

Narrative Accompanying the DRE Review Submittal Prior to
Preliminary Development Plan Approval
and
Final Development Plan Approval
Applications
Southtown Shopping Center
Major Sports Anchor Development
May 22, 2024

Introduction

Southtown Shopping Center ('Southtown') has a very long history within the City of Bloomington. Opening in the early 1960's it was a hub of cutting-edge retail and entertainment opportunities. The retail and entertainment markets have changed dramatically, and Southtown will continue to evolve as well.

Southtown is located on approximately 36 acres of land bounded by I-494 to the north, Penn Avenue to the west, American Boulevard to the south and Knox Avenue to the east.

In the early months of 2024, the demolition of the vacant Montgomery Wards/Herberger's store and the Toys 'R' Us store commenced. The small shop space between these locations to the exterior of the AMF Bowling Alley will be completed by July. AMF and the former Bed, Bath and Beyond stores are not included in the demolition. The demolition has totaled approximately 180,000 s.f. of functionally obsolete retail space. The demolition has opened approximately 15 acres of Southtown for redevelopment, with the remaining 21 acres continuing to serve the community as before.

It must be mentioned here, redevelopment has been significantly affected by the lack of sewer capacity serving the site. Through the retention of SAC credits due to the demolition mentioned above, enough sewer capacity has been retained to allow for this proposed nominal amount of redevelopment.

The re-development application approval requested is for a 120,000 s.f. two-level Major Sports Anchor ('Anchor') store, with a 60,000 s.f. footprint, and an accompanying outdoor fenced sports field of +/- 18,000 s.f. The proposed Anchor will be along the northern edge of the site, facing the shopping center interior, as do all the other retail spaces. Through careful and selective demolition, the interior of Southtown is now opened and visible and accessible from Penn Avenue to Knox Avenue. The proposed Anchor location will correspond with this new retail alignment.

The overall redevelopment of Southtown will be a multi-phased and multi-decades long process. In this instance we are seeking approval only for the Anchor use in its proposed location.

Southtown will soon be concluding the demolition contemplated for this phase of redevelopment. Next, Southtown will begin the process of updating storm water systems, improving the parking and pedestrian experience, and including additional landscaping. Also updated in this initial phase of

redevelopment will be planning for the future improvements on the drive aisle/access points at Penn Avenue.

Separate from this application is the pending application for the establishment of a Tax Increment Financing District to allow for the qualified costs outlined above to be reimbursed.

Zoning, Floor Area Ratio, Building

The area of the Anchor proposed development is zoned C-3 which stipulates a Floor Area Ratio ('FAR') of .5, however, the C-3 zoning in the Southtown area provides for a .4 FAR. The Anchor will be located on a site containing approximately 5 acres or 217,800 s.f. (a separate tax identification number for this 5-acre parcel is to be requested), resulting in a FAR of .55, considerably exceeding the requirement. The retail use of the Anchor is consistent with the C-3 zoning.

Building elevations, exterior building material choices, parapet heights and project signage are all pending and shall be submitted for review at a future date.

Also, forthcoming will be hours of operation and anticipated employment levels.

Timing for the project is tentative, but we plan to provide Anchor with a pad certification by October 1, 2024. We will then provide a construction ready pad and Anchor will be responsible for the actual construction of the building. Early indications are that construction would begin in Spring 2025 and last for 16-18 months, creating a store opening in Summer of 2026.

A complete storm water management plan is being undertaken and will be included in the Preliminary Development Plan approval submission, with the alignment generally located within the existing power line right-of-way location.

Parking, Lighting, Landscape and Pedestrian Environment

We are planning major improvements at Southtown to the parking, lighting, landscape and pedestrian environments. The attached site plan highlights the proposed changes, which include improved drive aisles, planned future improved entrance at Penn Avenue, oversized sidewalks, pedestrian links on both the north/south and east/west axis, identified pedestrian crosswalks from parking areas to the sidewalks adjacent to the improved spaces, landscaped parking islands, and landscaping along pedestrian sidewalks.

Bicycle parking, shopping cart locations, handicap parking, on-line pick up areas and other details will be submitted in connection with the Preliminary Development Plan submission.

It is important to note here that these improvements, while planned for the entire shopping center, will be phased, starting with the east side of Southtown in conjunction with the construction of the Anchor building, with the west side improvements to come at a later date.

Pylon Signage

We will be requesting the inclusion of a new, freestanding pylon sign for Southtown, as the planned Anchor building location and the existing pylon location conflict.

Other

All of the other detailed and required information will be included in the Preliminary and Final Development Approval applications.

Attachments:

- Proposed Site Plan
- Proposed site plan highlighting (in green) areas of Southtown improvements in conjunction with Anchor construction