

STAFF REPORT

June 7, 2001

No. 01PD025 - Planned Commercial Development - Initial and Final Development Plan **ITEM 46**

Fire Department Recommendations:

5. Prior to approval of the Initial Commercial Development Plan by the City Council, the site plan shall be revised to eliminate the outside above-ground fuel storage tanks; or the site plan shall be revised to show the location of the fuel storage tank below ground or within an enclosed structure as regulated by Section 8.24.500 of the Municipal Code;
6. Prior to approval of the Final Commercial Development Plan by the City Council, the site plan shall be revised to show a fire hydrant located at the entrance to the helicopter port site;
7. All applicable Unified Fire Codes and National Fire Protection Agency Standards shall be met;
8. Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, fire extinguishers shall be located on site as required by the Fire Department;

Building Inspection Division Recommendations:

9. A building permit shall be obtained prior to any additional construction and a Certificate of Occupancy shall be obtained prior to occupancy;
10. Upon submittal of a building permit, Architect/Engineered stamped plans shall be submitted;

Air Quality Recommendation:

11. An Air Quality Permit shall be obtained prior to any development work or construction in excess of one acre;

Urban Planning Division Recommendations:

12. The Planned Commercial Development shall allow for the expansion of the helicopter port as identified on the site plan. In addition, a mechanic's building and a fuel storage tank, constructed in accordance with all requirements of Section 8.24.500 of the Rapid City Municipal Code, shall be allowed;
13. The proposed mechanic's building and design of the helicopter port shall conform architecturally to the plans and elevations submitted as part of this Planned Commercial Development;
14. All lighting shall be designed to shine down onto the helicopter port;
15. Any retrofitting of existing infrastructure improvements to accommodate the helicopter port shall be at the sole expense of the developer; and,
16. The helicopter port shall continually comply with all Federal Aviation Administration regulations;
17. The Planned Commercial Development for the helicopter port expansion shall expire if the use for which it was granted has ceased for a period of 12 months or more, or if the use as approved has not been completed within 12 months of the approval; and,
18. Building permits may be issued for the hospital facility as approved within the Planned Development Designation when the total construction included in all building permits issued are less than twenty percent of the gross square footage of all structures.

GENERAL COMMENTS: The applicant is requesting approval of an Initial and Final Commercial Development Plan to allow for the expansion of a helicopter port site located at

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the Rapid City Regional Hospital. The existing helicopter port site is located approximately 900 feet south of the intersection of Fairmont Boulevard and Fifth Street, directly north of the previously vacated Third Street right-of-way and is part of the regional medical complex. The applicant has indicated that additional concrete will be poured to enlarge the existing landing pad to include that area currently encircled with landing lights. The helicopter port site currently is large enough to allow one helicopter on the property at a time. The proposed expansion will allow a helicopter to take off or land while providing a sufficient area on the helicopter port site for a second helicopter to be on the site. In addition, the proposed expansion will include a 20 foot X 20 foot mechanic's building and an above ground fuel storage tank.

Earlier this year, the property was rezoned from Office Commercial District to General Commercial District with a Planned Development Designation. Prior to any expansion of use on the property, an Initial and Final Commercial Development Plan must be reviewed and approved. The applicant has submitted the Planned Commercial Development – Initial and Final Development Plan in order to obtain a building permit for the proposed helicopter port expansion.

STAFF REVIEW: Staff has reviewed the Initial and Final Commercial Development Plan and has noted the following considerations:

Mechanic's Building: The applicant's site plan identifies a 20 foot X 20 foot mechanic's building to be located northeast of the helicopter port site. The mechanic's building is an accessory structure to the helicopter port and will provide an office area and a restroom for those staffing the helicopter port site. The applicant has indicated that the building will be constructed of masonry block, drivet and glass and will have a garage door on the south side of the structure. The Engineering Division has indicated that water and sewer plans, identifying the extension of services to the building, must be submitted for review and approval.

Fuel Storage Tank: The applicant's site plan identifies an approximate 12 foot X 25 foot above ground fuel storage tank to be located directly north of the helicopter port in a portion of the existing parking lot. The proposed tank measures 12 feet in height and has a volume capacity of 6,000 gallons. The applicant has indicated that an opaque privacy fence will serve to screen the storage tank and that the fence will be gated and locked. The Fire Department has indicated that Section 8.24.50 of the Rapid City Municipal Code states that the storage of flammable or combustible liquids in outside above ground tanks is prohibited except for in the Heavy Industrial Zoning District. Staff is recommending that the site plan be revised to eliminate the above ground fuel storage tanks or that the tanks be placed below ground or within an enclosed structure to insure compliance with the provisions of Section 8.24.50 of the Municipal Code. If the tanks are redesigned as identified than staff is recommending that a storm sewer design inlet with an interceptor be submitted for review and approval to prevent fuel spillage from escaping into the storm sewer. Placing the fuel storage tank below ground or within an enclosed structure will preclude the requirement to provide a screening fence around the storage tank.

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Parking: As previously indicated, the applicant's site plan identifies that the proposed fuel storage tank is to be located in a portion of the existing parking lot. Currently, 722 on-site parking spaces are required for the hospital while 1,431 parking spaces are being provided. Eliminating the five parking spaces to accommodate the storage tank will not impact the parking requirement for the hospital.

Drainage: Currently, a drainage pipe is located within a drainage easement along the southern area of the helicopter port site. The Engineering Division has indicated that the site plan must be revised to show the drainage pipe and easement to insure that the proposed expansion does not encroach into the drainage easement prior to City Council approval of the Initial Commercial Development Plan. In addition, the proposed expansion will result in an increase of impervious surface on the property. As such, Meade-Hawthorne Drainage Basin fees must be paid upon issuance of a building permit.

Lighting: The lighting currently encircling the existing helicopter port will continue to serve as the lighting for the proposed expansion to the port. The applicant has indicated that the lighting is designed to shine down onto the landing pad as required by the Federal Aviation Administration. Staff is recommending that all lighting be directed down on to the landing pad to avoid creating a safety hazard for traffic using the adjacent arterial street and avoid impacting the surrounding properties.

Noise: Currently, the helicopter port is utilized to transport patients 3-4 times per week from Scottsbluff or in connection with National Guard activities. The Rapid City Regional Hospital is proposing to provide helicopter services and significantly expand the use of the facility to as many as 800 flights per year. As a result of the significant increase in the number of flights, the potential noise impact on surrounding uses will increase. However, the applicant has indicated that the primary flight pattern is south-southeast from the helicopter port site based on prevailing wind direction. Based on these flight patterns, the noise impacts should be limited to the greatest extent possible.

Community Service: Rapid City Regional Hospital is the tertiary referral center for the region. Helicopter transport provides emergency response to accident and trauma scenes where motor vehicle congestion would make it difficult or where the terrain precludes access in a timely manner. The proposed expansion of helicopter service will significantly improve access to medical facilities on a regional basis. Staff is recommending that the Initial and Final Commercial Development Plan to allow for the expansion of a helicopter port site and the expansion of the helicopter services accessory to a hospital be approved with the stipulations of approval as outlined above.

As of this writing, the receipts from the certified mailings have not been returned. A recent site inspection identified that the sign has been posted on the property. Staff has received two calls of inquiry regarding this proposal. Neither caller voiced concern with the proposed use. Staff will notify the Planning Commission at the June 7, 2001 Planning Commission meeting if the mailing requirement has not been met or if any additional calls or inquiries are

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received.