



STAFF REPORT
WEST ALLIS PLAN COMMISSION
Wednesday, March 25, 2020
6:00 PM

COMMON COUNCIL CHAMBERS – CITY HALL – 7525 W. GREENFIELD AVE.

4. Site, Landscaping and Architectural Plans for West Allis Towne Center, an existing shopping center, located at 6900 W Greenfield Ave., submitted by Ross Gallentine RPT Realty Inc. property owner (Tax key No. 439-0001-007).

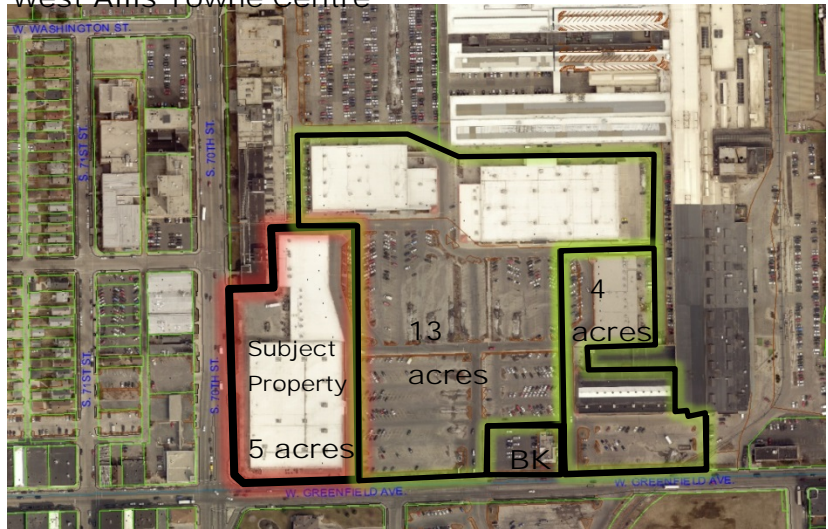
Overview and Zoning

The West Allis Towne Centre development consists of approximately 22.5 acres over 4 parcels of land. RPT owns the overall area and is seeking approval of a site, landscaping and architectural plan related to the infill of two new tenants within a portion of the former Kmart space.

In 2018 after the vacancy of an 86,000-sf Kmart lease space, Plan Commission approved tenant site, landscaping and façade improvements for Hobby Lobby which now leases about 50,000-sf of space.

Ramco-Gershenson Properties Trust renamed RPT Realty Realty Inc., the applicant/property owner, has two retail tenants under contract (a national Cosmetic and Shoe Retailer) who are seeking occupancy to re-tenant the remainder of lease space on the southwest side of the building located at 6900 W. Greenfield Ave.

West Allis Towne Centre



Surrounding context

Given the urban context of this area, it is very walkable setting along both W. Greenfield Ave. and S. 70 St. The area is serviced by public transit including Milwaukee County Transit and the Hank Aaron State Trail) and is located near many large corporate, institutional and retail commercial uses nearby within a short walk.

Neighboring uses within this area include: Downtown West Allis, Milwaukee Area Technical College west campus, West Allis West Milwaukee School District administration offices, Summit Place Office complex, the future Allis Yards Redevelopment area (inclusive of a new Home 2Suites hotel), Toshiba, Pick n Save, Landmark Apartments, Aurora medical clinic and The West - Six Points Redevelopment Farmers Market area.

Zoning

The Towne Centre is zoned C-3, Community Commercial, which permits retail uses. Therefore this isn't a use approval, but rather a site, landscaping and architectural plan review of the proposed site changes, new construction, and modifications to the property.

The applicant's proposal seeks Plan Commission approval to obtain necessary building permits to commence exterior site changes and exterior building modifications toward re-tenanting the building.

In accordance with sec. 12.13 of the Revised Municipal Code the proposed changes require The Plan Commission shall have the power to approve, approve with conditions, or reject a site or architectural plan on the basis of the requirements specified in section 12.13 and in accordance with the Site, Landscaping and Architectural review guidelines.

Architectural Plans

East façade (faces parking lot) – Like Hobby Lobby, this elevation is proposed to be the storefront side for two proposed new retailers.

The east façade features existing brick facia, with new brick pilaster columns added on the north tenant space and nichiha (an aluminum panel siding system) on the south tenant columns. New entrance portals to each retail tenant space will feature new windows, canvas awnings and a bracketed metal canopy and an elevated appearance from the rest of the east elevation. Nichiha (an aluminum panel siding system) has been utilized instead of an EIFS storefront above the entry.



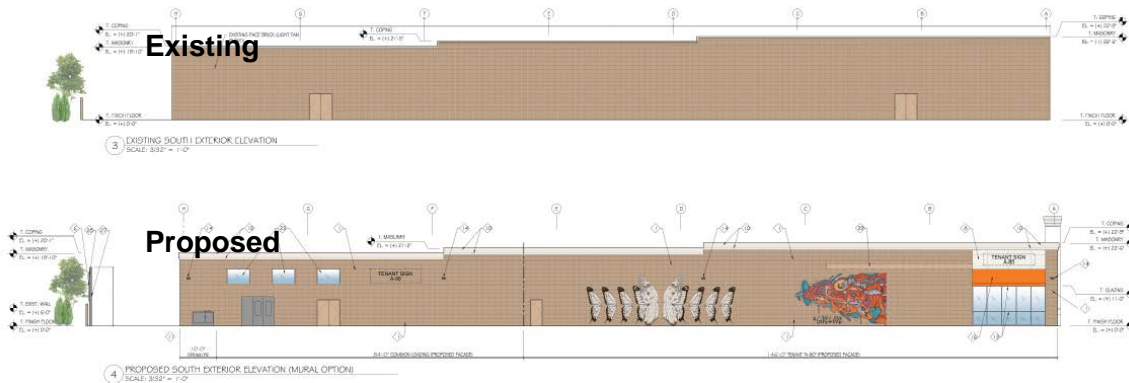
West façade (faces S. 70 St.) – while the backside of the building is proposed to face the street frontages of S. 70 St. and the intersection with W. Greenfield Ave. Staff has worked with RPT on updating the appearance that faces street frontages. Additional landscaping was added along the west side of the site in 2018. New metal panels are

proposed to be attached to the existing brick wall to provide additional screening for back of house deliveries. A new overhead door is proposed on the west façade that will provide a service entry for deliveries.



The new internal common loading area would also house any future refuse areas or compactor areas, so as to be out of view as located inside the building.

South Façade (faces W. Greenfield Ave.) – The plans have included additional storefront glass which as proposed will be clear transparent glass. An awning and niches metal panels are also featured to match the east storefront. Metal coping would run along the roofline of the building. New clearstory windows are also being added on the SW corner of the building.



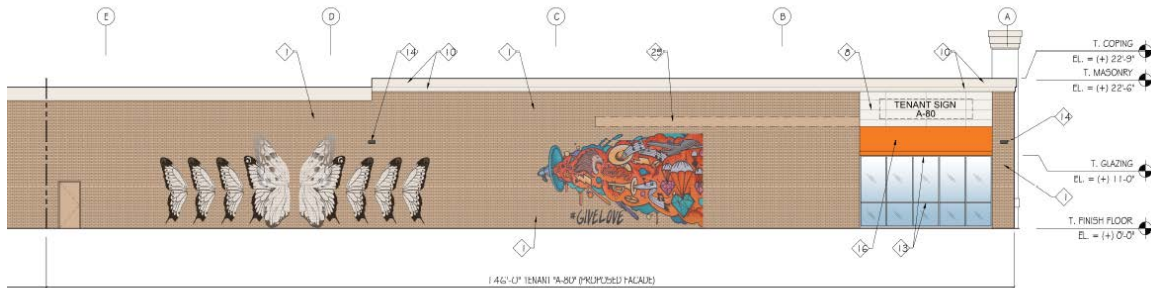
Staff Comment (Windows and Corner Condition) – consideration of additional façade elements being carry around the corner from the east façade to the south façade. This staff recommendation is intended to increase permeability and attraction from Greenfield Ave.

Internally, as proposed on the floor plan, a solid wall of retail merchandise shelving is situated on the interior of the south wall (excepting the SE corner). Some considerations to integrate windows into the south façade include:

- a) Floor plan adjustments such as creating gaps in the shelving,
- b) Portals through/within a solid wall of shelving, or external window display opportunities
- c) Wrap of design elements around the corner (an extension of the storefront). Adjustments to parapet wall height around the corner and/or additional windows on the south elevation.
- d) Secondary customer entrance on the south elevation.

Mural - A mural is also shown on the south elevation as an alternate to spandrel/opaque glass or other architectural features. Staff is not opposed to a mural on a portion of the south facade. The images shown on the architectural elevation are for reference only.

The City is in the beginnings of a mural program and has contracted with a public art curator called Wallpapered City. As part of the arrangement, several murals could be developed by different artists within a focused area of the City. Willing property owners and artists will be sought for meaningful public art. RPT has indicated it is willing to participate in the program, but selection process is still pending.

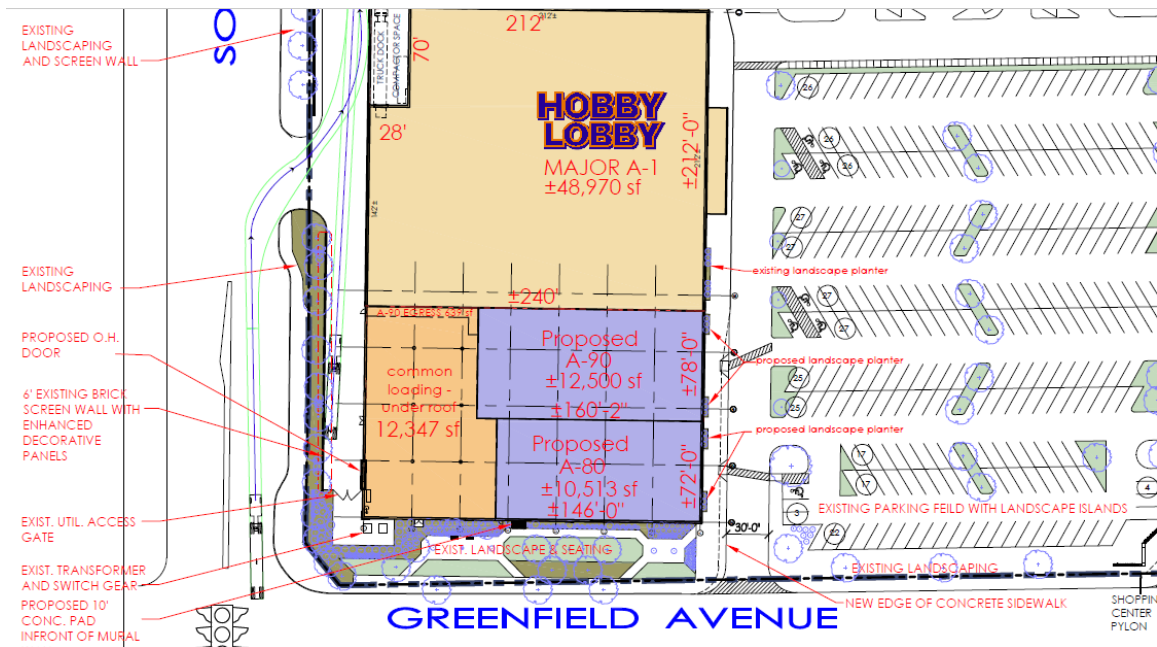


Staff Comment (Mural) - Staff feels the location is ideal for an artistic feature as S. 70 St. and W. Greenfield Ave. is a significant and vital intersection within the City. The same intersection is one of the busiest in terms of pedestrian and public transit use. The plaza RPT has created as part of the Hobby Lobby project would be complementary.

The mural placements are for reference only and will need to be revised/relocated. As shown, placement looks odd that there are two completely separate murals that don't interact with one another at all. Staff will work with RPT to discuss the murals, as a conceptual space holder.

Site and Landscaping Plans

In 2018, the property owner/RPT, converted a former vacant outdoor garden storage area (Kmart) to a landscaped pedestrian plaza with walkways, public art and accent lighting along W. Greenfield Ave.



With the addition of 2 new retail tenants RPT has proposed the following changes:

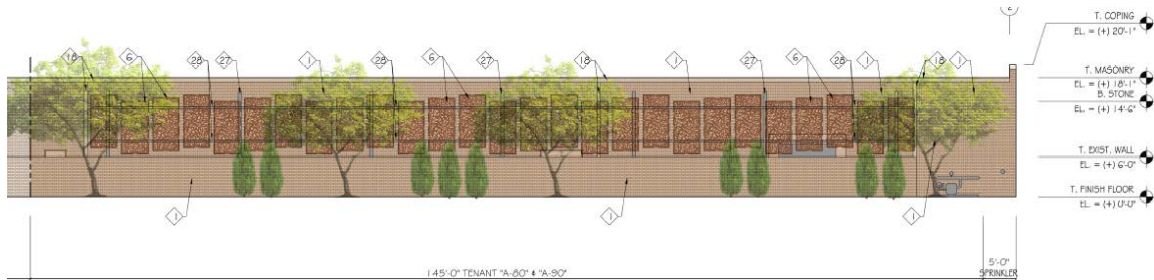
- a) West yard (S. 70 St.) New metal panels are proposed to be attached to the existing brick wall along S. 70 St. to provide additional screening for back of house deliveries.

A new overhead door is proposed on the west façade that will provide a service entry for deliveries.

The new internal common loading area would also house any future refuse areas or compactor areas, so as to be out of view as located inside the building.



DECORATIVE METAL PANELS FOR REAR SCREEN WALL



- b) The existing walkway along the east side of the building will be re-worked and expanded approximately another 5-ft to accommodate pedestrian/customer movement along storefront entrances and from the parking lot.

ADA access – a new pedestrian path and accessible stall will be added in the parking field east of the storefronts. New crosswalks will also be added.

Corresponding driveway width reduction at the existing entrance to/from W. Greenfield Ave. will be changed.

- c) Four new foundation planters are also proposed on the east storefront wall of the building.

Signage – future business signage review and permitting will follow the Site, Landscaping and Architectural review process. Signage permits may be considered and approved administratively if in compliance with the signage ordinance.

Recommendation: Approval of the Site, Landscaping and Architectural Plans for new tenant infill within the West Allis Towne Center, an existing shopping center, located at 6900 W Greenfield Ave., submitted by Ross Gallentine RPT Realty Inc. property owner (Tax key No. 439-0001-007), subject to the following conditions:

(Items 1 and 2 are required to be satisfied prior to the issuance of building permits associated with the proposed work reviewed by the Plan Commission. Contractors applying for permits should be advised accordingly.)

1. Revised Site, Landscaping, Screening and Architectural Plans being submitted to and approved by the Department of Development to show the following: (a) additional windows, façade elements being carried around the corner from the east façade to the south façade (considerations noted within staff report); (b) specify/detail pavement improvements within the expanded walkway on the east

side of the building; (c) mural artist, placement, and curation details to be discussed prior to implementing; (d) bike rack locations being identified on plan; (e) schedule for completion of the improvements Contact Steven Schaer, Manager of City Planning at (414) 302-8466 with further questions.

2. Driveway permit being applied for with the City Engineering Department. Contact Greg Bartelme at (414)302-8367.

(Remaining conditions of approval to be satisfied within one year of Plan Commission approval;)

3. Signage and public art details being submitted to staff for approval.
4. Compliance with Section 2814 of the City's Policy and Procedures Manual relative to that policy as it relates to the replacement and repair to City walkways of damaged or defective (if any) abutting sidewalk.