

June 20, 2017

Mr. Thomas Hovel
Planning Director
5520 Lacy Rd.
Fitchburg, WI 53711

Re: @Edge Live/Work Pre-Application Conference Submittal

Introduction

Torque Companies is submitting this letter to start the rezoning of three parcels of land generally located south of the intersection of County Highway MM and McCoy Road, between Highway 14 (PIN 060901399400, 060901395404, and 060901381704) and County Highway MM from Rural Development (R-D) to Planned Development District (PDD).

The Developer

Torque Focused Real Estate is unwaveringly committed to best practices in developing sustainable communities and infusing excitement into design and function.

Randall P. Alexander, Chief Creative Officer of Torque Focused Real Estate, was formerly president and CEO of The Alexander Company (Alexandercompany.com); a company which he founded in 1982. While at The Alexander Company, he was the visionary as the company undertook over 250 redevelopment projects throughout the Midwest and along the Eastern seaboard. Alexander is nationally recognized for his achievements in real estate development, and remains actively involved in the communities in which he lives and works.

"Mr. Alexander is unquestionably on par with the most hands on, diligent, and careful property managers we have ever worked with in our 30 years of real estate lending experience."

- Keith Volgman President, NorthPoint Capital

Alexander now brings his 34 years of development experience to Torque Companies. Continuing with his push for excellence in environmentally conscious development, Alexander sees the potential and seeks creative solutions on those development projects where few other developers would dare to tread.

From inception to project completion, Torque Focused Real Estate furthers the reach of Alexander's vision and continues the hammering out of his demonstrated commitment to creating environmentally forward, sustainability-minded, livable, beautiful communities.

The Site

The project is comprised of roughly 33 acres of land situated at 2991 County Highway MM, immediately southwest of E Clayton Road, the site is highly visible to automobile and bike commuters traveling on Highways MM and 14. Having been excavated approximately 30 years ago for the construction of US Highway 14, and used as a construction dump since, the land is currently

filled with a combination of soil, stone, brick, blacktop, concrete, and a limited amount of organic material such as tree trunks and shavings. A significant amount of concrete is laced with steel rebar and plastic duct work. In addition to being a visual blemish, the site is a hazard for anyone trying to traverse the steep grades of exposed concrete slabs, steel, and rusted metal.

Remediation of the site will involve the removal (approximately 213,000 cubic meters) of unstable materials from all building footprint areas, road/drive areas, and utility trench areas. The concrete, blacktop, and other masonry materials would be crushed and re-utilized for roads, utility trenches, and building footprints once the steel and plastic materials are separated. Additional new, engineered fill would also be imported for the construction of roads, utility trenches, and building footprints. A geo-synthetic grid will be used to reinforce the new engineered fill.

The project site is marked by its significant topography as you move across the site from the south to the north. Both the northern and western edges of the site are unbuildable, with very steep slopes. These slopes are comprised of concrete slabs, some the size of cars, that retain the eighteen to twenty-five meters of fill on the balance of the site. Interspersed between the concrete and rubble are invasive trees and plants. Remediation of these areas will require the removal of these trees. The shavings from these trees will be used in the redeveloped landscape and gardens. After the removal of steel and plastics, the concrete will be broken into smaller aggregates. Recycling of these materials, along with construction waste, will be implemented, along with appropriate measures for erosion control. New soils will be placed on these slopes and planted with native species that are non-invasive and drought resistant. Terracing will create walking paths, a small amphitheater, and gardens for the site's future occupants.

Stormwater will be retained on-site by two settlement basins and a water catchment system that will provide water for the community gardens, community dog wash, and a community car wash station.

The Project

The project will mirror Fitchburg's tradition of sustainability; recycling, re-using, and reducing waste. It will be a national model for the redevelopment in an environmentally conscious and vibrant community. Sustainability practices include a variety of live/work options, efficient building and site design, passive and active solar, water catchment, community gardens and recreation venues. The development will create a modern urban live/work environment where design, art, agriculture, community, and commerce are in balance with nature.

Rather than pursuing the path most often followed, suburban sprawl; the development strives to maximize the amount of buildable area creating a true urban effect. This practice will typically produce ten times the tax revenue and jobs per acre than would occur in a suburban sprawl setting.ⁱ

ⁱ ULI Geo Design Summit 2015



The built environment will incorporate a design aesthetic of artistic eccentric styles that will meet the expectations that the market is seeking while providing a collaborative community. The design will focus on creating and cultivating the artistic class and entrepreneurial spirit to create a culturally rich and creative space. The project plan incorporates a variety of housing types ranging from boutique studios to live/work townhomes, lofts, row houses, and duplex family homes. A total of 450 units are estimated to be constructed.

The commercial component will consist of 30 live/work units and five commercial pavilions creating 60,000 square-feet of tech-focused shared work spaces for start-up economy, creatives, and small business.

The development will support over 300 jobs from the small business and start-ups that will be attracted to the site. This is accomplished by creating a focused and friendly landscape for business through a variety of conveniences and amenities.

The cumulative effect of putting a large emphasis on supporting small business in the community is the overall health that a city will enjoy. Job creation and increased revenue are two large factors that are indicative of small businesses: *“New and young companies are the primary source of job creation in the American economy. These firms also contribute to economic dynamism by injecting competition into markets and spurring innovation.”*ⁱⁱ

The shared office, or Makerspace, will provide the tools and space in an environment where people gather to share resources and knowledge, work on projects, network, and socialize. “Hot Desking,” an emerging trend in the business market for young entrepreneurs will allow for high speed internet connectivity, wireless printing and flat screen monitors linked with computers, tablets, whiteboards, and smart phones.

The project’s diverse offering of styles, sizes, and price points will attract and sustain Fitchburg’s emerging businesses and creative class of residents. This will strengthen the social, environmental, and economic landscape of the community.

Supportive services and value-added amenities that would be found in the development, include, but are not limited to:

- Preferred Purchasing Rights with selected vendors and partners
- E/C Charging Stations
- Community Car Program
- Lounge/Library

ⁱⁱ Kauffman Foundation’s Entrepreneurship Policy Digest



- Fitness Center
- Indoor Theater
- Concierge Service
- Pool/Spa
- Commercial Kitchen Space/Community Dining
- Ultra-Highspeed Internet
- Community Engagement App
- Event Space
- Business/Print Center
- Conference Rooms
- Shared Office Space
- Post Office/Package Center
- Coffee Bar
- Communal Gardens
- Garden Harvest Exchange
- Bike Path Access with Bicycle Service Stations
- Outdoor Amphitheater
- Outdoor Pavilions and Kitchens
- Pet Walking Paths
- Pet and Car Washing Stations
- Fire Pits

Rational for Changing the Zoning District

Torque Companies is pursuing PDD zoning for the project site as it will permit the highest and best use of the site. Currently, the project site is zoned Rural Development (R-D), which is not compatible with the future land use recommendation of Industrial-Commercial (I-C), nor the proposed change in land use category from I-C to Mixed Use (M-U). The project site is appropriate for rezoning.

Significant study and consideration was given to pursuing either SmartCode zoning or a conventional residential zoning designation. In both cases, the site constraints, including topography, and the size and shape of the project site, gave rise to the need for a higher level of flexibility in development standards than was able to be accomplished through a conventional residential zoning district or SmartCode. Both the SmartCode and R-H zoning district set standards for lot sizes, a minimum of 40 acres for SmartCode and a maximum of 90,000 square-feet for Residential-High Density. The project site, at roughly 33 acres does not meet either of these requirements.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The project site is located within the Northeast Neighborhood (612 acres), which is identified as an area generally bounded by Nine Springs Creek on the north, US Highway 14 on the west, Town of Dunn on



the east and Swan Creek to the south. The Fitchburg Comprehensive Plan identifies the Northeast Neighborhood as an area of future growth.

While the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map currently recommends the project site for Industrial-Commercial development, consideration is currently being given to changing the land use recommendation from Industrial-Commercial (I-C) to Mixed Use (M-U). The M-U category "...includes a variety of housing units, types and densities along with neighborhood scale retail businesses and offices, sometimes all located in mixed-use buildings. All buildings are set close to the sidewalk with doors and windows facing the street with parking located behind the building. In some instances, based on the Plan Commission's discretion, stand-alone buildings may be permitted within a mixed use category depending on the comprehensive development plan for the area. Mixed Use falls primarily in the Planned Development Zoning District – General Implementation Plan (PDD-GIP) and Planned Development Zoning District-Specific Implementation Plan (PDD-SIP)..." (Page 4-18, Fitchburg Comprehensive Plan).

The development proposal and proposed PDD zoning, would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's M-U land use category and Northeast Neighborhood's area of future growth.

Traffic

The project site will be served by three points of access from County Highway MM. The access point furthest south is an existing access from County Highway MM that is today a cul-de-sac, Loniello Court. All access points are anticipated to be full movement.

Economic, Social, and Environmental Impacts

Today, the project site is a brownfield that has most recently been utilized as a construction dump site. The development proposal would improve the appearance and condition of the site aesthetically; promote sustainability by reducing traffic volumes by providing places of employment in proximity to housing; support small business development; and conserve areas that are sensitive to development, including steep slopes.

Schedule of Completion

Construction is anticipated to begin early 2018 with an occupancy anticipated for late spring 2019.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the development proposal with the Plan Commission. If you have any questions regarding this matter or otherwise, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Randall P. Alexander, Chief Creative Officer
Torque Companies

Attachments: Conceptual Site Plan



@ Edge Amenities

- Electric Car Charging Stations
- Community Car Program
- Lounge/Library
- Fitness Center
- Indoor Theater
- Concierge Service
- Pool/Spa
- Commercial Kitchen Space/Community Dining
- Event Space
- Business/Print Center
- Conference Rooms
- Shared Office Space
- Post Office/Package Center
- Coffee Bar
- Communal Gardens
- Garden Harvest Exchange
- Bike Path Access with Bicycle Service Stations
- Outdoor Amphitheater
- Outdoor Pavilions and Kitchens
- Pet Walking Paths
- Pet and Car Washing Stations
- Fire Pits

