



# Village of Lake in the Hills

600 Harvest Gate, Lake in the Hills, Illinois 60156

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

JANUARY 16, 2023

## Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Roll call was answered by Commissioners Walker, Murphy, Bolton, Dixon, Swanlund, and Chairman Esposito. Absent was Commissioner Siakel.

Also present were Director of Community Development John Svalenka, Trustee Bill Dustin, and Recording Secretary Laura Carpenter.

## Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion to accept the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting minutes from September 12, 2022 was made by Commissioner Dixon and seconded by Commissioner Murphy. On a roll call vote, Commissioners Walker, Murphy, Bolton, Dixon, Swanlund, and Chairman Esposito voted Aye. No Nays. Motion carried 6 -0.

## New Business

None

## Old Business

None

**Item for Discussion**—Conceptual review of conditional uses and zoning variations for the proposed outdoor storage of vehicles as a principal use at 8525 IL Route 31.

Director Svalenka reviewed the Informational Memorandum dated January 16, 2023. It stated as follows:

Kevin Seay, Vice President of Entitlements & Development for Plote Properties, has submitted documents to the Village to allow for the outdoor storage of vehicles on a group of parcels totaling 23.53 acres on the west side of Illinois Route 31, which is approximately one-half mile south of Rakow Road. Mr. Seay has indicated that Plote intends to maintain ownership of the property, but wants to lease out the property to several different tenants for outdoor storage. He anticipates that most of the tenants would store semi-trucks and trailers, but that some tenants might be landscape contractors who store landscaping equipment and bulk landscaping materials.

The subject property is within the M-1 Limited Manufacturing zoning district. In accordance with the Permitted and Conditional Use Chart in Section 11 of the Zoning Code, the “outdoor storage of vehicles as a principal use” is allowed in the M-1 zoning district only with the approval of a conditional use. As noted above, Mr. Seay has indicated that the principal use of the property is proposed to be the outdoor storage of semi-truck and semi-trailer vehicles. This would require approval of a conditional use.



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Per Section 11 of the Zoning Code, the “outdoor storage of materials/vehicles/equipment accessory to a principal use” is allowed in the M-1 zoning district only with the approval of a conditional use. Therefore, an additional conditional use approval would be required to allow the outdoor storage of landscaping equipment and bulk landscaping materials as uses accessory to the principal use of semi-truck/trailer storage.

Further, as noted in the definition of “Planned Development” in Section 3 of the Zoning Code, if land is zoned for manufacturing and is greater than five (5) acres in size it shall be developed as a Planned Development. Therefore, the development of the subject 23.53-acre property in the manufacturing zoning district would require the approval of a conditional use for a planned development.

Mr. Seay has submitted preliminary engineering drawings along with site and landscaping plans to demonstrate the conceptual design. In the existing condition, the site is relatively flat and level, except for an existing depressional area along the southern lot line that was reportedly designed and constructed as a stormwater management basin, and except for an existing wetland area along the northern lot line (directly behind the existing Berquist Marine Center boat sales business). Within the front (eastern) 75 feet of the property along Route 31, the plans show the installation of a landscaped berm to screen the view of the storage from the street. For all of the remaining area of the property, the plans show asphalt grindings to be spread on the ground as the surface materials for the vehicle storage areas. All vehicles would enter and leave the site from one new driveway proposed to be constructed along Route 31. The new driveway would align with the existing U-turn / left-turn lanes on Route 31 such that no additional improvements to the highway are proposed. A row of LED light fixtures on 20-foot-tall poles are shown to be installed along the east and west sides of the storage area to provide necessary illumination. Finally, the plans show an eight-foot-tall fence to be installed to the west of the proposed landscaped berm and to the north of the existing stormwater basin.

Alternative site plans have been submitted for consideration and feedback. One plan shows 100 percent of the gravel/grinding areas to be used to store semi-trucks and semi-trailers, and shows that as many as 360 semi-trucks/trailers could be stored on the property at full capacity. Mr. Seay also submitted a professional traffic study to the Village staff which indicates that as many as 400 vehicles could be stored on the property without requiring any additional roadway improvements along Route 31. A second plan shows 200 semi-truck/trailer storage spaces along the northern half of the property, with an open paved area on the southern half for accessory storage of other materials/vehicles/equipment.

Director Svalenka reiterated from the Informational Memorandum, that per Section 24.6 of the Zoning Code, the Planning and Zoning Commission must consider a list of factors and how they are relevant to the specific conditional uses when making a recommendation to the Village Board. At this time, staff is only presenting an informational item and requesting preliminary feedback from the Planning & Zoning Commission without any vote or recommendation. However, Mr. Seay intends to complete his applications to move the requests forward, and staff anticipates the scheduling of a public hearing in the near future for formal consideration. Therefore, in order to provide guidance to staff, the applicant requested feedback on the following questions:



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- Is the proposed outdoor storage of semi-trucks and semi-trailers necessary or desirable on the subject property?
- Is the proposed accessory storage of landscaping equipment and bulk landscaping materials necessary or desirable on the subject property?
- The Village's comprehensive planning documents call for commercial development on the subject property in the future when municipal water and sewer utilities become available, but the current zoning is industrial and the proposed uses are industrial. Therefore, would the proposed uses be desirable on a permanent basis? If not, would the proposed uses be desirable on a long-term temporary basis?

Kevin Seay, of Plote Properties spoke. He indicated that on the 24-acre parcel that truck parking will need three conditional permits. Director Svalenka reiterated that in Plote's proposal, that if sewer and water become available, Plote would move the berm back to allow for retail buildings. One of the questions was, do you find that truck parking would be desirable at the property? Dixon expressed concern about signage and a possible traffic study, Director Svalenka said that has already been done.

To answer the first question, is the proposed outdoor storage desirable? Chairman Esposito noted that Plote has a vested interest in the community with the past developments of Boulder Ridge and Lake Pointe. Mr. Seay said that Plote has owned this property for about 20 years, and it has mostly sat vacant. For a short period of time it was a flea market site, but has mostly struggled to find a purpose. Plote has marketed the property for 20 years, but there has been little to no interest because it doesn't have sewer and water utilities, and this use could make it a win for Lake in the Hills. Mr. Seay furthermore stated that the property would have a heavily landscaped berm to hide the trailers. Even if a manufacturing company was interested in the property, it does not bring in tax revenue. If the Village can bring in utilities, then it would be more appealing for retail. Commissioner Walker asked if this proposed parking would just be parking for Plote vehicles. Mr. Seay answered that it would not be, and that they would hire a management company to manage the tenants. Commissioner Walker asked if there was planned signage on Route 31. Mr. Seay indicated that Plote has planned for a sign that meets the Village's ordinance. Commissioner Swanland asked if there is an overwhelming demand for this type of parking. Mr. Seay said that they have received interest, Plote has been unable to do anything with the property for 20 years, and this seems like the best use at this time. Commissioner Dixon asked if tanker trucks would be allowed? Mr. Seay answered that the Village could put restrictions on the Lake in the Hills business license of any company that wants to operate on the property. Commissioner Murphy asked if Plote plans to sell trucks at the property. Mr. Seay said there are no plans for that. He also reiterated Plote had a traffic study done, and it was determined that there would not be an impact on traffic if the land was used for the company's proposed purpose. At this point, he envisions having one to three tenants occupying the property.

Commissioner Murphy asked if landscape companies would be allowed to store rock and landscaping materials on the property. Director Svalenka said that limits regarding such storage could put on any conditional uses. Commissioner Esposito confirmed with Mr. Seay that the fence would be gated. Commissioner Esposito said he supports putting a time frame on the conditional use. Mr. Seay said that Plote would be putting in a big investment to this property, so they would not go forward if a short time frame was put on the conditional use. Commissioner Dustin asked Mr. Seay about the projected term of the leasing? Do they want to attract an auto dealership? Mr. Seay answered that an auto dealership



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facility would require sewer and water access. In the past, Plote had sold land to ADESA, an auto auction company, because the land had limited utilities, so it was a good fit for that property's use.

Commissioner Esposito asked if Plote discussed using the land as a recycling facility. Mr. Seay replied that Plote has some recycling facilities, and they don't need another one. Commissioner Dixon asked if Route 31 was a priority for development, and Trustee Dustin spoke that this is the opportunity currently available to the Village of Lake in the Hills. Mr. Seay said there is more demand for truck parking on Route 31 due to the "Amazon effect". Mr. Seay also indicated that he would be open to different companies as tenants at the property and they would not allow dumping. Commissioner Walker stated that he feels this is not the ideal situation for the property, but the land will be used with a berm and Plote has been a good neighbor; therefore, making this a good idea overall. Commissioner Dixon said the landscape berm may stir interest from others to do the same. Mr. Seay said that Plote is open to landscape materials that are not an evasive species.

The discussion turned to the surface area being treated with gravel, ground asphalt or crushed limestone, not to exceed 10 percent of the total site area. The Commission gave some recommendations.

Trustee Dustin asked about trucks running overnight, and the berm deflecting the sound. Director Svalanka indicated that overnight idling is against a State law, and there is no residential neighborhood near the area at this time.

The Commission then addressed the question regarding the storage of materials, equipment, or vehicles within the Village's code of a ten-foot setback. Plote wants to store up to the property line, more towards the back so it looks better in the front. There was discussion as to where the berm can be located. Commissioner Swanland had a concern about the berm proposed location, and Mr. Seay said Plote would be open to adding more landscaping to the berm.

The Commission discussed Plote's potential landscaping variation, and if a solid row of evergreens would be acceptable instead of the trees and shrubs in the zoning code? Commissioner Dixon that he felt that the solid row of evergreens would be acceptable, as they are less distracting and hearty. Mr. Seay showed on his renderings that there was a fence proposed around the property that would make it secure. He indicated that there is electricity at the area, the property would be lighted at night for security purposes, and that they would not be asking for a lighting variance. Commissioner Dixon asked about the installation of future charging stations at the property, due to the interest in electric vehicles. Mr. Seay said Plote would support the installation of a charging station if it was able to do so and requested by an operator.

The consensus among the Commission was that they liked the this use for the property, with some conditions as noted.

**Staff Report**— Director Svalenka reported that the Moretti's sign variation application was approved by the Village Board with some modifications to the sign and its location. The Board approved a shorter sign with no arrow, and the sign will be moved more towards the center of the building. Commissioner Dixon asked about the solar project on Haligus. Director Svalenka indicated that staff has not received a building permit application to date.

**Audience Participation**- None



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**Trustee Liaison**-Trustee Dustin had nothing to report.

## Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Dixon and seconded by Commissioner Walker. On a roll call vote, Commissioners Walker, Murphy, Bolton, Dixon, Swanlund, and Chairman Esposito voted Aye. No Nays. Motion 6-0.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting of the Lake in the Hills Planning & Zoning Commission was adjourned at 8:25 p.m. The next Planning and Zoning Commission meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2023.

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laura Carpenter".

Laura Carpenter  
Recording Secretary