



Press Release

Contact Person:

Martin Scott
Director of Community Development
Village of Western Springs
(708) 246-1800, ext. 175
msscott@wsprings.com

For Immediate Release:

March 10, 2015

PRESIDENT

William Rodeghier

TRUSTEES

Suzanne Glowiak

James Horvath

Sheila Hansen

Edward Tymnick

Patrick Word

Alice Gallagher

CLERK

Jeanine Jasica

MANAGER

Patrick Higgins

DIRECTORS

Tracy Alden

Grace Turi

Pat Schramm

Ingrid Velkme

Martin Scott

Pamela Church

Matthew Supert

Patrick Kenny

On February 23, 2015 the Western Springs Village Board approved an amendment to the Development Control Ordinance (DCO) as well as a project known as Foxford Station. The DCO amendment includes the creation of a new Mixed Use Development (MXD) zoning district to facilitate redevelopment concepts approved in the 2011 Downtown Redevelopment Plan. Foxford Station will be located at the southeast corner of Wolf Road and Burlington Avenue in the former locations of Tischler's Finer Foods and Breen's Cleaners.

The new MXD district was created to address the fact that standard C-1 (Village Center Commercial) zoning, which is utilized for the Downtown, is inadequate for larger mixed use projects. In particular it was conceived for the southeast and southwest corners of Burlington Avenue and Wolf Road (sites 6 & 7). These sites were depicted as having potential to redevelop as four, and three and one-half story, mixed use buildings, respectively, in the Downtown Plan.

The general format for the new MXD district follows that of other districts (e.g. lists of permitted and conditional use, bulk regulations such as setbacks, height, and more). The requirements also expand to define parking, minimum unit size for condos or apartments, required submittals, as well as the review process since mixed use buildings will be reviewed as planned developments. As proposed, the MXD district was intended to only be eligible for sites 6 & 7 as identified in the Downtown Plan. The Plan Commission, after discussing the issue and considering resident input, recommended that site 7 (southwest corner of Wolf and Burlington) be removed from eligibility. The Village Board ultimately agreed and thus only site 6 is eligible for MXD zoning. To be clear, the Board only considered MXD zoning for site 6 and their decision did not change the current zoning for the rest of the Downtown area. Sites 6 & 7 are shown below as depicted in the Downtown Redevelopment Plan.

Sites 6 & 7



During the review process for MXD and Foxford Station there were questions raised by the public as to why the district was necessary and why Foxford was not rezoned to C-1 zoning. These issues and concerns appear to be closely tied to height, parking, condominiums versus apartments, and other issues. Below is a summary of some of the differences between the C-1 and MXD district as well as project facts related to Foxford Station.

| Comparison of C-1 Zoning, MXD Zoning, & Foxford Station | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| | C-1 Zoning | MXD Zoning | Foxford Station |
| Maximum Building Height | Conditional Use = 49'-6" * | Conditional Use = 50' ** | 49'- 6" |
| Maximum Building Height (with parapet wall, decorative element or architectural cornice) | 53'-6" maximum* | 54' maximum | 53'-3"*** |
| Parking Requirements: <i>Residential Uses</i> <i>Commercial Uses</i> | None None | 1 Space/Unit None | 52 spaces 14 spaces |
| Maximum Building Stories | 3.5 stories | 4 stories | 4 stories |

* Includes variation granted for additional 4.5' in height

** Requires that commercial parking be provided within the building

*** Measurement taken at the corner of Wolf Rd. and Hillgrove Ave. Height measured from the sidewalk to top of cornice. Remaining elevations are mostly below 50 ft. in height.

In regards to height it is important to note that “by right”, with a building permit and no oversight by the Village Board, a new building in the C-1 zoning district could be built at a height of 35 ft. With a conditional use approved by the Village Board, the height could be increased to 45 ft. With a variation, the height of the same building could be further increased to 49’- 6”. This is similar to the proposed height for some of the elevations for Foxford Station. (The height of a building is measured at the midpoint of the front façade across the front lot line. In the case of Foxford Station, the front lot line is Burlington Avenue. The approved height along this façade is 49’- 6”).

MXD zoning would only allow taller buildings under a conditional use, which includes public hearings, Plan Commission review, and Village Board approval. In addition, any additional height would require on-site parking for customers or employees if this benefit is deemed appropriate by the Village Board. In contrast, new and existing buildings within C-1 are exempt from the parking requirements and rely mostly on public on-street parking. There is no guarantee or rights in regards to building height provided through the MXD language; this issue is considered on a case-by-case basis with guidance provided by the Downtown Redevelopment Plan, developer’s application and supporting documents, proposed architecture, and other factors.

Foxford, MXD zoning, and C-1 zoning facts relating to height:

- The Foxford building, as measured per the ordinance, is at 49’- 6” along Burlington Avenue (since it is the front yard). Two (2’) foot of a low parapet wall brings the height to 51’- 6” total.
- At the corner of Burlington and Wolf, the building measures 53’- 3”. This includes a four (4’) parapet with an architectural cornice feature that enhances the corner of the building (and helps screen mechanical equipment).
- At the midpoint of the building along Wolf Road the building measures 47’- 11”.
- At the south end of the building near the lobby the building measures 46’- 11” to the 4th floor and 37’- 1” to the 3rd floor. The attached PDF clearly illustrates the building height measurements described above.
- The height of the original proposal was reduced by lowering the lobby, garage, and commercial space. However, it is important to remember that a minimum ceiling height of 16 ft.± is required for a commercial space and that standard ceiling heights for condo/apartment units are 9 ft. (or more) in high quality developments. Both of these design elements (or requirements) factor into the reasonable height that has been proposed.
- In the end, the possibility of a 59’ tall building within the MXD district is a moot point since a lower building has been approved, the district cannot currently be utilized on properties other than site #6, and since the Village Board reduced the maximum height allowed in MXD zoning to 50 ft.
- The building height regulations in the C-1 and MXD are identical for permitted uses (35’ or 2.5 stories, whichever is less) and one category of conditional uses (45’ or 3.5 stories, whichever is less).

- The MXD code changes also include a common provision to allow architectural elements at the roof line for screening and decorative purposes as long as they do not exceed 4 ft. in height.

Foxford, MXD, and C-1 facts relating to parking spaces per dwelling unit:

- The Downtown Redevelopment Plan suggests 1.25 spaces per dwelling unit. MXD requires 1 space per dwelling unit. The current C-1 regulations require no parking for residential units.
- The Foxford plan calls for 66 total spaces; 52 residential and 14 commercial. If all spaces were dedicated for residential use the total would be approximately 1.26 per unit. Instead, a portion of the commercial spaces will be used for overnight residential parking.
- Recent observations and experience from the project architect, planning consultants, and traffic experts indicate that 1 parking space per dwelling unit will not cause parking overflow issues. Similar mixed use projects in suburban downtown districts have thrived and not experienced parking problems.
- Prospective new residents will be made aware of on-site parking availability and factor this in when choosing to live in the building.
- The commercial spaces provide the benefit of taking employees and customers off local streets.

Rental v. Condo Units:

- The design and interior finishes of these units will be “condo level” upscale that will mimic the quality of new single family homes in Western Springs.
- The developer has retained the option to market the property with apartments or condos. The market is changing and apartments are being sought out by young professionals, seniors, and others who seek out transit oriented developments (TOD). These TOD developments offer easy access to Metra in unique suburban downtown locations that offer casual and fine dining, independent shops, and culture.
- Whether condo or apartment, property management firms and the planned development ordinance will both require that interior and exterior be properly maintained.
- Rents or condo sale prices will be at or above those in nearby communities
- Similar developments in the area have proven to generate very few students
- The Western Springs market has demonstrated that rental units are generally well managed and maintained.

Photo simulations of Foxford Station upon completion (provided by Fitzgerald Associates Architects)



View south on Wolf Road



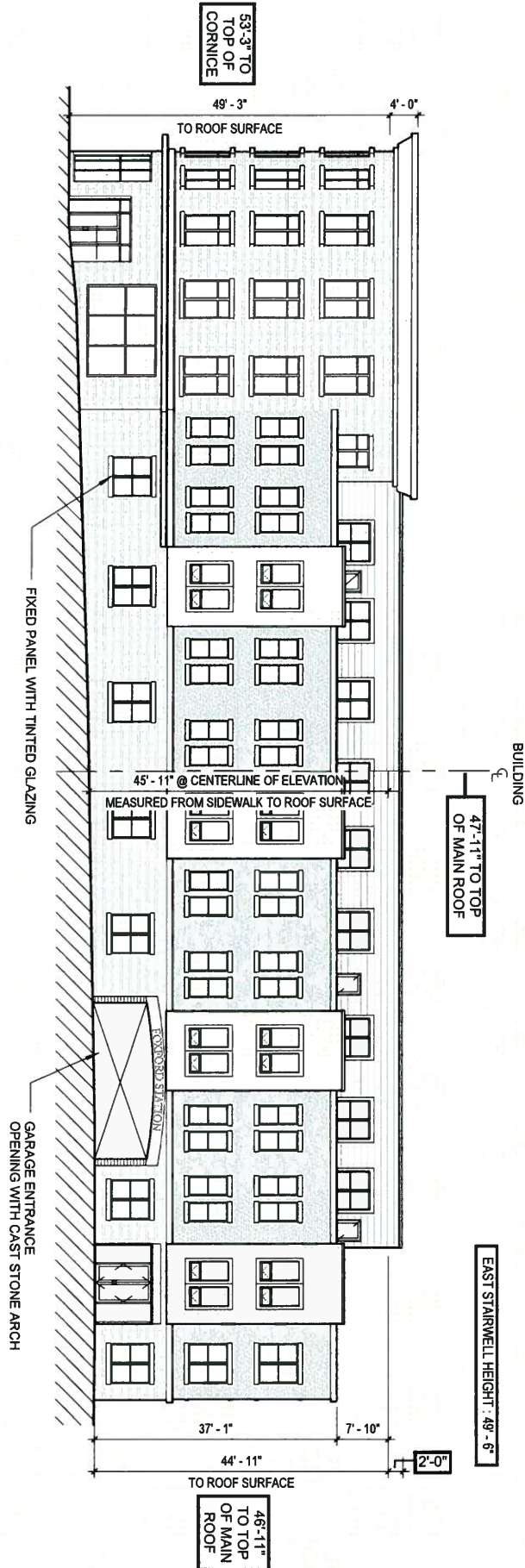
View southeast from Hillgrove Ave.

The Foxford public review process included the following:

- Adherence to the State and local laws regarding public hearings including notice of hearings to property owners within 250', four signs on the property, and publication of the meeting in a local newspaper
- At a minimum the preparation of the following:
 - Fiscal and economic impact analysis on the Village and other taxing bodies
 - Land use compatibility and real estate impact study
 - Preliminary market analysis
 - Traffic impact analysis
 - Stormwater management report and engineering plans
- Circulation of any resident's comments, emails, and letters (both for and against) to the Plan Commission and Village Board
- Approximately 9 hours of public meetings by the Plan Commission to conduct a thorough review of the proposed MXD district and Foxford proposal. The Commission then unanimously recommended approval and documented it in written findings of fact. This was followed by two additional public meetings conducted by the Village Board prior to ultimate approval.
- A recommendation by the Plan Commission to limit the MXD district to site #6 which includes only four properties; Tischler's, Breen's, J. Benak Service, and the Com Ed substation. Per the ordinance approved by the Village Board, no other properties in the Downtown would be eligible for the MXD district.

The 2011 Downtown Redevelopment Plan was also a topic of discussion at both the Plan Commission and Village Board meetings. The Plan serves as a guide to the future. It is not law but instead provides ideas and concepts on how to implement redevelopment and improve the Downtown. The ideas, proposed laws, and projects that have evolved since the Plan was approved will not match every recommendation included in the Plan. The goal is to allow improvements to happen which are deemed appropriate by the Plan Commission and Village Board with the Downtown Plan as a general guide.

WOLF ROAD ELEVATION



BURLINGTON AVENUE ELEVATION

