



**MINUTES OF THE
Special Meeting of the
Edina Transportation Commission**
Monday, March 19, 2007
Edina City Hall
4801 West 50th Street
Mayor's Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Warren Plante, Marie Thorpe, Jean White, Steve Brown, Hilah Almog

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Les Wanninger, Geof Workinger, Marc Usem

STAFF PRESENT:

Jack Sullivan, Sharon Allison

This special meeting of the ETC, to review the traffic study for 7380 France Avenue, was called to order by co-chair Thorpe.

Sullivan explained that developers are proposing to replace a two story office building with a three story office building at 7380 France Avenue. He said staff and the City's consultant, Chuck Rickart of WSB, received and reviewed the traffic data management and original traffic counts. He said the Planning Commission reviewed the redevelopment plans and voted favorably for the project with the condition that the ETC review the traffic study before final approval.

Rickart explained that the study looked at existing and future traffic impacts and the study shows that future impacts will be minimal. His only concern was with the right-in/right-out only driveway and drivers weaving across two lanes to make a U-turn at Parklawn Avenue. He asked Jim Benshoof with Wenck Associates, Inc, the developer's traffic consultant, to look at what impact this will have once the site is fully developed. Rickart said the only mitigation plan to preventing the U-turns would be a "no crossing" sign during peak hours. He said this will not stop all drivers but it will restrict some movements.

Benshoof explained that the redevelopment is replacing an existing building with a slightly bigger one that will have similar traffic patterns. He said the building is currently vacant and therefore, they could not do existing traffic counts; however, existing is estimated to be 31 trips and the larger building is expected to create 55 trips. He stated that his review of the right-in/right-out only driveway should not pose a problem because during peak hours, they expect only approximately 12 vehicles to make a U-turn. He said there are bus stops and sidewalk in the area and management has committed to providing transit information to the occupants.

Concerns and questions raised by commissioners are as follows:

- With such a short distance coming out of the site, will this be a safety concern with drivers making U-turns? Rickart said this is what he referred to as the weave.
- Removing the deceleration lane to provide more green space and boulevard to make the area more pedestrian friendly was suggested. Rickart said they would have to look at how

traffic would be impacted on France. Sullivan said they would probably look at the entire corridor instead of an individual site.

- Has Hennepin County looked at the plans? Rickart said access control is the primary concern for the County and in this case they are not changing the access point. He said further that this is a small project that will have very little impact on France Avenue and when they are working on projects that will have significant impacts to county roads they are usually involved; one such project is the roundabouts on W. 70th Street. Sullivan said they are not typically notified on every project; however, they could include them in the impact analysis statement that is being revised.
- With 69th and York they did “intersection management” and did not look at the impacts to the wider area. How will this project affect the wider area and, are there applications in process that might have further impacts on the area? Brown said they do have Cypress Equities in the works; however, this redevelopment was a simple discussion for the Planning Commission because the developers made an effort to conceal the access and it is not going to have a major impact on traffic and furthermore, the building could become a medical building which would reduce the number of trips generated. Rickart said they are studying 84 intersections in the southwest area as part of the synchro-model plan and when this is completed, developers will be told which intersections they must include in their traffic study. This tool, he said, will help them see the impacts on the general area better than they can now.

Staff recommendation is as follow:

Review the attached memos dated February 2 and March 8 from Jim Benshoof regarding the development plan and if so desired by the Transportation Commission, adopts a motion recommending that traffic generated from the proposed submittal of 7380 France Office Building (Development) does not adversely affect the adjacent transportation system.

Info/Background:

Staff received the proposal for re-development of an existing 2 story 25,000 square foot office building located along the west side of France Avenue north of Parklawn Avenue. The existing building would be torn down in order to construct a new 3 story 44,000 square foot office building in approximately the same location.

Wenck Associates, Inc. (formerly Benshoof and Associates) has submitted a traffic impact study and traffic demand management plan. Staff requested that an analysis of the intersection of France Avenue and Parklawn Avenue be performed. Wenck Associates, Inc. have included a memo, dated March 8th, addressing this intersection. Staff also contracted with WSB and Associates, Inc. to review the memorandums.

The following is an excerpt from the May 19, 2005 Transportation Finding of Fact requirement for Traffic Studies (comments for this development are indicated in bold):

The Transportation Commission shall consider the following four effects in the evaluation of traffic studies that are warranted by certain zoning, land-use, conditional use permits and final development plan applications prior to the application being submitted to the Planning Commission and Council for consideration:

- i) Does the development significantly affect the operation and congestion of the adjacent roadways or intersections and/or result in a traffic hazard?*

According to the Traffic Impact Study, no adverse impact to surrounding roadways or intersections shall occur from this Development.

ii) Does the development significantly affect pedestrian safety?

The Traffic Demand Impact Management Plan addressed the pedestrian facilities in the area and since the location of existing sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalk at signalized intersections are not to be altered, no adverse impacts shall occur from this Development.

iii) Does the development provide opportunities for enhanced transit usage, vanpooling or car-pooling?

A Travel Demand Management plan was submitted with the Development's application. The Development is willing to promote transit use by on-site sales of transit passes, flexible work hours for employees, and having a staff person work with the I-494 Corridor Commission.

iv) Does the development provide feasible opportunities to address an existing traffic issue or safety problem?

The proposed development does not address existing traffic issues along France Avenue. Since no significant traffic increases are calculated from the Development no improvements are required.

The proposed use(s) of the site are allowed in the zoning for this area. From a Traffic Engineer perspective, and based on the Traffic Impact Study, this project will not adversely affect France Avenue or the intersection of France Avenue and Parklawn Avenue.

Plante motioned to approve the traffic study as recommended by the consultant and staff. Motion was seconded by Brown. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned.