

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning & Zoning Commission

FROM: Grace Martin-Young, Planner I

DATE: April 2, 2024

SUBJECT: **Consideration of one Alternative Standard Associated With Window Requirements for a Religious Facility on Approximately 2.674-Acres, Out of the Eli Pickett Survey, Abstract Number 1014, Zoned Local Commercial (LC) District, Located at 175 Bellaire Boulevard, Approximately 570 Feet West of the Northwest Corner of Bellaire Boulevard and South State Highway 121 Business, as Requested by Marlen Marquez, Wright Group Architects, on Behalf of Chin Evangelical Baptist Church, the Property Owner. (24-02-1-ALTSTD)**

BACKGROUND:

The Chin Evangelical Chapel Baptist Church is an existing use that is expanding through adding a gymnasium and additional parking. Per the Unified Development Code (UDC), Article VI, Chapter 8, a minimum of 40% of the ground floor façade of buildings fronting onto primary arterials must be comprised of windows and doors. The applicant proposes to provide an alternative standard that mimics the appearance of windows as windows within a gymnasium are not appropriate.

ANALYSIS:

To proceed with the engineering site plan and permitting process, the property must comply with all standards specified by the UDC, including section VI.8 referenced above. To meet this standard, the applicant proposes a reduction of percentage of windows to 7% and to use building materials and color to create pattern and rhythm mimicking windows. The applicant proposes using a dark earth toned brick in rectangular shapes along the front, and right-side elevations which are visible to the street.

Requested Alternative Standard:

- a) To replace the required 40% ground floor window requirement with a combination of windows and changes in building materials to a dark toned brick mix to mimic the pattern and rhythm of windows.

The alternative standard being requested aligns with the purposes and intentions of the UDC and they are consistent with the comprehensive plan. Moreover, it maintains harmony with the overall objectives and intent of relevant development regulations and the character of the LC zoning district. Additionally, it adheres to all other applicable standards and requirements specified in the UDC. The modification being sought is kept to the minimum necessary to address the unique condition related to the proposed development. The requested alternative standard

will not have any adverse effects on adjacent properties and uses. Staff finds this request to be consistent with the criteria for approval within Section IV.4.9 of the UDC.

CITY STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Commission recommend approval of Alternative Standard as presented.