

MEMORANDUM

TO: Claire Powell, City Manager

FROM: Richard E. Luedke, AICP, Planning Director

DATE: May 6, 2024

SUBJECT: **Consideration of an Alternative Standard Associated With Window Requirements for a Religious Facility on Lot 1, Block A, Chin Evangelical Baptist Church Addition, Containing 2.674 Acres, Located on the North Side of Bellaire Boulevard Approximately 570 Feet West of South State Highway 121 Business, at 175 Bellaire Boulevard, Zoned Local Commercial (LC) District, 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 a religious facility expanding by adding a gymnasium and additional parking. Per the Unified Development Code (UDC), Article VI, Chapter 8, IH-35E Corridor Overlay District, a minimum of 40% of the ground floor facade 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. The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended unanimous approval (7-0) on April 2, 2024.

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 the percentage of windows to 7% and to use building materials and colors to create a pattern and rhythm imitating 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 provide a combination of windows and changes in building materials with a dark-toned brick mix to mimic the pattern and rhythm of windows in lieu of the required 40% ground floor window requirement.

The alternative standard being requested aligns with the purposes and intentions of the UDC and is consistent with the comprehensive plan. Moreover, the design maintains harmony with the overall objectives and intent of relevant development regulations and the character of the LC zoning district. Additionally, the alternative standard 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:

That the City Council approve the alternative standard as set forth in the caption above.