



To: Plan Commission/ZBA

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From: Ronald Mentzer, Community & Economic Development Consultant

Date: March 13, 2025

Lockport Township Fire Protection District Application for the Approval of Various Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments, Special Use Permits, Preliminary and Final Planned Unit Development (PUD) Plans, and Miscellaneous PUD Exceptions – Crest Hill Plan Commission Case # PUD-25-1-3-1

Project Details

Project	Public Safety Training Complex and Maintenance Facility
Request	Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments, Preliminary and Final PUD, and Misc. Deviations
Location	South end of Advantage Avenue

Site Details

Building Sizes	24,240 SF Training/Maintenance Principal Building, 3,360 SF Outdoor Classroom and 7,892 SF Burn Tower Accessory Buildings
Site Area	12.86 Acres

Land Use and Zoning Summary

	Land Use	Comp Plan	Zoning
Subject Parcel	Agriculture	Stateville	M1
North	Open Space	Natural Area	M1
South	Agriculture	Stateville	M1
East	Stateville	Stateville	M1
West	Stateville	Stateville	M1

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Lockport Township Fire Protection District (the “LTFPD”) has submitted a detailed application package for the City’s potential approval of the various Zoning Ordinance (the “Z.O.”) text amendments, Special Use Permits, Preliminary and Final PUD Plans, and miscellaneous PUD Exceptions that would be required from the City of Crest Hill for the new state-of-the-art, multi-building public safety training and maintenance building, training grounds, and an accessory outdoor firing range facility (collectively the “Training Complex”) it desires to construct on the 12.86-acre vacant, M-1 Limited Manufacturing District zoned, site it owns along the south side of Division Street approximately 6,000 feet west of Broadway Street and 4,135 feet east of Weber Road (the “Subject Property”). The Training Complex has been designed to provide consistent and realistic training opportunities and promote collaboration

among regional fire and law enforcement agencies. Per Chapter 10 of the Z.O., the size and scope of this project mandates it be processed as a Planned Unit Development (PUD).

A summary of the key components of the proposed Training Complex includes:

Primary Training and Maintenance Facility – Building 1: This 24,240 sq. ft. single-story building would be located along the Division Street frontage of the Subject Property. Approximately half of the building would be dedicated to training classrooms, an office, and a lunchroom with the other half being dedicated to emergency vehicle maintenance operations. This facility would be constructed with high quality metal and masonry building materials. See application package Exhibit G for detailed design drawings for this facility.

Training Ground Improvements: The training grounds for this facility have been designed to include the following key components:

- **Outdoor Burn Tower Classroom/Storage Building 2:** A 3,360 sq. ft., single-story accessory building constructed from pre-manufactured box containers (AKA shipping containers) covered by an independent, 15'-6" high structural steel and metal roofing canopy structure. This facility would be located on the south-central area of the Subject Property. See application package Exhibit I for detailed design drawings for this facility.
- **Burn Tower Building:** A 7,892 sq. ft., four-story accessory building constructed from pre-manufactured box containers specifically designed for firefighting training and would have an overall building height of 45'-3". This facility would be located between the burn tower building and the training pond. See application package Exhibit M for detailed design drawings for this facility.
- **Training Pond:** The required stormwater detention pond planned in the central area of the site will be designed to support real world water rescue and recovery training scenarios.
- **Vehicle Extraction Training Area:** A 75' x 150' gravel surface area will be provided in the southeast quadrant of the site to accommodate vehicle extraction training exercises on actual motor vehicles.
- **K-9 Training Area:** The open area adjacent to the west side of the outdoor burn tower classroom building will be designed and dedicated to support K-9 training activities.

Outdoor Law Enforcement Firing Range: A 27-yard-wide by 100-yard-long firing range surrounded on the east, west, and south sides by a 24' high berm is proposed in the southeast quadrant of the Subject Property. A 20' tall by 70' long noise barrier will be provided along the north edge of the firing range. The overall size of the firing range, including the berms, is approximately 210' wide by 420' long. The shooting platform would consist of a 20' wide x 60' long concrete slab on grade. Two 150 sq. ft., +/-, 15' tall, premanufactured metal canopy structures (no walls) would be attached to the shooting platform to protect trainees from inclement weather conditions. As proposed, the firing range would be equipped with twelve LED spotlights mounted on 25' tall light poles for evening/nighttime training.

Other Site Improvements:

- **Parking Improvements:** 153 standard parking spaces and 6 handicapped parking spaces will be provided for automobiles. Ten oversized parking spaces will be provided for fire trucks.
- **Burn Pit:** A 40' x 40' area will be provided south of the proposed Burn Tower Building to accommodate the disposal of excess burned training materials removed from the Burn Tower Building.
- **Trash Enclosure:** A 12' wide by 18' long, 6' tall, three-sided trash enclosure will be provided near the southwest corner of the primary training and maintenance facility.
- **Memorial Plaza:** A 25' diameter memorial plaza will be provided between the primary training and maintenance facility and the firing range.

More detailed information on the scope and anticipated use, operation, and public safety value of each component of the Training Complex can be found in the Project Summary (Part 2) and Site Elements and Building Descriptions (Part 6) components of the Project Narrative application binder LTFPD has submitted for this project. A paper copy of this binder was distributed to the Plan Commission Members with this report.

BACKGROUND

The proposed Training Complex would be located on a 12.86-acre parcel of vacant land the State of Illinois provided to the LTFPD to accommodate the creation of a new centrally located public safety training facility in Lockport Township.

On January 22, 2024, LTFPD representatives appeared at a City Council work session meeting to provide a status report and a preliminary overview of the scope of the new training grounds facility that was in the initial stages of design at that time. A copy of the meeting minutes from that discussion are attached for reference as Exhibit 1. The minutes reflect general City Council support for the project but significant concern about the firing range component.

On May 13, 2024, Interim Community and Economic Director Mentzer presented information at a City Council work session meeting to explain how the existing Z.O. does not specifically allow new firing ranges and therefore automatically prohibits them. He indicated the Z.O. would need to be amended before a new firing range could be constructed and operated in Crest Hill. A copy of the meeting minutes from that discussion are attached as Exhibit 2.

In early August of 2024, the LTFPD submitted a detailed PUD Concept Plan review application for the Training Complex Project to the City of Crest Hill. The City Council reviewed the concept plan application at its September 9, 2024, work session meeting. A copy of the minutes from that discussion are attached as Exhibit 3. The minutes reflect unanimous City Council support for the training facility components of the overall project with less, but still majority, support for the combined training facility/firing range project.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The application documents listed on attached Exhibit 4 have been thoroughly reviewed by City staff and that review is the basis for the following staff commentary, recommendations, and conclusions. ***Specific staff recommendations and conclusions are highlighted in purple, bold, italic font.***

Comprehensive Plan

The City's 2014 Comprehensive Plan assigns the "Stateville Correctional Center" land use designation to the Subject Property but acknowledges that the future of the Stateville facility is unclear and there may be opportunities for redevelopment of all or portions of the facility. Page 52 of the Comprehensive plan provides some initial thoughts and guidance on potential future land uses on the Stateville Property should it become available for redevelopment. This land use guidance identifies the area of

the Stateville Property the LTFP now owns as potentially being utilized for some form of residential, institutional, or industrial redevelopment. "Institutional Uses, including Governmental Buildings" are considered a potential special use in all residential and industrial Zoning Districts and are a critically crucial element of safe and efficient public services. As such, ***staff believes the proposed Training Complex is generally consistent with the goals and objectives outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan.***

Stormwater Management

Stormwater detention is required for this project and will be provided in the new combined detention pond existing regional stormwater detention/training pond improvements that would be constructed in the central area of the Subject Property. The City Engineer has reviewed the grading plans and stormwater pond details included in Exhibit B of the Project Narrative/Application Binder for this project and found them to be acceptable. ***Final stormwater calculations and construction engineering design drawings will need to be submitted to and approved by the City Engineer before permits for this project can be issued for this project.***

Public Utilities

The Final PUD Utility Plans for this project illustrate the primary potable water supply for the proposed main training and maintenance building being supplied through new service connection to the existing City of Crest Hill Water main located along the Division Street frontage of the Subject Property. A secondary water service interconnection to the existing City well site to the east is proposed to specifically supply water to the fire hydrants that would be installed throughout the Subject Property for training purposes. Per the recommendation of the City Engineer, these training hydrants will be painted a different color to differentiate them from the hydrants associated with the potable water supply system for the project.

Sanitary service for this facility would be provided through a new service connection made to an existing City of Crest Hill sanitary sewer main located on the adjacent Stateville Property to the east.

The City Engineer has reviewed the proposed utility plans for the project included in Exhibit B of the Project Narrative/Application Binder for this project and found them to be acceptable. He has confirmed the existing City water and sanitary sewer mains the project would connect into have sufficient capacity to effectively serve the proposed Training Complex. ***Final construction engineering design drawings and a utility easement dedication plat will need to be submitted to and approved by the City Engineer before permits for this project can be issued.***

Traffic Control and Site Circulation

The City Engineer has reviewed the November 15, 2024, traffic study KLOA prepared for this project and concurs with its findings and recommendations. A copy of the traffic study is included as Exhibit P in the Project Narrative/Application Binder for this project. The proposed Final PUD Plans reflect the recommendations in this report and do not include any new turn-lane improvements on Division Street. The facility would be served with a single, centrally located, access driveway on the portion of Division Street that is owned and controlled by the Illinois Department of Transportation. ***IDOT permit approval for this new driveway is required before it can be constructed.***

Landscaping

The landscape plans included in the Project Narrative application binder for this project as Exhibit E illustrate LTFPD's commitment to plant a desirable and appropriate mix of 50 shade trees, 18 evergreen trees, 5 ornamental trees, 69 deciduous shrubs, 61 evergreen shrubs, 51-1 gallon container ornamental grasses, 82 –1 gallon container perennials, 227,982 sq. ft. (5.23 acres) of turf

grass, and 57,413 sq. ft. (1.2 acres) of native vegetative mat with an upland meadow/wildflower seed mix. The native vegetative mat would be planted on the entire 24-foot-tall berm illustrated around the south, east, and west sides of the proposed firing range. Landscape Plan Sheet 1 also identifies the potential installation of 7 additional shade trees and 15 evergreen tree plantings adjacent to the perimeter property lines in the southwest corner of the Subject Property as "Alternative 1 Plantings" ***Staff recommends the Alternative 1 Plantings be required as part of the initial development phase of this project.*** With the installation of Alternative 1 Plantings, staff has determined the

proposed landscape plan complies with the landscaping requirements contained in Section 15.04.040 (1)(2) of the Municipal Code. Furthermore, staff believes the design and implementation of the proposed landscape plan would:

- Create a visually attractive landscape treatment on the site, especially when viewed from Division Street
- Complement the architectural design of the primary training and maintenance building and effectively soften the visual impact of larger areas of pavement and service improvements and the site
- Provide desirable shading in the parking lot areas
- Produce a desirable transition to adjacent properties

Parking

According to the Preliminary and Final Planned Unit Development Plan included in the Project Narrative application binder for this project as Exhibit A, the project will provide 153 standard parking spaces and 6 handicapped parking spaces for automobiles and 10 oversized parking spaces for fire trucks. Staff has calculated the maximum (most conservative) Z.O. required parking for this project as follows:

Function/Use Classification	Zoning Ordinance Parking Requirement	Project Specific Design Parameters	Required # of Parking Spaces
<i>Motor Vehicle Service/ Repair</i>	4 parking spaces per service bays	12 Service Bays	48
	1 space per employee on largest shift	6 employees	6
<i>Professional Training School</i>	1 parking space per 4 seats of training space	150 seats in Bld. 1 58 seats in Bld. 2	52
	3 trainers per classroom and 2 spaces for each 3 trainers	3 classrooms in Bld. 1 1 classroom in Bld. 2	6
Firing Range	1 space per station	15 stations	15
	2 spaces for instructors/trainers	2 instructors/trainers	2
TOTAL PARKING REQUIRED			129

Based on these calculations, the proposed amount of parking that would be constructed in this project exceeds what is required by the Zoning Ordinance.

Photometric/Lighting Plans

City staff has reviewed and found the photometric plans included in the Project Narrative application binder for this project as Exhibit J are acceptable given the nature of the proposed facility and related proposed site improvements. All light fixtures would be LED type fixtures. All pole mounted light fixtures would be mounted to 20 ft. tall poles. To minimize unnecessary glare and light pollution, ***Staff recommends any PUD approval of this project include a condition that requires all pole mounted light fixtures, except the floodlight fixtures that will illuminate the firing range, to be installed and maintained in a manner where the bottom glass of the fixture remains parallel to the adjacent grade level.***

Special Zoning Related Requests

A Summary of the various special zoning requests included in the LTFPD's application materials and Staff's assessment and recommendations on those requests follows:

1.) Zoning Ordinance text amendments to:

- a. Add the following definition for “*Outdoor Firing Range, Government Training Purposes*” to the Zoning Ordinance: “The use of a designated outdoor areas accessory to a government training facility for the discharging of firearms for the purposes of target practice or military/law enforcement training.”

Staff Comments: If this particular land use is ultimately added to the list of potential special uses in the M-1 Zoning District, ***staff strongly recommends adding this definition to the Z.O.*** as well as it narrowly defines and therefore restricts any such use to that of an accessory use to a government training facility. This would preclude any such establishment from being operated either as a principal use or as a for-profit private facility.

- b. Add the “*Outdoor Firing Range, Governmental Training Purposes*” to the list of potential special uses allowed in the M-1 zoning district.

Staff Comments: The City’s current Z.O. does not include any reference to this specific land use. As a result, by default this use is currently considered prohibited land use in the City of Crest Hill. If the City is interested in potentially accommodating a governmentally operated firing range at a specific location in the City and/or under specific special conditions, ***staff recommends this land use be added to the list of possible special uses allowed in the M-1 Limited Manufacturing District.*** M-1 zoned areas are generally the areas of the City furthest removed from residential uses and are also where the most intensive land uses are located. If this use is added to the Z.O. as a potential special use, any specific proposal to establish and operate one in Crest Hill would trigger the need for the owner/operator to apply for and ultimately receive City Council approval of a special use permit for the facility. All special use permit applications are reviewed at a formal public hearing before the Plan Commission. In conjunction with its review and approval of a specific special use permit, the City could impose detailed restrictions and requirements on the operation of the proposed facility that are designed to minimize the potential negative impacts the use could have on the community.

- c. Add minimum parking requirements for the “*Outdoor Firing Range, Governmental Training Purposes*” land use that would require any such facility to provide one parking space for each firing station plus two parking spaces for instructor and employee use.

Staff Comments: Based on staff research, this parking requirement is in line with how other municipal zoning ordinances address parking needs for this type of facility. If the City is receptive to amending the Z.O. to add this type of land use to the list of potential special uses allowed in Crest Hill, ***staff recommends this new parking requirement be added to the schedule of Parking Requirements contained in Section 11.8 of the Z.O.***

- d. Specifically exempt “*Outdoor Firing Range, Governmental Training Facilities*” from existing Z.O. Noise Performance Standards.

Staff Comments: The LTFPD has engaged Soundscape Engineering to evaluate (i) the noise impact the proposed firing range will produce and (ii) the ability of the proposed firing range to comply with the noise performance standards outlined in section 8.8-1 of the Z.O. As stated on pages 9 and 10 in the Project Summary (Part 2) component of the Project Narrative binder for this project, the sound engineer has stated the City’s existing noise performance standards are antiquated, most typical ambient neighborhood noise would exceed the current standards, and the current standards should be revised to better align with current expectations and State standards. Based on this technical input, LTFPD has requested the Z.O. be amended to

specifically exempt this type of public safety training firing range from the City's antiquated noise performance standards.

It is important to note that a representative of Soundscape Engineering is planning to provide testimony and be available to address questions at the March 13, 2025, Plan Commission public hearing for this project. Soundscape Engineering is actively performing detailed modeling to quantify the sound impacts that would be associated with the proposed firing range. Their sound model and final report will be presented by Soundscape Engineering representatives at the March 13, 2025, Plan Commission Meeting. In the meantime, Soundscape Engineering has produced the February 28, 2025, Sound Statement included in the Project Narrative binder for this project as Exhibit S. The Sound Statement outlines how the sound reduction measures that have been incorporated into the design of the proposed firing range will help control sound impacts. *Staff cannot provide a recommendation on this Z.O. text amendment request until staff receives and reviews Soundscape Engineering's final sound report and hears the testimony Soundscape Engineering representatives provide at the March 13, 2025, public hearing for this application.*

2.) Waiver of Preliminary/Final PUD Application Submission Requirements for:

- a. Final Construction Drawings (Z.O. Section 10.3-3.c.)
- b. A Market Analysis (Z.O. Section 10.3-2.b.8)
- c. A Tax and School Impact Analysis (Z.O. Section 10.3-2.b.8)

Staff Comments: Section 10.3 of the Z.O. specifically states "The City may, in those cases where, in their judgment, the required information (specific application submissions) is not necessary because of existing evidence and information, waive all or portions of the requirements listed within this Section, upon written request from the applicant." LTFPD has requested the City waive the submission requirements of the three above noted documents as part of the ongoing PUD review and approval process for this project.

The City's standard past practice on larger, more complex developments is to not require the submission of final construction drawings as part of the PUD review and approval process for this project and instead require their submission with the construction permit applications submitted if and after a PUD Special Use Permit Ordinance is approved. This practice has proved to be more cost effective and efficient for both the Applicant and the City. As a result, *staff recommends waving the requirement for the submission of final construction drawings at this time.*

Given the fact that the proposed project will be owned, operated, and used by a tax-exempt overlapping taxing body to improve public safety service to the community, *staff recommends waving the requirements for the submission of a Market Analysis and a Tax and School Impact Analysis.*

3.) Special Use Permits for:

- a. (i) The construction and operation of a new Institutional Use in the form of the proposed Training Complex on the Subject Property and (ii) the Preliminary and Final PUD Plans for the project.

Staff Comments: Overall, staff believes LTFPD's Project Narrative binder effectively documents the need for and community benefits that would be realized by the construction of the proposed Training Complex. Furthermore, staff believes the design of the project is well thought out, high quality, and would have a positive impact on the character of this section of Division Street. Based on the staff findings articulated in attached Exhibit 4, *staff*

recommends conditional approval of the required Special Use Permits required for all project components except the proposed firing range.

- b. The construction and operation of a new Governmental Training Firing Range as an accessory use on the Subject Property. As proposed, the firing range would be owned by the LPTFPD but operated and supervised by the Lockport Police Department under an intergovernmental agreement between the two agencies. It is important to note that the only public safety agencies that would be allowed to train at this range under the current application are those that work and operate in Lockport Township.

The information included in subsection 3 of Part 2 of the Project Narrative application binder for this project outlines in detail how the firing range would be operated, which public agencies will be permitted to use it, and how it will be designed and maintained to minimize potential negative impacts on the surrounding area (see pages 8-13 of Part 2).

Staff Comments: The LTFPD continues to work diligently to understand and address the concerns the City has identified with their proposed Training Complex project. This includes concerns related to the noise impacts that would be associated with the proposed range. LTFPD has engaged Soundscape Engineering to evaluate (i) the noise impact the proposed firing range will produce and (ii) the ability of the proposed firing range to comply with the noise performance standards outlined in section 8.8-1 of the Z.O. Their sound model and report is expected to be presented at the March 13, 2025, Plan Commission Public Hearing.

While staff understands the public safety value and benefit the firing range would have for the broader Lockport Township community, it is still unclear what type of impact it will have on the nearby neighborhoods in Crest Hill. It is important to note that a representative of Soundscape Engineering is planning to provide expert testimony and be available to address questions at the March 13, 2025, Plan Commission public hearing for this project. Soundscape Engineering is actively performing detailed modeling to quantify the sound impacts that would be associated with the proposed firing range. Their sound model and final report will be presented by Soundscape Engineering representatives at the March 13, 2025, Plan Commission Meeting. In the meantime, Soundscape Engineering has produced the February 28, 2025, Sound Statement included in the Project Narrative binder for this project as Exhibit S. The Sound Statement outlines how the sound reduction measures that have been incorporated into the design of the proposed firing range will help control sound impacts. *Staff cannot provide a recommendation on this Z.O. text amendment request until staff receives and reviews Soundscape Engineering's final sound report and hears the testimony Soundscape Engineering representatives provide at the March 13, 2025, public hearing for this application.*

Ultimately, if the City is receptive to the approval of the Firing Range component of this project, *staff recommends that any such approval be conditioned upon the range being operated in accordance with commitments and limitations outlined subsection 3 of Part 2 of the Project Narrative application binder for this project with the following modifications and additions and modifications:*

- a. *Unless otherwise required by these conditions of approval, the firing range shall be operated in compliance with the information included in subsection 3 of Part 2 of the Project Narrative application binder for this project (see pages 8-13 of Part 2).*

- b. *The maximum number of night shootings allowed each calendar month shall be agreed upon between the Applicant and the City Council.*
- c. *The final construction design drawings for the firing range shall comply with the current edition of the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges. The range shall also be designed to prevent contamination of any waterway considered "Waters of the U.S." as defined by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, wetland, or floodplain in accordance with the Clean Water Act.*
- d. *No live ammunition training shall be allowed on Sundays unless otherwise approved by the City Council for special events.*
- e. *The firing range spotlights shall only be operated when the firing range is in use within the hours of operation allowed by the City approved special use permit for the range.*
- f. *If complaints from Crest Hill property owners persist after the outdoor firing range opens, the Applicant shall appear before the City Council to discuss the complaints and if and how the hours of operation of the range can be adjusted to address the complaints without materially impacting the ability of the range to meet the mandatory training needs of authorized users.*
- g. *Add the following definition for "Outdoor Firing Range, Government Training Purposes" to the Zoning Ordinance: "The use of a designated outdoor areas accessory to a government training facility for the discharging of firearms for the purposes of target practice or military/law enforcement training."*

4.) Planned Unit Development Exceptions to:

- a. Reduce the minimum amount of masonry required on building facades. Section 8.7-2.2.b of the Z.O. requires at least one wall façade on a non-residential building include a minimum of 80% masonry materials. As illustrated in the building elevation drawings attached to the Project Narrative application binder for this project as Exhibit G, none of the building facades for the proposed main maintenance and training building would satisfy this requirement.

Staff Comments: The two most visible building elevations (west and south) for this project each provide a significantly higher percentage of masonry materials than required by the Z.O. As proposed, 44% of the east building façade would be constructed with masonry materials when no masonry materials are technically required on this façade per Sections 8.7-2-2.d of the Zoning Ordinance. As proposed, 40% of the building façade facing Division Street would be constructed with masonry materials when technically only 10% of this façade is required to be constructed with masonry materials per section Sections 8.7-2-2.c of the Z.O. It is also important to note that 23% of the building's overall façade area would be constructed of masonry materials when only 20% is required by the Z.O.

Overall, staff is of the opinion that the Applicant's proposed distribution of masonry materials on the main building is attractive and desirable. *Staff recommends approval of a PUD exception that would allow the building facades to be constructed as reflected in Project Application Binder Exhibit G.*

- b. Permit the use of metal panels on miscellaneous exterior building facades. Section 8.7-3 of the Zoning Ordinance prohibits the use of metal panels on non-industrial buildings.

Staff Comments: Overall, staff is of the opinion that the proposed exterior façade design for the main maintenance and training building reflects an attractive mix of building materials that would be appropriate for the geographic area it would be constructed in and would have a positive impact on the character of the area. *Staff recommends approval of a PUD*

exception that would allow the building facades of the main training and maintenance building to incorporate the use of metal façade panels as reflected in the building elevation drawings attached to the Project Narrative application binder as Exhibit G.

- c. Allow multiple accessory structures to have a height in excess of 15-feet. Section 8.3-7 of the Z.O. restricts the height of accessory building and structures to 15 feet. The following proposed buildings and structures in this project do not comply with this restriction:
- Training Tower Classroom/Bldg. 2 (Application Binder Exhibit I) is proposed with a maximum 15'-6" height.
 - Main Burn Training Tower (Application Binder Exhibit M) is proposed with a maximum height of 45'-3".
 - The sound attenuation wall proposed at the north end of the firing range (Application Binder Exhibit F) is proposed with a maximum height of 20'-6"

Staff Comments: Given the specialized nature of the proposed Training Complex, the overall size of the site, and the existing established large institutional use on the adjacent properties, ***Staff recommends approval of PUD exceptions that would allow these accessory structures to exceed 15' in height*** as noted above.

- d. Permit the use of shipping containers for accessory training buildings. Section 8.3-9.6 of the Z.O. prohibits the use of shipping containers. As illustrated in the architectural drawings included in the Application Binder as Exhibit I and the specialized fire training systems drawings attached to the Application Binder as Exhibit M, the proposed burn tower and the adjacent outdoor classroom facility (Building 2) would be constructed with shipping containers.

Staff Comments: Given the specialized nature of the proposed Training Complex, the overall size of the site, and the existing established large institutional use on the adjacent properties, ***Staff recommends approval of PUD exceptions that would allow the main burn tower building and the adjacent outdoor classroom facility to be constructed with shipping containers.***

- e. Permit a wall sign to be installed at a height less than 10 feet from grade. As currently proposed, the bottom edge of the proposed wall sign on the west building façade of the main training and maintenance facility would be located 6'-0" above grade (see sheet A1.2 of the architectural elevation drawings attached to the Project Narrative application binder as Exhibit G). Section 15.12.080 of the City's Sign Ordinance requires wall signs to be located 10' above grade.

Staff Comments: ***Staff recommends approval of a PUD exception that would allow the bottom edge of the wall sign on the west building façade of the main training and maintenance facility to be located 6'-0" above grade.***

- f. Allow the driveway curb cut onto Division Street to exceed 30 feet in width. Section 15.04.040 of the Municipal Code restricts the width of driveway curb cuts to 30' measured at the property line. As illustrated on Sheet C-4 of the engineering design drawings attached to the Application Binder as Exhibit B, the proposed Division Street curb cut width for this project is just under 150'. The measured width in this case is measured at the very widest part of the driveway where it connects with the through pavement of Division Street because the existing front property line for the Subject Property is located in the Division Street pavement.

Staff Comments: The City Engineer has reviewed the design of the proposed curb cut and feels it is appropriate given the type of facility it would serve and the type of vehicles that would

be using it. *Staff recommends approval of a PUD exception that would allow the Division Street curb cut width for the proposed Training Complex to be 150' in width.*

- g. Eliminate required parking lot landscape islands. Section 11.6-2 of the Z.O. requires landscape islands at the ends of all rows of parking spaces. As illustrated on the Preliminary and Final Planned Unit Development Plan attached to the Application Binder as Exhibit A, there are several parking lot islands located at the southwest corner and immediately south of the proposed main training and maintenance building that would be paved and striped off rather than being landscaped in order to accommodate large vehicle maneuvering and fire truck driver training activities.

Staff Comments: Given the intended use and users of this facility, *staff recommends approval of a PUD Exception that would allow the four above noted parking lot islands to be paved and striped rather than being landscaped.*

- h. Eliminate the requirement to provide a designated loading zone: Section 11.11-15 of the Z.O. requires one 12' x 65' loading zone to be provided for this facility.

Staff Comments: Given the nature of this facility and the extensive amount of asphalt pavement that would be available along the north and south sides of the proposed main training and maintenance building, staff feels the site has adequate space to accommodate the very limited large truck loading and unloading needs this facility will generate. Staff recommends approval of a PUD exception that would eliminate the requirement for designated large loading space to be provided in this project.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on staff's analysis of the detailed and extensive application materials for this project, staff recommends the Plan Commission recommend conditional approval of the following special approvals for this project.

1. *Waiver of Preliminary/Final PUD Application Submission Requirements for:*
 - a. *Final Construction Drawings (Z.O. Section 10.3-3.c.)*
 - b. *A Market Analysis (Z.O. Section 10.3-2.b.8)*
 - c. *A Tax and School Impact Analysis (Z.O. Section 10.3-2.b.8)*
2. *Conditional approval of Special Use Permits for the Preliminary and Final PUD application documents listed in attached Exhibit 4 and for the construction and operation of a new Institutional Use in the form of the proposed Training Complex project as reflected in those documents. Conditions of approval of these special use permits include:*
 - a. *Final staff approval of the final construction engineering design plans for the project including, but not limited to, site geometry, traffic study, and stormwater management.*
 - b. *Final approval of an IGA between the City and LTFPD prior to any improvements or interconnections being made to City Well #11 for the purpose of providing City well water service for training purposes at the Training Complex.*
 - c. *Final City approval of a Plat of Easement dedication as deemed necessary by the City Engineer.*
 - d. *IDOT approval is secured prior to construction of any new driveway improvement onto Division Street.*

- e. *“Alternative 1 Plantings” shall be considered part of the required Phase 1 landscaping for the project.*
 - f. *All new pole mounted parking lot and drive aisle light fixtures shall be installed, equipped with necessary shielding, and maintained in a manner where the bottom glass of the fixture remains parallel to the adjacent grade level in order to ensure all lighting is directed downward. .*
3. *Approval of PUD Exceptions that would:*
- a. *Allow the building facades to be constructed with the level of masonry reflected in Project Application Binder Exhibit G.*
 - b. *Allow the building facades of the main training and maintenance building to incorporate the use of metal façade panels as reflected in the building elevation drawings attached to the Project Narrative application binder as Exhibit G.*
 - c. *Allow the following accessory structures to have a height in excess of 15-feet:*
 - *Training Tower Classroom/Bldg. 2 (Application Binder Exhibit Binder Exhibit I) is proposed with a maximum 15'-6" height.*
 - *Main Burn Training Tower (Application Binder Exhibit M) is proposed with a maximum height of 45'-3".*
 - *The sound attenuation wall proposed at the north end of the firing range (Application Binder Exhibit F) is proposed with a maximum height of 20'-6"*
 - d. *Allow the main burn tower building and the adjacent outdoor classroom facility to be constructed with shipping containers.*
 - e. *Allow the bottom edge of the wall sign proposed on the west building façade of the main training and maintenance facility to be located 6-0' above grade.*
 - f. *Allow the Division Street curb cut width for the proposed Training Complex to be 150' in width.*
 - g. *Allow the four above parking lot islands illustrated on Application Binder as Exhibit A as being to be paved and striped to not be landscaped.*
 - h. *Eliminate the requirement to provide a designated large loading zone in the project.*

It is important to note that the above staff recommendations do not encompass the special zoning approvals required to construct or operate the proposed firing range component of this project at this time due to the outstanding sound study information that is still being finalized by the Applicant's sound engineering consultant. Approval of the following separate Z.O. text amendments and additional special use permit would be required for this component of the project to proceed:

- 1. Zoning Ordinance text amendments to:
 - a. Add the following definition for *“Outdoor Firing Range, Government Training Purposes”* to the Zoning Ordinance: “The use of a designated outdoor areas accessory to a government training facility for the discharging of firearms for the purposes of target practice or military/law enforcement training.”
 - b. Add the *“Outdoor Firing Range, Governmental Training Purposes”* to the list of potential special uses allowed in the M-1 zoning district.
 - c. Add minimum parking requirements for the *“Outdoor Firing Range, Governmental Training Purposes”* land use that would require any such facility to provide one parking space for each firing station plus two parking spaces for instructor and employee use.
 - d. Specifically exempt *“Outdoor Firing Range, Governmental Training Facilities”* from existing Z.O. Noise Performance Standards.

2. Special use permit that would allow for the construction and operation of the new accessory Governmental Training Firing Range as described and illustrated in the various in the Application Binder and Preliminary/Final PUD documents submitted for project on the Subject Property. If this special use is ultimately recommended for approval, staff recommends the following conditions be attached to its approval:
 - a. Unless otherwise required by these conditions of approval, the firing range shall be operated in compliance with the information included in subsection 3 of Part 2 of the Project Narrative application binder for this project (see pages 8-13 of Part 2).
 - b. The maximum number of night shootings allowed each calendar month shall be agreed upon between the Applicant and the City Council.
 - c. The final construction design drawings for the firing range shall comply with the current edition of the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges. The range shall also be designed to prevent contamination of any waterway considered "Waters of the U.S." as defined by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, wetland or floodplain in accordance with the Clean Water Act.
 - d. No live ammunition training shall be allowed on Sundays unless otherwise approved by the City Council for special events.
 - e. The firing range spotlights shall only be operated when the firing range is in use within the hours of operation allowed by the City approved special use permit for the range.
 - f. If complaints from Crest Hill property owners persist after the outdoor firing range opens, the Applicant shall appear before the City Council to discuss the complaints and if and how the hours of operation of the range can be adjusted to address the complaints without materially impacting the ability of the range to meet the mandatory training needs of authorized users.
 - g. Add the following definition for "*Outdoor Firing Range, Government Training Purposes*" to the Zoning Ordinance: "The use of a designated outdoor areas accessory to a government training facility for the discharging of firearms for the purposes of target practice or military/law enforcement training."

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
January 22, 2024

The January 22, 2024 City Council work session was called to order by Mayor Raymond R. Soliman at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 20600 City Center Blvd. Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois.

The following Council members were present: Mayor Raymond Soliman, City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall, City Treasurer Glen Conklin, Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderman John Vershay, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti, Alderman Nate Albert, Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also present were: Police Chief Ed Clark, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Public Works Director Blaine Kline, Interim Planner Maura Rigoni, Community Development Director Ron Mentzer, Building Commissioner Don Seeman, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Finance Director Lisa Banovetz.

TOPIC: LTFD Training/Maintenance Facility

Mayor Raymond Soliman announced that we have several guests from the Lockport Fire Protection District in the audience tonight to discuss the Lockport Fire District Training Center. Mayor Soliman introduced Lockport Fire Chief John O'Connor, Division Chief of Training Dave Izquierdo, and Deputy Fire Chief Frank Blaskey.

Fire Chief O'Connor approached the podium and gave a presentation on the concept for the training center on Division Street. This is a project that they have been dreaming of for the past twenty years so that they can have a dedicated training facility for the fire fighters. He stated that the presentation is based off their mission and vision and is why they need a training facility of this size. He then read off their Mission and Vision: To effectively provide professional, caring emergency service to those in need with courage, honor, and commitment and to continually improve our services through community interaction, progressive training, and utilizing latest technologies. We will be ready, able, and qualified to respond to all public safety needs. He explained public safety needs have expanded in the last twenty years. It used to be fire and Emergency Management Services and now it has expanded to technical rescue, water rescue, search and rescue, hazardous materials, fire investigation and all these matters they need to be subject experts. These calls are high risk low frequency type of emergencies and the only way to be proficient is with training.

He explained that they have conducted a SWOT analysis which is strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This analysis has identified some weaknesses within the fire district and some of the weaknesses were: lack of dedicated training facility, lack of live fire training, not enough training on basic firefighting of auto extraction, hands on physical training, standalone vehicle maintenance facility, and vehicle maintenance department for outstanding repairs. They currently do their practical training at the old convent in Lockport owned by St. Joe's Church which was an abandon building that they use for training now.

The property was attained through the State of Illinois and is on Stateville property and is thirteen acres. The property is centrally located to the fire department since they will still be on duty while doing the training.

There will be a training maintenance facility building with parking for over one hundred vehicles, there will be a driver's course, fuel depot, and extra emergency vehicle storage. There will also be a classroom for about one hundred people, locker rooms, office space, storage, and six drive through bays with twelve bays for vehicle maintenance. They currently take on vehicle maintenance for Homer Fire, and Channahon Fire, would like to take on Wilmington Fire but with the current situation there is no space but with more bays they can expand their vehicle maintenance program.

It was stated that the training center needs to be four stories. The two top stories on the four-story center will be empty in case the police would like to come in and do room cleaning. (Short video was shown on the training center and explanation of the building was given with the video).

Chief O'Connor commented that they wanted to focus on the training of their fire personnel and have room to grow for the next fifty years. He explained that the public safety departments are on many calls together and work together and that it would be ideal if they could train together and be able to provide better services to the community.

Chief O'Connor also explained that there is concern about a gun range in Crest Hill but there are four arson investigators who have side arm pieces and are sworn officers and have arresting powers. These officers need to be qualified every year and they had thought of a later phase to have a small gun range since there is room to do so and fulfill all the training needs. It was then discussed that why not have Romeville Police, Lockport Police, and Crest Hill Police utilize this as well.

He also commented that Lockport Police had desire to have a gun range but that had fallen through. It was then suggested to work together where Fire Protection has the land, and they had the funding. Chief O'Connor commented that they want all their public safety partners to be able to utilize the facility and not just the gun range and work together with other police departments for a safe gun range.

Chief O'Connor commented that another partnership could be with Tri-River Police Training Region and the Director Brad Hertzmann was there to explain what Tri River is responsible for. It was commented that Tri River Police Training Region is responsible for all the continuing education for police in a three-county area and is currently held out of the Plainfield Police Department. It was stated that is a nice partnership with the Plainfield Police Department but there are challenges. Some of the challenges are gaining access to the building, space, and they must share the training classroom with the police. Chief O'Connor commented that if they can build their new facility, they could accommodate Tri River and they could have a classroom for thirty-five students, four offices, kitchen type facility, I.T. Room, and a dedicated entrance for Tri River. Tri River would provide lease payments to the fire department, and they would run all the continued education out of the new facility in Crest Hill.

Brad Hertzmann approached the podium and stated that this would be the first fire and police training facility in the State of Illinois. He commented that this facility will give

them an opportunity to offer several types of training that is a major part of what the officers go through. This would give us the opportunity to purchase the simulator and have departments from Will, Grundy, and Kankakee Counties to utilize that simulator.

Alderman Cipiti thanked the Chief O'Connor and the rest of the department for coming tonight and presenting the information. He also stated that all the City Council have the upmost respect and support of the fire departments, police department, and all first responders and thanked them for all they did. Alderman Cipiti asked at what point did you reach out to the City of Crest Hill with the ideas and plans to build this facility. Chief O'Connor commented that after he received approval from the fire board in August of 2023, but did not have any plans or designs just a study to know what this might cost. It was October of 2023 when we reached out to the mayor and asked what the next step would be, and it was mentioned to bring this in front of the Plan Commission and City Council. He also stated that the mayor informed him that until the fire department has plans there is nothing to do and then when there is, it will go before the planning commission. Alderman Cipiti commented that the Council did not learn anything about this until December after a sign was placed for the residents about what would be built there and now, we are playing catch up.

Fire Chief O'Connor stated that he placed his business card on the dais for all Council members and please feel free to contact him with any questions or concerns.

Alderwoman Gazal thanked them for coming out today and she commented that they are so professional. She also wanted to thank our Lobbyist, Josh Hassert, for bringing this to the Council. She also commented that she thinks this is a beautiful building and it is an asset to the City of Crest Hill but there is an issue with the gun range, and it is her job to represent her residents. She stated that as she learned tonight there will be municipalities utilizing this facility and this would create more traffic by extending this out to other agencies. She commented that people will not like this in their backyard and that will affect many pets in the area. Chief O'Connor commented that he can certainly understand her concern but if you are weighing that verses your community and your police officers being proficient, this will out way the gun shots in the area where there is already two gun ranges in the area. Chief O'Connor commented that this gun range will be one hundred yards and it can be designed with berms that will help reduce the sounds. Alderwoman Gazal also commented that this will be a health hazard and pollution for the air quality from the lead being left in the dirt/ground. Chief O'Connor stated that he could not speak to that since he is not aware of any studies of lead leaking in water or dirt and causing ground or air pollution and if she were aware of a study, he would be happy to look into it.

Alderman Cipiti asked if they had looked into other locations that are further away from residential areas. Chief O'Connor commented that they originally looked at the property by Wilco but because of it being close to Lewis University and close to planes that would not be good and would be a challenge. He commented that they also talked to the Park District and Forest Preserve but the area they were providing would not be large enough and could not construct a building because of water drainage.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that she talked to one of the trustees on Saturday and was told that the amount of dirt that will be left over from building the facility would be cheaper to use it to build the gun range than haul the dirt away. Chief O'Connor said that that is not

the reason for the gun range and there will be dirt and the advantage will be to use the dirt to put a berm around the entire property.

Alderwoman Gazal also asked why the City of Lockport Police Department does not build their own gun range and everyone goes there. Chief O'Connor commented that they did originally have land and funding, but he does not know why this did not get followed through. Alderwoman Gazal also commented that Romeoville has a gun range and does not need this range. Chief O'Connor commented that that is not necessarily true, and they have a small range already but can only qualify for small handguns. Alderwoman Gazal commented that they have been managing with that. Chief O'Connor asked her if managing is the bar and she commented that when there are residents affected than it is.

Chief O'Connor commented that you cannot train enough for a situation that they may come against that could kill you, and this would be a great opportunity. Alderwoman Gazal suggested that they do an indoor gun range. Chief O'Connor commented that the cost for an outdoor gun range versus an indoor gun range is a lot. He also commented that the fire department is going out for the funding without putting a referendum on the ballot and making the taxpayers pay more or asking Crest Hill.

Alderman Jefferson asked if anyone asked about polling the residents for this facility and it was stated that residents were not polled. Chief O'Connor commented that they have looked at every other option in our community and this is the best location that is centrally located. Alderman Jefferson commented that he went to a facility in East Dundee and was able to walk around and he questioned the acoustics, so the sound does not travel outside. He also commented that he is 100% for public safety, fire fighters, and police but he cannot come back to the residents and say he will vote for another gun range.

Chief O'Connor explained the difference between indoor and outdoor gun ranges and the distance to qualify with a rifle which is what they need. Alderman Jefferson questioned about the control burns and that he supports anything that does not affect the residents, and the animals. Chief O'Connor commented that they are under regulation with the state on what they can burn and that it is clean smoke to make it realistic to an actual fire and there will be certain rooms that will be used to burn.

Alderman Dyke commented that the main concern is the gun range and feels the Council will support the training center but feels there should be another location for the gun range where it is not a residential area. He also commented that he has seen plenty of areas in Lockport that would not affect anyone.

Chief O'Connor commented that having the gun range would be ideal for fire and police to work together and the partnership would be ideal.

Alderman Vershay commented that the complex is about 30 years too late, and asked how close the range will be from the subdivision. Chief O'Connor commented that he will need to look into the distance. He also asked which direction they would be shooting. Chief O'Connor commented that they would be shooting in the opposite direction of the residential area. Alderman Vershay commented that he feels this is needed now more than ever to stay on top of the crime. He also commented that at 3:00a.m. he hears gun training at Stateville and he does not see a problem with the location where it is being built but he does not live by it, and he thinks it is a good idea.

Alderman Dyke asked if he is given permission to hunt geese on a farmer's property within city limits, would that be legal. Chief Clark commented that no he could not do that legally in city limits.

Alderperson Oberlin commented that she appreciates the firefighters and police officers, but she feels that the gun range was hidden from them, and it is unfortunate that having several people in that meeting, and no one thought about letting the Council know what was being planned.

Chief O'Connor commented that they did not get any approval from the Board until August and the first meeting was the with Crest Hill.

Mayor Soliman clarified that the meeting was not in September. He commented that the meeting with the fire department was on October 26th at 11:00a.m. and in attendance was Blaine Kline, Ed Clark, Ron Wiedeman, Maura Rigoni, Don Seeman and Steve Gulden. He also commented that the meeting was just informational on what is required.

Alderman Albert asked about the budget and the total cost of the facility. Chief O'Connor commented that the cost is approximately twelve million dollars. Alderman Albert commented that this is a phenomenal project, however we have been good partners with the fire department, and we should have more conversation with the Council, and that there needs to be a form of buffer between the project and the residents.

Mayor Soliman asked if anyone would like to make a public comment.

Julie Pearce, a resident, commented that if the wind blows west, they can hear the gun range on Route 53 like if it is the fourth of July all day and night. She also commented that it impacts the residents, pets, and veterans.

Erma Castro, a resident, commented that she is in support of the training facility and is appreciative of all the firefighters and what they do but it is not a win-win situation, the residents are baring a loss. The residents are losing property value and quiet enjoyment, and this is the straw that breaks the camels back. She also commented that the decision is going to keep her in Crest Hill living up to the commitment she made when buying her home or it will make her run for her money. As a resident she stated that she feels the dream they work so hard for will no longer be able to enjoy.

Therese Stellato, a resident, commented that she owns three properties and when the wind blows right you can hear the gunshots inside or outside of their home. She stated she has no problem with the training center, but a gun range will make her move and sell all three properties.

Christina Pershey, a resident, commented that she supports a gun range but asks to rethink an indoor range or sound absorption so that the sound is contained.

Stuart Soifer, a resident, commented that the Council and most residents agree with the training center and not the gun range. He also commented that he feels if the Council were aware of this before December and architect had not gone through the design you would have had all this input. Chief O'Connor commented that nothing is out to bid and there is

nothing to put out to bid since there is no plans. He also commented that all they have done is a study to see if the land was able to be built on. Stuart commented that whomever you spoke to in the city would have sent out an executive memorandum and possibly pushed this in a different manner by sharing with the Council.

Linda Dyke, a resident, asked the mayor if this would go by Carillon Lakes Subdivision how would they feel. She also commented on how they screamed about lights from a hot dog stand. She stated that she is not against the training center. She also commented that she is no fool and that the meeting that was held was where Steve Gulden was at, but Steve Gulden works with Josh Hassert and Josh Hassert never heard about it. The residents elect the Council to know what is going on in the community and asked the mayor how he feels about this and stated the mayor can never answer a question. It was then said by someone that it is comments not questions. She then commented that she wished the mayor would resign.

Aderman Cipiti asked the mayor what his opinion is about the gun range. Mayor Soliman commented that there are positive and negatives on the gun range. He also commented that he is not sure what the frequency of the usage of the firing range is. He also commented that the communities are not going to use it 24/7 and they will only have to qualify twice a year. He commented that when he lived on Clement Street, he could hear District 5 and Stateville, same living in Carillon Lakes as well. He does feel there could be improvements to the gun range, but he agrees with the fire chief that there is a great opportunity to train our firefighters. Mayor Soliman commented that he feels for the residents, but nothing will happen coming out of the meeting tonight. He commented that there is a process for the fire department to move forward and if they wish to move forward, they will follow the same rules and regulations with the city that everyone would have to follow.

Alderperson Oberlin commented that she is in full support of the training facility but to say it is no cost to the city when you heard residents speaking about how they are already affected, and this is a cost to the city and residents. She also commented that as much as she loves the aspect of the facility and welcomes it to the city, the gun range is a big issue.

Chief O'Connor commented that when he referenced no cost to the city, he meant monetary. He also stated he will take away a lot from this meeting and asked for everyone to keep an open mind. He stated that the mayor is right this is early in the process, and he just wanted the opportunity to address the City Council and do something for public safety.

Alderwoman Gazal asked what happens if we change an ordinance to not allow a gun range within several miles of the city. Chief O'Connor commented that that is your prerogative, and the land did not cost them \$1.00 and that would be something they would have to think about.

Several Council members thanked Chief O'Connor and all the departments that came out tonight to discuss this issue with the gun range.

TOPIC: 1269 Caton Farm Road Permit Fee Reduction

Building Commissioner Don Seeman commented that he has a permit fee reduction for 1269 Caton Farm Road, a building that is being built by Mr. John Russ Jr. He commented that in December 2021, Mr. Russ came to the city and received a permit for a cost of \$4,520.00 but did not start the work due to some circumstances. In August of 2023, he

Exhibit 2

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS May 13, 2024

The May 13, 2024 City Council work session was called to order by Mayor Raymond R. Soliman at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 20600 City Center Blvd. Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois.

The following Council members were present: Mayor Raymond Soliman, City Treasurer Glen Conklin, Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti, Alderman Nate Albert, Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also Present were: Interim Administrator Tony Graff, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Interim Finance Director Carron Johnson, Interim Public Works Director Mike Eulitz, Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer, City Attorney Mike Stiff, Deputy Clerk Karen Kozerka.

Absent were: City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall, Police Chief Ed Clark, Building Commissioner Don Seeman, Interim City Planner Maura Rigoni.

TOPIC: Presentation by QuikTrip Corporation – Purchase Proposal for Old City Hall Property 1610 Plainfield Road

Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer commented that there was a publication in the paper notifying the public that the City is accepting proposals to purchase the property and the only submittal was from QuikTrip for the purpose of redevelopment of the property. QuikTrip is present at the meeting and would like to talk a little more about their thoughts and development plans for this site. Interim Director Mentzer recommended that the Council does not have any discussion on the terms of the transaction during open session, there would need to be a discussion in a closed session regarding the terms of transaction.

Charlie Tarwater and Jeremy Foreman with GW Properties approached the podium, introduced themselves, and gave a background to who QuikTrip is. QuikTrip started over sixty (60) years ago in Tulsa, Oklahoma as just a convenient store with no gas purchases. They have grown exponentially moving into markets such as St. Louis, Atlanta, Phoenix, Tucson, Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, and Denver. The Chicagoland area is a new market they have recently been exploring, and the closest one would be in Addison. Last year they celebrated their one thousandth store opening and as of today they have 1,070 stores nationwide. They do employment approximately 25,000 people nationwide and that is corporate employees, store employees, and deliver techs and quality techs. They are privately held and rated as the top one hundred best companies to work for, as well as Forbes top one hundred privately held companies. They donate 5% of their profit each year and last year that number was roughly \$50,000,000.00. They are a registered national safe place, which means any youth who feels they are in danger can come to their store and tell a team member they do not feel safe and will be escorted back to a safe location in the store where a store team member can contact the proper authorities.

Mayor Soliman asked for any questions or comments. There were none.

AYES: Ald. Dyke, Jefferson, Gazal, Oberlin, Cipiti, Albert, Kubal.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

TOPIC: City of Crest Hill Gun/Shooting Range Regulations

Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer commented that this stems from a work session meeting where the Fire District came and presented their development plans for their multiuse complex and Alderman Cipiti asked that there be another discussion regarding what specific regulations the City has in place that addresses the gun shooting range proposed. He also commented that after researching there are no specific regulations that would allow or prohibit gun ranges. He went on to explain the structure of the zoning ordinance not listing gun ranges or shooting ranges in any zoning district, which has a catch-all stating that if it is not listed, it is automatically prohibited by zoning ordinance. Interim Director Mentzer commented in order to allow the gun range under the structure of the City's Ordinance they would have to do a Public Hearing where the City Council will find and approve a Special Use permit where they would find a gun range similar to something else that is already in the zoning ordinance but there is nothing in the Ordinance that you will find similar as a gun range. The only other option accommodating a gun range would be for the applicant to ask for a Text Amendment to the Zoning Regulations that would add some type of gun range listing as a possible permitted use in that particular zoning range, which is M-1, and this would still require a Plan Commission Public Hearing.

Interim Director Mentzer commented that in his opinion as the zoning administrator for the community, he feels the best course of action is to do nothing since the ordinance does not accommodate this and if the Fire District wants to do it at some point in time and make their formal application and they will need to ask for an amendment to the Text of the Zoning Ordinance.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that basically if they do not come for approval, they cannot build a gun range. Interim Director Mentzer commented that that would be his interpretation. Attorney Mike Stiff commented that he concurs with everything Interim Director Mentzer stated, and he thinks that the Text Amendment would go through the entire process of a Public Hearing and residents will come in and speak about it and you will receive a recommendation from the Plan Commission and ultimately it is the City Council's decision.

Alderman Oberlin commented that once again the cart was put before the horse, and they did not have their facts and Council did not learn about it until after the fact.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that the fact our State Representative Natalie Manley is reaching out to some of us to convince us, tells us how much they want it.

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
CITY COUNCIL OF CREST HILL
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
September 9, 2024

The September 9, 2024, City Council work session was called to order by Mayor Raymond R. Soliman at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 20600 City Center Blvd. Crest Hill, Will County, Illinois.

The following Council members were present: Mayor Raymond Soliman, City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall, City Treasurer Glen Conklin, Alderman Scott Dyke, Alderwoman Jennifer Methvin, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderwoman Claudia Gazal, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti, Alderman Nate Albert, Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also Present were: Interim Administrator Tony Graff, City Attorney Mike Stiff, Deputy Chief Ryan Dobczyk, Deputy Chief Jason Opiola, Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer, Building Department Don Seeman, City Attorney Mike Stiff.

Absent were: Police Chief Ed Clark, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Interim Finance Director Erica Waggoner, Interim Employee Relations Dave Strahl, Interim Public Works Director Mike Eulitz.

TOPIC: Review of Conceptual Planned Unit Development (PUD) Plans and Related Special Zoning Request for Proposed Lockport Township Fire Protection District Training Grounds Facility

City Attorney Mike Stiff spoke on the procedure for tonight's meeting and stated this is a Step II Conceptual Plan Procedure Hearing under the Crest Hill Zoning Code. It is a very preliminary matter for the applicant to inform the Council as to the general scope of the application as well as addressing zoning approvals that were in the Staff Memo. He also commented that this is not a Public Hearing. There will be a Public Hearing that will happen in the future, which will be before the Plan Commission and that is where the public will have the opportunity to examine and cross examine the applicant who is under oath. Attorney Stiff did state that there would be public comments, but it is not a question-and-answer time, this would be a time to make your comment, and it will need to be under three minutes or less.

Interim Community Development Director Ron Mentzer commented that there was an initial pre-application meeting with Fire District Personnel and their fire team, along with their architects on the project. The proposed facility includes a new 23,100 square foot training and maintenance facility along the Division Street frontage of the thirteen-acre site that the State of Illinois gifted the Fire District. They are also proposing a forty-five-foot tall, 7,892 square foot burn tower training facility that would be constructed out of metal storage containers and a 3,360 square foot training tower classroom building and the last building they are proposing is a storage/bathroom accessory building that would be 1,280 square feet. Finally, their plan does call for construction development of a Law Enforcement Shooting Range and restricted of use by law enforcement agencies only. This building would be twenty-five yards wide and one hundred yards long.

According to the City's Zoning Ordinance it is required that the project be processed as a Plan Unit Development (PUD) and the City Council will need to approve a special use permit that would document the approval of the PUD, plans for the project, and outline the special restrictions and conditions that would be attached. This would all be submitted to the Plan Commission for a Public Hearing to be conducted.

The applicant will be requesting a zoning variation to allow the burn tower to be forty-five feet tall, which is an accessory structure and is normally limited to fifteen feet in height. They are also requesting a zoning variation for a reduction in masonry building materials on certain proposed buildings. One of the training buildings of the burn tower are proposed to be constructed using shipping containers and in the zoning ordinance it prohibits the use of shipping containers in the community, which they will be requesting a variation to use shipping containers. Finally, the zoning ordinance prohibits any new gun ranges/shooting ranges in the community and for this to be potentially approved the applicant will need to request a text amendment to the zoning ordinance that would define and list law enforcement shooting range as a possible special use.

Jason, a FGM architect for the Lockport Township Fire Department commented that they have worked with the district for many years. He gave a presentation explaining the 12.8 acres off Division Street, just to the west of Stateville. This is a training maintenance facility with parking that would accommodate parking for the training programs as well as vehicle/equipment storage in the back as part of the maintenance facility. Part of the grounds will be for training in vehicle maneuvering. At the rear of the property will be the law enforcement range and in the middle of the lot is a pond which will be for rescue and training, as well as retention and will be up to twenty feet deep for dive training. The facility will have outdoor classrooms to allow them to evaluate evolutions during training and remove them out of the weather and wind.

The building is a pre-engineered structure that is skinned with masonry and metal and the building to the west will be the main entrance. The prefabricated burn structure has different training pieces for multiple uses of training.

The need for the training facility has been coming along time and being able to get this site was a lot of work and a high priority in the long-term plan. The facility started as they realized they needed public safety throughout the region and the district was approached by multiple agencies, specifically law enforcement, with opportunities to utilize and co-exist on the site.

Chief O'Connor spoke about the changes made since the last work session meeting regarding the gun range. He stated that they presented last time in the early stages of the project. Since they work together with law enforcement every day, they thought why not share this facility with law enforcement to help keep our community safe which will benefit all. This project will not increase taxes for our residents. The range will be funded solely by the Lockport Police Department and will be shared with the Police Departments and the fire district which would include City of Crest Hill, City of Lockport and Village of Romeoville, State Police, and Will County Sheriff along with the Fire Department.

Some of the changes were made, after hearing the concerns of the residents, was regarding the sound. The range is approximately one hundred yards long by twenty-five yards wide. It has been relocated to the southeast corner of the training grounds, which is furthest away

from Ward 2. Much of the training will be using handguns on the southernmost part of the range which is fifteen to twenty yards from the end berm and the firing direction would be to the south, which is the opposite direction of Ward 2. The entire range will be surrounded by twenty-five-foot berms with natural vegetation designed to dampen sound.

There will be electric on the range for night qualifications and have a canopy for weather. The range will be owned by the Lockport Township Fire Protection District but will be designed, built, and operated by the Lockport Police Department and an intergovernmental agreement will be drafted to outline these parameters. This is not a public range.

Deputy Chief Ron Huff of the Lockport Police Department introduced himself and stated that he has been a Range Master for twenty years and is certified through the University of Illinois Police Training Institute. He spoke about the gun range and stated for the purpose of this discussion the sound is the biggest concern. The biggest noise of the gun shot comes from the barrel and goes forward and two things are done to help that, which was turning the range away from the residents to lower the amount of noise created and creating berms at the end of the firing line. Which is why they propose to create twenty-five-foot berms around almost the entire range structure. The only portion that would not have berms would be at the rear of the range in which a small access point would be to get on the range. You typically do not place trees on the firing points of the berm, but the rear berm will have trees and pines to try to reduce the noise.

He also explained three different guns were tested in a sound study without a berm and that came back at 88 decibels and then tested with a berm and that came back at 62 decibels which is a normal conversation sound when people are talking at three feet apart. He stated by simply turning the range and adding a berm they are reducing the noise level by twenty percent.

Alderman Oberlin commented that originally, she thought someone had stated that any agency can utilize the facility range, which is alarming to her since that would be non-stop gun firing. Deputy Chief Huff commented that any agency can use the training grounds but not the firing range. He stated that the firing range is restricted to the City of Lockport, City of Crest Hill, Village of Romeoville, and Lockport Township Park District Police.

Alderman Oberlin also asked how it will be placed in the agreement that not every municipality can utilize this. Chief O'Connor commented that it could be a Memorandum of Understanding between Lockport Police Department and Lockport Fire Protection District that there are restrictions, and they have no problem putting this into writing and state who can use it and how it will work.

Attorney Mike Stiff commented that if it comes from the Plan Commission as a condition with a recommendation and if it does not come with a recommendation, and the Council wants to put the condition in place it can all be written in the PUD ordinance as a condition and a restriction. He also commented that an IGA could be a potential requirement if you want to take it further.

Mayor Soliman asked out of the four law enforcement agencies, what would be an average of use on how many times the range would be in operation on a monthly or yearly basis.

Deputy Chief Huff commented that Lockport is on the range fourteen times a year, but he could not speak for other agencies, since some only use the range minimally for a long-range rifle shoot.

Alderman Methvin asked if there is a way to make a public announcement for the days there will be night shooting. Deputy Chief Huff commented that they can pass that information along to the city to make that announcement, because it would not do any good for them to make an announcement. The range schedule is made early in the year and that schedule remains throughout the year. Deputy Chief Huff commented that if he had to guess on the high end, it would be seventy-five to eighty days a year.

Alderman Gazal asked if it is not necessary to shoot so many times a year, why not partner with District 5? Deputy Chief Huff commented that Lockport does not shoot at District 5 any longer because it is impossible to get range time there since they are a busy range. Lockport shoots between April and October and they now use the Department of Corrections instead of District 5.

Alderman Gazal asked since District 5 and Stateville are going to rebuild their very own gun range could you all partner together to build one big/enclosed and/or open gun range facility and share one range. Deputy Chief Huff commented that the feasibility of building an indoor range that is large enough to accept the number of agencies that must qualify would not be economically feasible and be a huge building.

Alderman Gazal commented that public safety is number one, and she wonders why no one has come to the city in the past for a better outcome that will suit everyone. Chief O'Connor commented that they have been working on this facility for many years and have had courtesy meetings with the City of Crest Hill to inform them of a conceptual idea and coordinating with the City of Crest Hill to make sure we did not go after property that the city was also interested in. They have always coordinated with the City of Crest Hill from day one.

Alderman Methvin asked if they foresee hiring related to this since more people will train at the facility and are new to the departments. Chief O'Connor commented that their goal is to have this facility operate for on-duty staff but there are possibilities.

Mayor Soliman asked if the smoke will be contained in the training facility. Chief O'Connor commented that in the tower itself they would only burn pallets and hay, and they would not need much smoke or fire to create a realistic atmosphere, and this would dissipate quickly for the small amount of smoke.

Alderman Gazal asked questions from residents, one of the questions was why Lockport denied the open range facility. Deputy Chief Huff commented that it has never been denied by Lockport since they had never found a suitable piece of property within the City of Lockport, so that is not accurate information.

She then asked if the grant was given to the Lockport Police Department how can the Lockport Township Fire use the grant. Chief O'Connor commented that the way the legislative is written is that it can be used for public safety and is very general in its statement as long as it is for public safety. He also commented that it is not a grant. Alderman Gazal then asked if Lockport Police Department was given a grant for this.

Chief O'Connor commented that Lockport Police Department was never given a grant, there is no grant. He also commented that the Police Department is building the range out of their operating budget.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that there are concerns about lead and pollution and finding the way into the ground water. It was stated that the amount of lead is manageable compared to the amount of dirt and the rounds will be in the berm opposed to directly in the ground. It was stated that drainage will be going toward the pond and treated to make the pond safe for the water training.

Alderman Oberlin asked about an IGA and where the water will come from, so they are not using the Lake Michigan water. The building itself would have Lake Michigan Water but for the training it would be one of the wells kept in service for the emergency water supply, which must be actuated monthly. The study on the amount they will be using the water system for their live fire training was cents and the city would work together with the Fire Department.

Alderman Oberlin asked if there is any where we can go to observe a gun range at the sixty-two decimal range. Lockport Police Department commented that he is not aware of any range that has berms to go listen and view.

Alderman Dyke commented that where he lives, he is not sure where the shots he hears are coming from, but he hears them, and he lives farther away from the range. Chief O'Connor replied that a lot goes into hearing the shot, such as the wind and energy but at the Lockport Police Department they will occasionally hear firing coming from District 5 and they are not located nearby. It was then explained that noise goes in the direction of travel but if it hits the berm, the noise goes directly upward and does not come down but when you shoot a gun and there is nothing to stop the noise it is just all open.

Alderwoman Gazal asked if they were to build a smaller scaled training facility would they not need the gun range since they would not need the money from the Police Department. Chief O'Connor commented that that is not a correct statement, they are not receiving any money from the Police Department. The Fire Department is working with the Police Department providing land and they have been looking for land for many years as well.

She also asked if this would go to referendum and affect the taxpayers. It was stated the Fire Department will be getting a bond which is like a mortgage for twenty years and this will not be going back to the taxpayers for funds.

Alderman Albert thanked them for coming back with a revised plan and the location of the gun range. He also commented that the City of Crest Hill is in a unique position because we have a lot of state property that the state is trying to give to different agencies, and he applauds them for the efforts in obtaining that land and making the investment in the City of Crest Hill. He commented that he feels they have done everything they can to reduce the sound of the gun range. He also commented that he applauds them since they have done more with this gun range proposal than the Department of Corrections or the State of Illinois has, and they continue to build on to their facilities without any conversations with the City of Crest Hill.

Attorney Stiff commented that if anyone would like to memorialize something in writing in addition to what they are saying tonight during the public comment section they can fill out a form that is located on the table in the foyer and that will be part of the file that will go to Plan Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEM #1:

Robert, a resident on Borio Drive, commented that he is concerned that this is an open firing range, and it is too close to the houses, and he has been at ranges where there have been accidents because those bullets go places. He also commented that Division Street is crazy as it already, and this will create more traffic.

Alderman Albert had a resident reach out to him via email and wanted Alderman Albert to read his statement. Alderman Albert read the statement from Mr. Harry Blackburn, Attorney at Law. The statement read that Harry is a resident of Carillon Lakes and he stated that he is aware of the facility and the gun range being proposed and wanted to state that he is in favor of the facility and the built-in sound suppression and is hoping the Council will vote and approve the training facility once the proposal becomes finalized.

John Batusich, a resident, and a Fire Trustee commented that they are reducing the noise by 20% and it is being done the correct way, this will be an important part of our city and the safety of our community and our Police and Fire Officers who protect all of us. He commented that this will take our Fire District and our community to the next level. He then commented that we are the 'City of Neighbors.'

Paul Siegel, a business owner, and a Trustee commented that he is near to this project, and he commented that the fire and police work together on almost every call. They need to depend on the police to watch their backs during calls and this facility will protect the community and the backs of the Fire and Police Department members. He also commented that no one wants someone to come help that did not get the proper training, you want an experienced, trained, equipped, and capable person to come to your call of need.

Patricia Burnett, resident of Lockport, commented that she hears the gunfire every Saturday and Sunday and deals with it because she wants these individuals trained so well that when they come to her house when needed they are fully trained. She also commented that she is a Lockport Commissioner, along with Rhonda Cassagrande who is also a Commissioner and a Crest Hill resident, and they hire Fire Fighters. She then commented that they look for people with integrity, honesty, compassion, and passion and once hired they must be trained, and this facility will be able to train these officers, and it will be cost efficient to the Fire Department. She then asked the Council to think long and hard on their decision to move forward and protect the citizens in their area.

Larry Campbell, a resident of Carillon Lakes, commented that he has had Lockport Township Fire at his residence, and they are in their subdivision often, and he would like to see the city support them in their new adventure in training our people. He would like them to be well trained when carrying a gun. He then commented that the noise level will be down, and it will not cost the taxpayers. He then congratulated the fire department on their proposal.

Aldersperson Oberlin commented that she appreciates all they have put into the proposal and the adjustments they have made, and she thanked the Fire Department for how well they are already trained since she used the Fire Department in the past.

Mayor Soliman thanked everyone for their professional presentation and the respect of the residents and the department members. He also commented that he feels this is a great opportunity and asset for the community which will protect all.

City Administrator Graff commented that Interim Director Mentzer would like directions on what needs to be done by the Fire Department.

Interim Director Mentzer suggested directing the applicant to revise their application materials and addressing the staff comments prior to submitting the application to the Plan Commission for Public Hearing.

Alderwoman Gazal commented that she never stated she was against the training facility, she believes it will be an asset to the city, but she will not vote for the gun range. Alderwoman Gazal also commented that she will not vote if it is not in two different votes, one for the fire training facility and the other for the gun range.

Interim Administrator Graff commented that he recommends voting on this proposal how it is, because it is a package deal.

Alderman Cipiti commented that he has concerns with the firing range but would like the training facility and he would like to see a separated vote, as well.

Alderman Albert commented that we are in a unique situation because Stateville is within the city limits, and they have parceled pieces of land, and this is an opportunity for them to obtain land for zero dollars and is a great investment for our community.

Alderman Jefferson commented that he feels it is a great opportunity for the city but on the other hand he hears the gun shots, and he feels the communication he has had and the research he has done on the noise reduction is creditable. He also commented that it means a lot for all the effort they have put forward on the project.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote for both facilities, the training facility, and the gun range.

AYES: Ald. Methvin, Oberlin, Albert, Kubal, Jefferson.

NAYES: Ald. Gazal, Cipiti, Dyke.

ABSENT: None.

Alderwoman Methvin commented that she is a registered nurse of fifteen years, and all first responders need cooperative training, and need to be able to work together to provide services to the community. She then commented to have this facility here and allowing for interdepartmental training is an amazing thing.

It was asked how the mayor would vote, and he commented that the mayor only votes in a case of a tie, but if he had to vote he would vote yes.

Interim Director Mentzer commented that the next steps are in the applicant's court and there will be a Public Hearing with the Plan Commission. When that date and time comes available there will be a publication in the paper, a sign on the property, and property owners in the three hundred feet of this project will be notified by certified mail. Anyone else who would like to fill out a form and be put on a list that the city will use to notify those individuals of the dates on the project can receive an email notification.

TOPIC: Review of Lockport Township Fire Protection District Fee Waiver Request for Proposed New Training Grounds Facility

Interim community Development Director Ron Mentzer commented that the Fire Protection District, as part of their Concept Plan, is requesting the city waive the applications fee and permit fees for their project. This would be approximately \$95,000.00 in total. He also commented that since the project is complex enough where the city would incur consultant costs you would want the Fire Department to make sure that they know these costs that the city incurs will need to be reimbursed, so he would suggest that if the Council is inclined to do this that the attorney and staff work on formalizing an agreement to include this.

Alderman Oberlin commented that she is willing to waive the fees but anything the city incurs needs to be reimbursed.

Mayor Soliman asked for an informal vote to direct staff and city attorney to prepare a fee waiver and city expense reimbursement agreement with the Lockport Township Fire District for the new training facility project.

AYES: Ald. Kubal, Albert, Cipiti, Oberlin, Gazal, Jefferson, Methvin, Dyke.

NAYES: None.

ABSENT: None.

TOPIC: Status Report by City Attorney Reference Mowing Parkways on Gavlord Parkway

City Attorney Mike Stiff commented that he did not have all the materials until recently and has not had an opportunity yet to review what was sent by the homeowners. He commented that he was able to pull the plat of the subdivision, and it is easement are on each homeowner's rear property line but there is no survey to show where their fence is located to know which grassy area is being talked about. Once he has all the proper documentation regarding the strips of land that are being discussed he would make a legal assessment to what the city's rights and responsibilities are and the ability to pass any of the maintenance and mowing requirement on to the property owner.

Attorney Stiff did inform the Council that he has asked the Public Works and Building Departments to not issue any citations or try to enforce any mowing requirements until this issue is resolved.

Alderman Gazal asked why this was put on the agenda if we are not ready to discuss this and now residents have sat here for two hours and have no answers. Attorney Stiff commented that he was advised to have an update for tonight's meeting.

FGMARCHITECTS

TRANSMITTAL

Date: March 5, 2025

Recipient: Mr. Pat Ainsworth, Community and Economic Development Director, City of Crest Hill

Project Name: Lockport Township Fire Protection District- New Training Grounds

Project Number: 23-3640.02

We are sending you the following:

- ☐ Change Order
- ☐ Insurance Certificates
- ☐ Labor/Material Bonds
- ☐ Performance Bonds
- ☒ Plans/Prints
- ☐ Samples
- ☐ Pay Apps/Waivers
- ☒ Other:

The reason for Transmittal is:

- ☐ For Your Approval
- ☐ For Your Use/Information.
- ☒ For Your Review/Comment
- ☐ As You Requested
- ☒ An Action Requested
- ☐ Other:
- ☐

This material is:

- ☒ Attached
 - ☐ Under Separate Cover
 - ☐
- And is being sent via:
- ☐ Mail
 - ☐ FedEx Priority
 - ☐ FedEx Standard
 - ☐ Messenger

COPIES
15 ea.

DESCRIPTION OF ITEM, SHEET, OR DOCUMENT NUMBER
Resubmittal for PUD application. Packet for Staff Review
Submittal includes:

DATED
03.05.2025

- Transmittal
- Response to CCH Review comments January 27, 2025
- Project Narrative (includes Application for combined PUD)
- Exhibits (24 x 36 drawings)
 - Exhibit A - Civil Preliminary & Final Planned Unit Development Plan
 - Exhibit B - Engineering Improvement Drawings and Details
 - Exhibit C - Plat of Survey
 - Exhibit D - Vehicle Maneuvering Diagrams
 - Exhibit E - Landscape Drawings and Details
 - Exhibit F - Architectural Site Plan and Details
 - Exhibit G - Training/ Maintenance Facility (Bldg. 1) Plans
 - Exhibit H - Training/ Maintenance Facility (bldg.. 1) Signage
 - Exhibit I - Tower Training Classroom (Bldg. 2) Plans
 - Exhibit J - Overall Site Plan Photometrics
(exhibits K thru R are in the Project Narrative)
- Flash Drive containing all information above

1

Jennifer Villena-Johnson, AIA | Project Architect
jennifervillena@fgmarchitects.com