interior space, they need to maintain the exterior as it is and not cut into it.

Mr. Allen requested that the applicant be sure that the project narrative is revised as they make other revisions so it fits in with the consistency piece. He asked questions about the raised curbing and the applicant responded that it one continuous curb all of the way across. The 4' fence on the north side would sit on top of the 6" curb. Mr. Allen added that he is not sure that a see-thru aluminum fence provides the screening that they are probably looking for. He inquired more about the lower level floor plan for clarification, as well as the amenity area.

Mr. Capka asked if there will be any connection of the site to other walking areas around it or other means of tenant exercise. A path on the east side from Center Ridge to the neighborhood behind them was explained. He would like to see more detail about how to connect the amenity areas to the rest of the building. Regarding the ground floor and site plan, he would like more detail on the pergola and seating area.

Mr. McAleer said that he agrees with the comments and thinks that a more residential feel is very important. He likes what they have done with the perimeter but it seems a little disconnected from the building itself and he would like to see more detail on that.

Mr. Bishop said that he would call this a pre-preliminary review and he feels they are not quite at the preliminary stage. They don't have enough to offer a public hearing, because for the public to review this, they would have needed to have the time to review it but it is not complete. He suggested that they table this meeting and they do the public hearing next time. He said that there are a lot of unknowns and those things need to be clearly shown. He said that the last time they met there was a different presenter and there was a push to do this very quickly. He said that the applicant is investing a lot of money and there is a lot of competition for this project coming up. He does not think they are too far away from doing this the right way and urged them not to force the timetable. Mr. Fridrich said that the owner will not give any extensions on this deal beyond the end of August. Their attempt to date has been to see if this plan can be considered acceptable and can be viable. They will do their best to take all of the input and quantify it to the ownership so he can decide if he will proceed or not by the end of the month.

Mr. Bishop said that they have come a long way in the 4 weeks since this was first before them. They made suggestions to the applicant regarding unit mix last time and the applicant ended up being able to make them work. They are about 85 – 90% there and the seller should know that. Discussion was had relating to having a special meeting date and the fact that notices must go out 7 days in advance.

Mr. Bishop moved to table the preliminary review of this project. Mr. DeMarco seconded.

5 Ayes – 0 Nays
TABLED

5. SEAN KENNEDY – 19933 Lake Rd – Pre-Preliminary Review – New Office Building.
Ms. Julie Trott of Vocon is present with Sean Kennedy, the property owner and with Krueger Group, the Construction Managers.