



## City Council Work Session Agenda Memo

Crest Hill, IL

**Meeting Date:** 09/09/2024

**Name:** Ronald Mentzer, Interim Community & Economic Development Director

**Department:** Community Development

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

**Background:** On August 5, 2024, the Lockport Township Fire Protection District (LTFPD) submitted a formal application for a Planned Unit Development Special Use Permit and numerous related special zoning approvals for the new training grounds facility it is seeking to develop on the 12.86-acre section of former Stateville Property the State gifted to the District along the south side of Division Street (the “Project Site”). The proposed facility includes a new 23,100 sq. ft. training and maintenance facility, a 3,360 sq. ft. training tower classroom building, a 1,280 sq. ft. storage/bathroom accessory building, a 7,892 sq. ft. burn tower training structure, and a law enforcement shooting range.

Per the Zoning Ordinance (the “Z.O.”), the size and scope of this facility mandate that the City process it as a PUD. Chapter 10 of the Z.O. outlines the detailed regulations, standards, and the following four-step procedure the City uses to review and process PUD requests. **The September 9, 2024, City Council Workshop Meeting discussion of this project is being conducted in accordance with the below highlighted Step 2 requirements.**

- **Step 1 - Pre-Application Procedure (Z.O. Section 10.2-1):** LTFPD and City staff and consultant representatives completed this step in late June and early July of 2024.
- **Step 2 - Conceptual Plan Procedure (Z.O. Section 10.2-2):** The detailed Z.O. requirements for Step 2 are attached for reference as Exhibit 1. The intent of Step 2 is to provide the City Council an opportunity to learn about the details of the proposed project and “provide direction, modify, or disapprove the Plan”. The underlying goal of Step 2 is to provide the petitioner (LTFPD in this case) reasonable assurance that if the agreed to concept plans are carried out, preliminary and Final PUD approval will be granted by the City of Crest Hill. It is important to note that Step 2 does not require any public hearing notices for the project be published, sent, or posted on the project site.
- **Step 3 - Preliminary Plan of PUD Procedure (Z.O. Section 10.2-3):** This step in the City’s process requires the Plan Commission conduct a formal public hearing on the Preliminary PUD application materials for the project. The City’s public hearing process

requirements require a public notice for the project to be published in the local newspaper, sent to surrounding property owners within 300 feet of the Project Site by certified mail, and a public hearing sign be posted on the project site at least 15 days prior to the public hearing.

- **Step 4 – Final Plan Procedure (Z.O. Section 10.2-4):** This step of the PUD process involves the Plan Commission’s and staff’s review, and the City Council’s approval, of the final design plans for the proposed project at formal public meetings of each body.

On January 22, 2024, LTFPD representatives appeared at a City Council workshop meeting to provide a status report and an initial overview of the scope of the new training grounds facility they were in the initial stages of design at that time. A copy of the meeting minutes from that discussion are attached for reference as Exhibit 2. The minutes reflect general City Council support for the project but significant concern about the gun range component.

On May 13, 2024, Interim Community and Economic Director Mentzer presented information at a City Council workshop meeting to explain how the existing Z.O. does not specifically allow new gun/shooting ranges and therefore automatically prohibits them. He indicated the Z.O. would need to be amended before a new gun range could be constructed and operated in Crest Hill. A copy of the meeting minutes from that discussion are attached as Exhibit 3.

**Application Information:** The LTFPD’s lead project consultant, FGM Architects, prepared and submitted the Application For Development/Appendix C attached for reference as Exhibit 4 and the August 5, 2024, letter attached as Exhibit 5 to provide a detailed description of the various elements of their project (Sections A-C on pages 2-4 of the August 5 letter), summarize the various Special Zoning approvals their project requires from the City of Crest Hill (Section D. on page 4 of the August 5 letter), and document the various concept design drawings and supporting documents they have submitted for the City’s review (listed on pages 4 and 5 of August 5 letter).

Full-size hard copies of any or all of the application documents submitted for this project are available upon request to Administrative Clerk Zoe Gates in the Community Development Department.

**Initial City Staff/Consultant Feedback:** Staff offers the following initial feedback on the concept design drawings and supporting documents submitted as part of this application:

- ***Shooting Range***
  - Exhibit 5 indicates the LTFPD intends to request approval of a Z.O. Text Amendment that would accommodate the construction and operation of a “Law Enforcement Shooting Range” by the City of Lockport Police Department.
  - A shooting range decibel study conducted by the Lockport Police Department has been submitted as Exhibit H in the application materials for this project. If the City Council has technical questions or concerns about the submitted study, the City should consider engaging a qualified consultant to review and verify the information and conclusions in it.
  - If the City of Crest Hill is receptive to a limited law enforcement shooting range at this location, staff suggests the Z.O. be amended to:

- Add a very narrow definition of what a “Law Enforcement Shooting Range” encompasses.
  - Add “Law Enforcement Shooting Range” to the list of potential special uses allowed in the M-1 Limited Manufacturing District. As a special use, the City would be able to impose specific restrictions and requirements on any new law enforcement shooting range approved in the City of Crest Hill.
- Information regarding the planned construction schedule of the proposed shooting range should be provided.
- Additional information regarding the protective canopy or wooden structure for the shooting range should be provided.
- Additional details regarding the proposed hours and days of operation for the shooting range should be provided.
- Additional detailed landscape plans should be provided to illustrate exactly what type of vegetation/landscaping is proposed on and around the 25-foot-tall berm proposed around the east, west, and south sides of the shooting range.
- A detailed photometric plan for the site lighting proposed around the shooting range should be provided.
- ***Division Street***
  - The submitted concept plans do not reflect any improvements or new access driveways on Division Street. Division Street is a State-owned roadway. This project will require some level of improvement to and a ROW dedication for the adjacent section of Division Street. All access, improvement, and ROW dedication details for the project will need to be coordinated and permitted through IDOT. This coordination should commence as soon as possible if it is not already underway.
  - Once access and ROW requirements are confirmed with IDOT, City staff will be able to verify if the proposed building, parking and drive aisle setbacks comply with applicable Z.O. requirements or if additional variations will be required.
  - A traffic study should be provided to document the amount of increased traffic and turning movements the proposed project will generate on Division Street and identify what improvements to Division Street will be required to effectively manage the increased traffic.
- ***Existing Gravel Frontage Road***
  - The submitted concept plans do not reflect any material improvement to the existing 13-foot-wide gravel frontage road located on the Project Site along Division Street even though it would be used as the primary vehicular access route to and from the Project Site.
  - This frontage road also provides access to the Stateville property and improvements located immediately adjacent to the Project Site.
  - The existing gravel frontage road will need to be widened and paved in accordance with current City standards if it is to be used as the primary vehicular access route to and from the Project Site.
  - The LTFPD should secure and provide an access agreement with Stateville documenting its right to use and improve the existing off-site frontage road access driveway connections to Division Street for the access needs of the proposed project.

- The existing frontage road driveway connection to Division Street east of the project site will need to be designed and upgraded to manage the increased traffic and turning movements generated by the proposed project.
- A truck/fire engine maneuverability exhibit should be submitted to demonstrate how large vehicles will be able to enter and exit the project site safely.
- ***Parking***
  - Landscape islands should be provided at the end caps of all rows of parking.
  - The plans illustrate overflow parking. Additional design details should be provided to illustrate how these parking areas will be designed and constructed. The City's Z.O. requires all parking spaces to be paved.
- ***Shipping Containers***
  - The Z.O. prohibits shipping containers in the City of Crest Hill.
  - According to consulting Sr. Planner Rigoni, the City has allowed the use of shipping containers for storage purposes on properties in the M-1 Zoning District as part of previous PUD approvals.
  - As proposed, the burn tower and training tower classroom would be constructed with shipping containers. While staff understands the merit of having the burn tower constructed with metal shipping containers, it would be preferable to have the training tower classroom building and the storage/toilet room building constructed in a design and with building materials similar to that of the main training/maintenance facility.
- ***Architectural***
  - As presented, LTFPD is requesting a reduction to the minimum required percentage of masonry on the main building. Staff recommends consideration be given to providing additional masonry on the front and east facades of the main building in the areas illustrated on attached Exhibit 6. These areas of the building are very visible from the Division Street corridor.
- ***Water***
  - The City and the LTFPD should continue to work towards an IGA for the raw water the training facility will use during practice sessions. This agreement will be a major cost saving to the LTFPD and for the City by not using some of the City's Lake Michigan Water allocation which could then be allocated for additional desirable private development.
  - Internal fire hydrants that will be used for training shall be painted a different color as those tied to the City's potable water line.
- ***Stormwater***
  - Stormwater detention shall be provided per city ordinance and all calculations, and a stormwater report shall be submitted to the City for review and approval.
  - The construction of the stormwater pond will need to meet all city ordinances (i.e. safety selves, etc.).
- ***Miscellaneous***
  - Coordination and approval will be needed from Northern Illinois Gas Company for any proposed crossing of the pipeline easement.
  - The City Engineer suggests that the city's requirement for curb and gutter be waived for the segments of internal driveways located south of the main parking lot. Due to the

location and training function of this facility, 3-foot wide aggregate shoulders along these driveways would be acceptable instead of concrete curb and gutter.

**Recommended Council Action:** Review the Concept Plan Application Materials and provide direction on what adjustments or revisions should be made to the design and application documents for the project before the applicant submits its Preliminary/Final PUD application materials.

**Financial Impact:** N/A

**Funding Source:**

**Budgeted Amount:**

**Cost:**

**Attachments:**

- Exhibit 1 - Detailed Z.O. requirements for Step 2 in the City's PUD Process
- Exhibit 2 - January 22, 2024, Workshop Meeting Minutes
- Exhibit 3 - May 13, 2024, Workshop Meeting Minutes
- Exhibit 4 - Application For Development/Appendix C
- Exhibit 5 - August 5, 2024, FGM Architects Application Letter
- Exhibit 6- Staff Recommended Areas of Additional Masonry Architectural Elements