

6. Incorporate the staff comments that are already in the little package.

Sonya Tablada seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0. John Carruth thanked the applicant for making those changes.

REZONING

DRB10-37

ANDRETTI INDOOR KARTING & GAMES

11000 Alpharetta Hwy

John Carruth stated that the Board had a number of new members and this is the first time they have seen a rezoning. Years ago in the city of Roswell, only the Planning Commission and the city council saw rezoning applications and by the time they were approved the Design Review Board would often have their hands tied in terms of effecting any significant changes to site plans. When the zoning ordinance was rewritten the Board was given the ability to provide commentary or advice at the initial stage. This actually serves as the initial meeting so the applicant is not required to provide elevations because elevations typically are not required as part of the rezoning application. As it goes through the process from here they have a neighborhood meeting, they have a Planning Commission meeting, a city council meeting. If they are approved, they have to come back to the Design Review Board for a final approval on the aesthetics. The Board's job is really not to try to assess whether it really fits the overall scheme of the city and so forth. They can express an opinion if they have one but the Board's job is really to look at it from more of an aesthetic standpoint, planning standpoint. Is there something that they can do or suggest that maybe they like it.

Brad Riffle with AEC presented the rezoning. Also present was Warren Fondue and Stan Renusoz with Andretti and Arie Kohn, the architect. If the Board has any questions for the owners or the architect they will get to that.

Brad Riffle stated that he was responsible for doing the site plan and it was pretty simple because there is an available space right now just to the side of the building that is fronting on Houze. The Andretti's would just like to take advantage of that space. There are really no cars being parked in it right now and they thought they would take advantage of putting some outdoor karting tracks out there and try to reach an age of kids that may not have the ability to ride on any of the karts in the building. This kind of opens it up to a greater demographic.

Riffle stated that he handed out a few packages of some photographs so the Board can see how the existing site looks. Right now they have a board that they put up on the concept of the canopy, which he may bring up and try to let the Board look at it a little bit closer. This is a rezoning so Riffle stated that he will be brief. He opened the discussion for questions from the Board.

John Carruth asked if everyone saw the outdoor structure design ideas. \

Laura Hamling asked if this was going to be a year-round track. Brad Riffle stated that it was. Warren Fondue, general manager of Andretti's stated that for as much as the weather will allow. Obviously, being outdoors they are subject to the cold and the rain. They cannot operate the karts in the rain and if it is too cold, he wouldn't want to be out there.

Laura Hamling stated that she had a concern about the acoustics and how loud this is going to be. From what she sees of the plantings in the front, she would like to see some evergreens there to perhaps make the sound not quite as loud as it might be.

Warren Fondue stated that they have done some preliminary noise studies. They have ordered a professional independent noise study to be conducted before planning next month. The results surprised Fondue as well. They took readings from five different locations around the lot. From three of those locations one could not hear the karts at all, the loudest one being right next to the track area. They took readings on Houze and Alpharetta and could not hear them. It was not even a heavy traffic day on Alpharetta Hwy.

Brad Riffle stated that was part of the package that he handed out. That one white sheet with the typing on it is some of the sound study.

Sonya Tablada asked if they were testing one kart? Warren Fondue stated that they had seven karts running during the test. Tablada asked what the maximum was that they will run at the facility. Fondue stated that they will run anywhere from six to 10 depending on the volume of business. Tablada asked Fondue to explain in terms of the screening because the picture doesn't show it. It looks like they have screening on the plan.

Brad Riffle stated that there are some large fields of beds of existing plant material which one can kind of see from a photograph presented. He showed the entrance on Houze where one can see a little clouded bed. That is the existing shrub mass that is on the corner. Then there is another shrub mass, an existing cloud underneath the trees. He pointed out another shrub mass. There is nothing in between in that zone. One can get a better picture of the site. He showed the end of the mass that is next to Houze Way and he pointed out the shrub mass that is over by the entrance towards the back further down Houze. Visibility is important so he felt that there were some over story trees that were missing. They decided to add a random spacing of trees and basically keep the same shrubbery massing as is and then just have grass.

Warren Fondue stated that also playing into the equation is that they are set down from the street level in this area specifically up towards the front of Alpharetta Hwy. which also does quite a bit to defer the noise. Also along the complete perimeter of the west side there are the over story, thick pines

separating them from the businesses behind them. They were even inside the bike shop during the tests and could not hear the karts.

Brad Riffle explained that this was a very thick row of Leyland Cypress on the back and they have completely run together so it is very thick.

Hal Adams asked what the applicants' proposed plans were for kart storage, fueling and maintenance. Is that handled inside the current building or will that take place in this new area. Warren Fondue stated that maintenance will take place inside. They have a mechanic shop inside the current building in the far corner. The actual storage of the karts will be in place underneath the proposed canopy in the middle of the lot. The idea being that is where the guests will enter and exit from the karts, that is where the karts will be locked every night and stored during the overnight. Gassing also takes place in the back far corner behind the building as it currently does now.

Roberto Paredes stated that right next door there is the bike shop and the little coffee shop. He is very concerned about the impact of the noise to the adjacent structures. A little further down there is an office condominium a little past the bike shop. His first question is, is this use allowed by the current zoning? This proposed use?

Brad Riffle stated that it is what they call at AEC a conditional use, which is what they are going for approval, this being the first stop along the way. They will need to get permission from mayor and city council for the conditional use of the space. It is very similar to the type of attraction that was up until about 18 months ago in operation just down the road behind the former StarTime. So there is precedent. The way they are currently zoned, they do need to get the special conditional use approved by the city council.

Roberto Paredes commented that assuming that the use is something that council will allow, his two concerns are acoustic and from a site planning standpoint or aesthetically he wonders if there is a way to maybe rotate this thing slightly so that the amount of landscaping along Houze Way is constant. Right now there is a very narrow corner to the east and a wider area of landscaping to the west. He wonders if the track could be rotated slightly so that maybe to minimize the space between the existing building and the tracks. One would maximize the space between the road and the tracks. Also, if this thing slides a little to the east so that there is more landscaping even buffering the bike shop and the little coffee shop next door. He wonders if in doing that if there is a way to maybe either bring dirt or something to slightly create a berm around this thing such as a three-foot high berm where one rolls and then plants on top of that. He thinks anything like that; he thinks it would help in terms of sound control.

But the most important thing is that the report, having done several of these things, this letter is very loosey-goosey. It says little or no change. What is little or

no change? Decibel levels are a very tricky thing. One has to set a base line. What is the base line that was used? That would be the first thing Paredes would like to know. Is it 50 decibels, 40 decibels, what is it? What is the reading in the morning when they are operating this thing with ambient noise and what is the latest they are going to operate this thing? 8 p.m., 9 p.m.,

Warren Fondue stated that as far as the noise, when the professional independent noise study is done it will certainly address all of Paredes' questions about the actual noise as far as setting a base line. Those preliminary readings are something that the applicant has done to kind of address them and have the answers ready for, certainly for the neighborhood meeting as they move forward.

Concerning the hours of operations, Fondue stated that they are going to want to operate as often as possible, weather permitting and going year round. They will take into consideration the various ordinances regarding light and sound that they have to deal with in the city of Roswell. But they will want to operate ideally, if they are open inside, to be open outside. Obviously they will have to work on that and see where the ordinances will allow them to do so.

Roberto Paredes clarified that the applicant's plan is to mitigate...because the next paragraph says essentially doubling the level. Doubling the level is a huge increase in terms of decibels. When one doubles, it is a logarithmic scale so double is like 10 times the power of the noise level, which is a huge increase. So what the applicant is saying is that he would mitigate whatever readings he gets by an independent test agency and he would design and mitigate through design the noise level.

Warren Fondue stated that was correct. He added that the preliminary readings that the Board has in front of them were conducted for the applicants' benefit as much as for the Board for the applicant to see exactly what kind of noise levels they are going to be having to deal with from a layman's standpoint. Obviously, for Fondue to say that the decibel reading doubled. That is the numbers on the dial that he had in front of him. He does not pretend to know how decibels work and he understands the incremental increases in noise and there is a science to it. That is what the independent study will be able to show them. What they have proposed in the plan as far as adding based on the pictures the Board has in front of them, is adding some taller trees to that space that is obviously lacking. As the noise levels and noise studies dictate they will be able to identify spaces that may need a little bit more landscaping to help buffer the sound.

Roberto Paredes stated that his point is that landscaping is not going to do it. If the applicant is looking at mitigating that kind of magnitude he has to do it with either mass, landscaping may cut five or six decibels out of their reading, but it is not going to cut it to the level that it is sounds he needs. He needs to be prepared to either berm around it, put sound walls of some material like a bigger highway,

a wall that actually blocks the sound. As long as they all understand that and then what aesthetic impact that makes, Paredes is all for it.

Sonya Tablada asked the applicant who is doing their sound study. Is he saying that he is going to the neighborhoods with just this or he will have his professional sound study by the time he goes to the neighbors?

Warren Fondue stated that if they can get it done in time then they will have it for the meeting next week. Tablada asked Fondue if he knows who they are using. Fondue stated that he did not.

Laura Hamling stated that there are some residential areas real close to this. There is a residential condominium complex on the corner of Houze Way and Houze Road. She agrees with Roberto Paredes that something needs to be done to help those residents and also their values.

Brad Riffle stated that when they did the preliminary study they stood on the corner of Houze Way and Houze Road and couldn't hear the karts at all.

John Carruth stated that he thinks they really just have to wait for professional tests to be done and then trust that the mayor and city council are review that and take into consideration the neighbors that live closest by. For the most part he understands that the applicant is in a very commercial area. He has a car dealer across one way, a bike shop, and some office-professional a little further down. Carruth stated that he met with Warren Fondue last week with Kevin Turner downstairs and he thinks it is a great idea. He does not have any serious reservations about it. He does like the idea of increasing some landscape screening, adding some evergreens that are going to get higher than the two or three feet that the little shrubs are cut to now would be useful.

Brad Riffle stated that he can see, especially since the residential is this way, he can definitely see beefing up this area right here with some substantial evergreens that would get up there. By the time one is here from a visibility standpoint, when he gets past it he will be able to see it and of course coming this way is important. This is the primary corner that needs attention from a sound standpoint.

John Carruth agreed and added that that is the one that is closest perception to the neighborhood where the people live. The other is really to a commercial corridor. He doesn't think it needs it as much. They want some visibility from Alpharetta Highway and the sense that it is not just indoor karting, it is outdoor also.

Brad Riffle stated that the large Leyland Cypress really are a benefit to that effect from a sound standpoint.

John Carruth stated that Warren Fondue showed him last week an initial thought on the barricades that have to go around the track. He does not see anything tonight. Does he have...Fondue stated that he was not able to get it done in order to get it here tonight. They are still working on various 3-D renderings that would indicate different colors and patterns. They one that Carruth saw that was brought to Fondue's attention was not even close to scale. So he wanted to make sure that he got it right, which is why he does not have it here for the Board tonight. Carruth stated that he was going to go ahead and put in the record what he and Fondue talked about.

What Fondue showed Carruth was an alternating blue and green barricade system. Those are their corporate colors. Fondue is wearing the blue. The green is the little slash that is on the logo. Carruth stated that the green is way too bright for that and it needs to be a lot darker, not as much contrast between the blue and the green if they want to do two colors. But Carruth thinks that when all is said and done they are going to have to look at that when the applicant comes for a final. That is going to be something that they are really going to look at. It may be better just to go with one color and not get to "wowwy" with it. He just wanted his comments that were made downstairs to go on the record on that.

John Carruth stated that the Board is not really passing judgment here tonight. And even the mayor and city council are probably not going to pass judgment on color he wouldn't think. That is usually is a Design Review Board's purview. He does not mind what is shown here with the renderings in blue. Fondue showed him one with white the other day and Carruth stated that he actually would object more to a bright white than he would to the dark blue that he is showing here.

Laura Hamling stated that she had a question on parking. The applicant is reducing significantly the number of even the minimum spaces from 389 to 386. Brad Riffle stated that was correct. The way it was established in the parking...what needs to be understood is that this existing building is 97,000 square feet. On the sheet CU-1 there is a little interior space square foot calculation that breaks down the architectural, the footprint. One can see that the indoor tracks and maintenance equals 65,785 square feet, which is a substantial portion of the building which otherwise would not be occupied anyone because the people there in the karts are also going to be occupying the other space. So it would be doubling up. There are of course, three or four attendants that are in that area. So, that space does not warrant the need for all of the parking spaces, which is why they are able to do what they are able to do because of the interior functioning spaces.

John Carruth stated that this was originally a Sam's Club and it had a huge parking lot to handle that retail operation. For the amount of square footage the reality is the applicant has a whole lot fewer people able to even get in the building and use the building. Brad Riffle stated that was correct.

John Carruth asked Riffle to explain what their plan is for the lighting, the additional lighting that they need in the track area.

Brad Riffle stated that he knows that his site plan shows a few light poles that are one the perimeter. Georgia Power is going to do a lighting study. Currently there are two existing light bases that are in the middle of the parking lot. If one looks at the screen there is one that is probably in the middle right where "track" is written. There is almost another one right where track is written. They are going to try to utilize those existing bases and put new poles and probably a four-head standard on there that is the standard, to match what is existing in the parking lot now. Georgia Power provided a standard shoebox fixture so they will probably look at doing a four-head fixture on those existing pole bases.

John Carruth asked if this was the same height and look as to what is in the rest of the rest of the parking lot. Brad Riffle stated that they would imagine that they would try to duplicate it. The same continuity throughout would be maintained.

There were no further comments or questions for the applicant. John Carruth stated that the Board is only giving advice tonight. They do not take a formal action. They trust that their comments will be considered by the other bodies that will take formal action on this and he hopes to see the applicant soon.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Laura Hamling made a motion that the minutes of the August 19, 2010 meeting of the Roswell Design Review Board be approved as stated. Roberto Paredes seconded the motion.

The minutes were approved 5-0.

John Carruth stated that the Board talked last time about possibly having a chairmanship election but unless the Board feels an urgency to do that, Carruth would like to wait until they have a full board.

ADJOURN:

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

John Carruth, Chairman

CC: mayor and city council
community development
applicant's files