

MEMORANDUM

TO: Donna Barron, City Manager
FROM: Richard E. Luedke, Planning Director
DATE: March 2, 2020
SUBJECT: **Consideration of Six Alternative Standards to the Provisions of the IH-35E Corridor Overlay District Associated With a Proposed Industrial Building on a 15.753-Acre Lot, Legally Described as Lewisville Square Addition, Block A, Lot 1A; Located at 280 East Corporate Drive; Zoned Light Industrial (LI) District, as Requested by Dan Lawson of Proterra Properties and Derek Downs of Halff Associates on Behalf of Longpoint Realty, the Potential Property Owner (Case No. 19-11-2-ALTSTD).**

BACKGROUND

This proposed building lies in the IH-35E Corridor Overlay Transition Sub-District, and as such has enhanced requirements to the design requirements. The overlay district does not impact the uses permitted in the base Light Industrial (LI) Zoning District. The City Council may approve Alternative Standards after a recommendation of the Overlay Board if they find that hardship or practical difficulties may result from strict compliance with the Overlay District regulations, provided that such exception shall not have the effect of nullifying the intent and purpose of the regulations. On February 4, 2020, the Overlay District Board voted unanimously (7-0) to recommend approval of Alternative Standards a), b) and d) through f) as presented with the additional open space and screening provided on the concept plan and recommended approval of alternative standard c) with the condition that the cross access easement is provided. The Overlay District Board also approved Alternative Standard request g).

ANALYSIS

Proterra Properties plans to construct an approximately 120,000 square foot office warehouse at the property. Per the IH-35E Corridor Overlay District, the development must comply with all standards in the Transition Sub-District. The standards in the IH-35E Overlay District were designed in anticipation of structures geared toward retail and office uses instead of large industrial developments. The Alternative Standards outlined below are requested to facilitate the development of the proposed office-warehouse. Before preparing engineered drawings, the applicants have submitted this request for Alternative Standards to determine if the project may move forward.

Building and Envelope Standards

The conceptual layout is attached and shows the orientation of the building and proposed parking and access. Staff has reviewed the conceptual layout and, based on the information provided, helped the applicant to identify the Alternative Standard requested below. The applicant plans to meet all other building and envelope standards.

Requested Alternative Standards:

- a) to allow the short edge of the building to be placed parallel to the adjacent street. Section 17.5-5 (b)(2) requires the long edge of the building to be placed parallel to the adjacent street. An Alternative Standard is requested to allow the narrow end of the building to run along the street. This is based on the building dimensions and shape of the lot. Staff has no objection to this request.
- b) to allow a maximum block perimeter over 2,400 feet. Section 17.5-5 (b)(3) requires the maximum block perimeter shall be 2,400 feet. This is requested based on the current street layout and adjacent creek. Staff has no objection to this request.
- c) to not provide cross access pavement. Section 17.5-5 (b)(5)b requires that cross or joint access easements shall be provided. There is no need for cross access to the creek on the southwest side of the property and the property to the northeast is already developed and has not provided cross access to this lot. However, in order to facilitate more cohesive redevelopment, staff recommends that a cross access easement be recorded and referenced on the required engineering site plan. We would not require the applicant to build the cross access but to provide the easement in anticipation of future redevelopment of adjacent properties.
- d) to allow reduced driveway spacing of 70 feet in lieu of the required 300 feet. Section 17.5-5 (b)(5) c.1 which states that driveway openings be a minimum of 300' apart. The applicant is requesting an Alternative Standard for the northeastern driveway as it is only approximately 70 feet away from the adjacent property owner's driveway. For adequate circulation for the trucks and fire access, two points of access are needed. The two points on-site are more than 300' feet apart and will provide deceleration lanes per City standards. However, the northeastern drive is too close to the off-site drive on the adjacent property. Staff has no objection to this request.
- e) to allow a reduction of off-street parking requirements by providing one space per 2,000 square feet for the warehouse portion of the building. Section 17.5-5 (b)(7) requires onsite parking shall be provided in a one space per 250 gross square feet of floor area. The applicant is requesting an alternative standard to park the office portion at 1 space per 250 but park the warehouse portion at 1 space per 2,000 square feet. This reflects the parking ratios for warehouses outside of the I-35E Overlay. The parking ratios established in the I-35E Overlay were adopted at a blended ratio anticipating mostly office, retail and restaurant developments. The goal was to reduce the parking standard and make reuse of the same site with a different use easier. No parking ratios were established for industrial uses. Staff is currently drafting revisions to the I-35E overlay to address proposed developments with industrial and office/warehouse buildings. Staff has no objection to this request.

Architectural Standards

- f) to allow 20% brick or stone on the front and rear elevations in lieu of the required 80% of each exterior wall to be brick or stone. Section 17.5-5 (c)(3) a, which requires 80% of each

exterior wall to be comprised of brick or stone. The applicant is requesting an Alternative Standard to reduce the percent of masonry to twenty percent for the front and rear façade and zero percent for the side facades. An 80 percent brick or stone office-warehouse of this size is highly unusual. Properties with tilt wall construction over 100,000 square-feet outside the IH-35E Corridor Overlay District are allowed a reduced landscape buffer of 15 feet in lieu of 30 feet if a minimum of 10% brick or stone on the street facing elevation is provided. All of the industrial tilt wall structures constructed in the City over the past 20 years have provided a minimum of 10% brick or stone on their exterior elevations. Staff is currently drafting amendments to the IH-35E Corridor Overlay District to allow slightly higher percentages of brick or stone on tilt wall buildings relative to the brick or stone percentages required for reduced landscape buffers outside of the overlay to produce a high-quality aesthetic for future tilt wall buildings within the overlay. The applicant is proposing a tilt wall structure with thin sliced stone on the most visible elevations. The previous brick veneer gateway standards required only ten percent masonry on the street facing elevation when the tilt-wall construction type was used with a 15-foot landscape buffer. The applicant is proposing twenty percent masonry on the street facing elevations and providing landscaping as required by the I-35E Overlay. Staff has no objection to this request.

- g) to allow 4 colors in lieu of the maximum of 3 colors per elevation. Section 17.5-5 (c)(3)b which requires no more than 3 colors per elevation. An Alternative Standard is requested to allow 4 colors. All of the proposed colors are grey neutral colors as shown on the elevations and rendering. Staff has no objection to this request. This Alternative Standard request was approved by the Overlay Board on February 4, 2020.

Landscape Standards and Open Space

The applicant plans to meet all landscaping requirements of the overlay district. This may require some minor revisions to the concept plan, but no Alternative Standards related to landscaping are being requested at this time.

The applicant is also complying with open space standards. Section 17.5-5 (d)(3) requires 5 percent open space for the development, or 0.787 acres. This could be private or public open space. More than 6 acres of the property is within the floodway or 100-year floodplain along Timber Creek. The applicant has agreed to dedicate this land to the City as drainage and trail right-of-way and construct the hike and bike trail in this area along Timber Creek. In addition, the applicant is willing to dedicate an approximately 0.75-acre area that is outside of the floodplain and immediately adjacent to E. Corporate Drive to the City for a future park or trailhead. The master trail plan contains a public trail along Timber Creek. This land would provide a valuable access point to that trail along E. Corporate Drive. This is also immediately across Corporate Drive from the “triangle” area identified as park deficient through the 10-Minute Walk to a Park program and studied by a team of experts from the Urban Land Institute in March 2019. Many residents of the area would be able to walk to this open space. It is not intended that the applicant provide any developments in the dedicated park area. The Parks and Recreation department will determine the best use of the space during the engineering and design of the Timber Creek trail.

Street and Streetscape Standards

The applicant plans to meet all streetscaping requirements of the overlay district. No Alternative Standards related to streetscaping are being requested at this time.

Screening

Section 17.7-5 (f) addresses screening of loading areas and outside storage. The office/warehouse has 27 truck bays for loading. These will be screened from the street in compliance with the I-35E Overlay by having the office portion of the building directly between Corporate Drive and the truck bays. In addition, the applicant has agreed to landscape screening to block the truck bays from view along the trail. This landscape screening shall consist of canopy trees planted every 40 feet on center and an evergreen shrub row that will be 3-foot-tall at time of planting and grow to at least 6 foot tall. The future outside storage area will need to be screened per the I-35E Overlay standard at the time of construction.

If these Alternative Standards are approved, they will apply only to the proposed concept plan and allow the applicant to move forward with the proposed development.

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council approve Alternative Standards a), b) and d) through f) as presented with the additional open space and screening provided on the concept plan and approve alternative standard c) with the condition that the cross access easement is provided.