

**CITY OF ROCHELLE
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
REPORT OF FINDINGS**

Case No.: 08-15
Applicant: Keith Scott
Address: 1310 N 7th St., Rochelle, Illinois 61068

Narrative:

The applicant owns approximately 0.86 acres at the address above which is zoned B-2 Commercial Highway. Currently, it is improved with a former restaurant (Pizza Hut) which has since been redeveloped at another location. The property fronts Illinois Route 251 North on the east side and North 8th St on the west side. The petitioner is seeking a special use for outdoor storage.

The petitioner plans on using the former restaurant as a similar use, and the additional parking area not required for the restaurant, to be used in conjunction with his towing business. The area will contain perimeter fencing, pervious paving, and the storage of vehicles consistent with a towing business. The property is currently zoned B-2, Highway Commercial, and "Storage, Outdoor" is a permitted use in this zoning district if a special use permit is issued.

After a duly noticed public hearing, the City of Rochelle Planning & Zoning Commission will consider all the relevant evidence presented at said hearing on November 2, 2015.

Staff recommends perimeter screening for outdoor storage that meets the requirement for outdoor storage found in Section 110-347. Such storage shall be effectively screened from adjacent public streets by a solid fence, compact hedge or similar opaque landscaped element. Such screening shall be placed along property lines or, in the case of screening, along a street, at least 15 feet from the street right of way or adjacent property line. A louvered fence shall be considered solid if it blocks direct vision. The petitioner is proposing a solid wood fence 6 feet tall on the East and West of the property facing a street, running north and south, and a louvered chain link fence on the side lot running East and West. The petitioner is proposing prairie grass in the green space on the south and north property line.

Staff is asking for a 20 foot Utility Easement on the North and South Property lines, 20 feet wide running from the East property line, to the West.

Staff is asking that the vehicles being stored will be on the lot no longer than 30 days, at such time the vehicle will be removed, to allow for another vehicle.

Staff has some concerns that using a portion of the property to store operating and non-operating vehicles would be detrimental to surrounding property values or will impede the normal development of surrounding properties. On the one hand, the storage of operating and non-operating vehicles is more suited to the City's industrial districts. In particular, the City's zoning code allows for auto wrecking in the I-2 and I-3 areas, and the proposed use at least partially fits the definition of Auto Wrecking. On the other hand, the property is surrounded by car lots, both new and used, as well as car servicing stations, and indoor storage. In addition, the definition of Auto Wrecking seems to suggest that the only use is for non-operating vehicles, and would include allowing the storage of vehicle parts, tires, etc.

Findings:

The City of Rochelle Planning and Zoning Commission finds:

1. The proposed use for outdoor storage requires a special use recommended by the planning and zoning commission to the city council for approval found in Section 110-291 of the Rochelle Municipal Code under "Storage, Outdoor".
2. The proposed use of the property for a restaurant conforms to Section 110-291 "District Use Classification" and the current comprehensive plan.
3. The Planning and Zoning Commission finds the use to be detrimental or dangerous to public health. Despite the lot being secured, the potential for rodent infestation exists in this type of storage.
4. The Planning and Zoning Commission finds that the use may impair property value in the neighborhood. The storage of wrecked vehicles is better suited in the Industrial Districts which is allowed under Section 110- 291 of the Municipal Code.
5. The Planning and Zoning Commission finds that the surrounding properties have been developed, and this use will not impede on the normal development and improvement of the surrounding properties for uses found in the district. This parcel in Rochelle currently is surrounded by indoor storage, outdoor storage, new and used car sales, auto service, and auto repair.
6. The Planning and Zoning Commission finds the use will not impair light and air to adjacent property; nor will it congest public streets, increase the risk of fire; or substantially diminish property values within the vicinity. However, the Commission finds that it may endanger the public health due to increased risk of rodent infestation.

Recommendations:

Based on the findings above, the Planning and Zoning Commission hereby recommends to the Rochelle City Council that:

1. The Petitioner be denied a special use permit for the use of "Storage, Outdoor" for the portion of the Property, the legal description of which is attached.

Passed by the Planning & Zoning Commission: November 2, 2015

Vote:

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Abstain:

Chairman