

**PLAN COMMISSION
VILLAGE OF DEERFIELD
Minutes**

The Plan Commission of the Village of Deerfield called to order a meeting at 7:30 P.M. on September 14, 2023 at Deerfield Village Hall.

Present were: Al Bromberg, Chair
Blake Schulman
Jennifer Goldstone
Lisa Crist
Bill Keefe
Kenneth Stolman
Sara Lubezny

Also present: Jeff Ryckaert, Principal Planner
Daniel Nakahara, Planner II

Public Comment on a Non-Agenda Item

There were no comments from the public on a non-agenda item.

PUBLIC HEARING

1) Public Hearing on the Request for Approval of a Special Use to Permit the Establishment of a Floor and Decor Store Over 30,000 Square Feet in Area in the Deerbrook Shopping Center Planned Unit Development (former Bed Bath & Beyond, Men's Warehouse and Carters Tenant Spaces) with an Address of 96, 114 and 118 S. Waukegan Road

Chair Bromberg asked for proof of publication and certified mailing. Mr. Ryckaert reported that the legal notice was published in the Deerfield Review on August 17, 2023 and certified mailing receipts were provided by the petitioner.

Chairman Bromberg swore in all who plan to testify before the Commission.

Kimberly Tomlinson from CenterPoint Integrated Solutions addressed the Commission on behalf of their client Floor and Decor. She stated that she is joined by Julie Starzynski from Floor and Decor and they will provide an overview of the project and the operations of the store.

Julie Starzynski, Director of Construction and Design at Floor and Decor which was started in Atlanta, Georgia in 2000 and they now have about 204 stores in 34 metro markets around the United States. They are the leading specialty retailer for hard surface flooring, tile, wood and stone. They source directly from manufacturers and quarries worldwide. They provide free design services and stores have a design gallery with examples of how to use the tile, wood and stone that are in stores. Each location is normally stocked with about one million square feet of flooring. Floor and Decor hires locally for staff with the exception of the Chief Executive Merchant which is the store manager. They typically promote within the company for this role. The average ticket price for a sale is about \$500 a customer. Customers can purchase a full package for their renovation project. For example, a bathroom renovation would include

vanities, mirrors, lighting, grout, and tile. They offer one stop shopping for most renovation needs.

Ms. Tomlinson showed an aerial site plan. Floor and Decor is looking to take over the vacant former Bed, Bath and Beyond, Carter's and Men's Warehouse spaces and combine them into one 60,000 square foot retail space. Ms. Tomlinson showed the current exterior elevations of the site as well as renderings of the new space. They are proposing a more modern updated look and asking for a Special Use to combine all three spaces into one over 30,000 square foot space which requires a Special Use. Other tenant spaces in the center that are over 30,000 square feet include Jewel, Steinmart and Hobby Lobby as well as Art Van. They are looking to renovate and do a modern face lift on the elevations. Ms. Tomlinson showed renderings of the plans with views from the side as well as the front customer pickup area and entrance. She stated that the proposed customer pickup area has safety measures detailed in the packet to address some initial concerns from the Appearance Review Commission (ARC) meeting. They added additional "Caution watch for vehicles" signs as well as an audio and light device to inform pedestrians they are walking across the customer pickup area.

Chair Bromberg asked if it is normal to have the customer pick-up area in the front of the store or if it usually in the back. Ms. Starzynski replied it is typically in the front of the store. It provides for an easier transition for how you walk through the space by putting customer pickup at the front of the building. Additionally, the loading docks must be adjacent to the customer pickup so that a forklift is not on the sales floor - they are adjacent with loading in back and the customer pickup directly in front of it. She stated that 80 to 85 percent of their stores have customer pickup in the front of the building. Chair Bromberg asked what percentage of customers will use the customer pickup. Ms. Starzynski replied that it is used for large orders, which is between 50 and 60 percent of customers. It is usually a pallet placed into a pickup truck or van. She added that weekends are busier and see about 30 to 40 percent of tickets during the day, which is around 10 to 15 customer pickups a day. Customer pickup is open the same hours as the store which is Monday through Friday 7 A.M. to 8 P.M., Saturdays 8 A.M. to 7 P.M. and Sundays 10 A.M. to 6 P.M. Most pickups are first thing in the morning, and between 4 and 5 P.M. as it is mostly contractors, so they are normally early before a job or on the way home from a job for the next day's job. Chair Bromberg commented that early in the morning nothing else in the mall is open except Jewel which is not next to this space.

Commissioner Lubezny asked if other locations are typically in a mall like this. Ms. Starzynski replied that it is a mix. They do have some standalone buildings. But they are finding that they tend to be in shopping centers like this because these are available spaces and they help with vacant spaces from big box tenants that have gone out of business. She estimates that around 60 percent are in shopping centers like this. Commissioner Lubezny asked if they have implemented pedestrian crossing safety measures before. Ms. Starzynski replied yes, but maybe not to this extent with the flashing light, but they have done striping and other things based on what a municipality asks for.

Commissioner Keefe confirmed that they will have an employee at customer pick-up that will initiate or activate the warning light. Ms. Starzynski replied that yes, they will have a spotter with every forklift that will make sure it is clear for them to load a vehicle. When the vehicle is entering and leaving, either someone will activate the warning light or it will be motion sensed so that once a vehicle gets there, it will activate it.

Commissioner Schulman confirmed that loading is in back even though customer pick-up is in front. Ms. Starzynski replied that loading is in back directly behind where customer pick-up is. They are adjacent in the front and back to keep forklift traffic in the warehouse directly connected, and not in the customer area. Commissioner Schulman asked if they can add more striping where cars will pull in. She replied that yes, they can add more if needed. She stated that typically they have one or two parking spots clearly marked with where to stop for navigating the forklift to maneuver, and they could add more striping outside that area to help with pedestrians, as well.

Commissioner Schulman asked where the closest stop sign is. Brad Hickey with Kimley Horn stated that he is the Civil Engineer on the project. He replied that in the civil site plan they proposed striping on the front sidewalk in front of the bay, diagonal hatches and rectangular crosswalk striping. For stop signs, there is one located close to the front entrance, but not near the customer pickup bay. There are yield signs there instead but they are open to suggestions if the Village would like to see stop signs added. He added that traffic does not go through the pick-up area. Chair Bromberg commented that many people ignore the stop signs in this center and they are not enforceable. Mr. Hickey stated that they typically place a stop sign at a store front entrance where people are walking in and out from the parking lot.

Commissioner Goldstone asked if The Dump or other stores in the area have loading and customer pickup in the back. She suggested using a different material in rebuilding the new sidewalk to differentiate that it is not a place for pedestrians. Commissioner Goldstone commented that it looks like all sidewalk, even though it will be for cars. Ms. Starzynski replied that yes, they can look at changing the material where pedestrians will be, to differentiate it to help alert them that there could be cars passing in front of them. Commissioner Goldstone asked what most contractors drive, as they will be the primary users of the customer pickup area. Ms. Starzynski replied that most are in pickup trucks or cargo vans, there are no semis or larger trucks. Delivery trucks bringing products will always go to the rear loading dock. Nothing can be dropped at the front customer pick-up. Commissioner Goldstone clarified the process that a do-it-yourself customer would walk in, pick out their purchases, then pull their car up to customer pickup. Ms. Starzynski replied yes, or if it's a small enough purchase, customers can pull it out on a flatbed cart. She emphasized that most users of the customer pickup area are contractors.

Commissioner Crist asked if most of the pickups back in or drive forward in. Ms. Starzynski replied that all must back in for the forklift to load the vehicle. Commissioner Goldstone confirmed that mirrors will be installed for blind spots.

Commissioner Keefe clarified that not anyone can just randomly pull in the customer pickup area. You would have to text or contact the store first. Ms. Starzynski stated that there is a place to wait, and customers will pull in when they are told to by the store. They have a system where customers inform the store they are there and they wait until they are told to back into the customer pickup area.

Chair Bromberg asked how many employees are at the store at a time. Ms. Starzynski replied that there are about 20 to 25 employees at a time and possibly 25 to 30 during the busy season.

Chair Bromberg asked about exceptions needed for signage and asked them to review the location and size of signs that will need exceptions. Ms. Starzynski stated that most directional signage is being revised to be to code (2 square feet or less and non-illuminated). They are also

removing directional signs with arrows in the rear because they are not needed. They are asking for an exception for the building sign to be above the roof deck, but it is within the size requirement. Chair Bromberg asked if the ARC was ok with placement of the sign. Mr. Ryckaert replied yes, and added that they also need an exception for the customer pickup wall sign over the CPU bays as it is over two square feet. Also, the pylon sign will be all one color per the request of the ARC and will meet the sign criteria.

Ms. Tomlinson concluded their presentation and thanked the Commission. Chair Bromberg asked for comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Keefe stated that for context, compare this to the customer pickup at Home Depot where there is an awning and there are pedestrians too. He commented that this plan looks safe and more controlled. Chair Bromberg agreed.

Commissioner Stolman commented that he hopes it goes well and he is happy that their business wants to use vacant sites and beautify and develop the spaces.

There were no comments from the public on this matter.

Chair Bromberg stated that the Plan Commission has concluded public testimony and will deliberate their recommendation on this matter. He stated that this portion of the meeting is open to the public, but no new testimony will be taken unless requested by the Commission. He stated that the Plan Commission is a recommending body, a written recommendation will be forwarded to the Village Board of Trustees for final action on this matter.

Commissioner Lubezny confirmed that there is another ARC meeting to finalize signage.

Commissioner Goldstone stated that she has some concerns with the pickup area being in the front of the mall and she wished there was a way to have it in the back. Chair Bromberg commented that it is unusual for this mall, but that with the number of pickups, the time of day, and measures they are putting in with lighting and crosshatching alleviates his concern. Commissioner Goldstone stated that the evening time is busier in that mall and she has some reservations.

Commissioner Crist agreed and has hesitation regarding backing in to these spots with pedestrians there. But she also agrees that they have taken measures to alleviate potential problems and she appreciates that there will be an employee there spotting. She stated that she used to walk from Jewel to this space, but now there may not be as many pedestrians doing this. Chair Bromberg agreed that there are not many pedestrians now. Commissioner Crist suggested that maybe swing-arms could be extended into the sidewalk as something to physically stop people. She reiterated that she is concerned about safety, although she does want this business in Deerfield.

Commissioner Stolman commented that he does not have reservations as a lot of the traffic for Jewel would be entering and exiting at the north access drive and not driving by the space. And with 10 to 15 pickups a day mostly in the morning, he does not see it as a concern.

Commissioner Keefe thinks the combination of the design of the customer pickup combined with the employee present, and also the system to have customers wait and then get asked to back in at the right time adequately covers the interference between pedestrians and vehicles.

Chair Bromberg confirmed they met with ARC once and will go back one more time to review things. Mr. Ryckaert said they will need another meeting with the ARC to wrap things up.

Commissioner Keefe moved, seconded by Commissioner Stolman, to approve the request for Special Use to permit the establishment of a Floor and Decor store over 30,000 square feet in area in the Deerbrook Shopping Center Planned Unit Development (former Bed Bath & Beyond, Men's Warehouse and Carters tenant spaces) with an address of 96, 114 and 118 S. Waukegan Road with the exceptions needed for signage. The motion passed with the following vote.

Ayes: Crist, Stolman, Lubezny, Keefe, Goldstone, Schulman, Bromberg (7)
Nays: None (0)

Mr. Ryckaert reported that this matter will go before the Village Board on October 16, 2023.

DOCUMENT APPROVAL

1. August 24, 2023 Plan Commission Minutes

Commissioner Crist provided spelling corrections to the minutes. Commissioner Goldstone moved, seconded by Commissioner Lubezny to approve the minutes with the corrections provided. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Items from the Staff

Mr. Ryckaert reported on upcoming agenda items. The next meeting will be on September 28, 2023.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Commissioner Goldstone moved, seconded by Commissioner Schulman to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 P.M. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laura Boll