

NAPERVILLE SUN

\$3.00

SUNDAY, JULY 19, 2020

NAPERSUN.COM

RETAIL

Building proposal OK'd for Route 59

Retail development with drive-thru window wins commission blessing

BY SUZANNE BAKER

A new retail development that could house up to three new shops has been proposed for south Naperville, with a critical piece of the project being a drive-thru window.

Phillips Edison & Co., one of the nation's largest owners and operators of grocery-anchored shopping centers, wants to make an addition to its Naperville Crossing development at the northwest corner of 95th Street and Route 59.

Tim Goyette, Phillips Edison senior project manager, told the Naperville Planning and Zoning Commission this week that since purchasing the 146,591-square-foot shopping center anchored by Aldi a year ago, the company has spent \$950,000 on property improvements and achieved a 94% occupancy rate.

The company now wants to construct a new building on an open lot just north of Biaggi's restaurant for up to three tenants, Goyette said.

To make the space more attractive, the company is seeking city approval for a drive-thru window with a partial bypass lane and stacking of eight vehicles instead of the required 12. The concept was unanimously endorsed by the commission Wednesday and now goes to the Naperville City Council for final approval.

Goyette said as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, Phillips Edison has seen an increased demand for patios and for walk-up and drive-thru windows.

The trend is expected to continue, he said, now that people have become accustomed to the convenience for safety reasons.

Goyette added the drive-thru concept provides benefits for parents with young children, customers who don't want to dine-in and as a dining option during inclement weather.

Before the vote, Commissioner Anthony Losurdo expressed concern when Goyette said the company had no confirmed tenants lined up, questioning whether it was premature to approve a drive-thru without knowing what restaurant might be going into the site.

Commissioner Manas Athanikar also questioned whether a second business with a drive-thru window would exacerbate the traffic problems caused by the drive-thru at Starbucks on the south side of Naperville Crossings. Traffic frequently stacks up onto Showplace Drive, Athanikar said.

Goyette said the company is targeting niche food service providers, and it's unlikely that a coffee shop would locate there because the center already has a Starbucks and a Panera and Dunkin' Donuts is located across the street.

Potential tenants with higher demand for stacking, he said, are not as interested in a site that doesn't have adequate capacity.

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NATION & WORLD

Grim toll shows normal life far away

WHO reports global single-day record of over 237K new cases, with South Africa set to join the top five countries most affected by the pandemic. **Page 8**

INSIDE

Puzzle booklet

Crosswords, word search and more. **Inside subscribers' copies**



CHICAGO HISTORY MUSEUM

Grace Wilbur Trout, president of the Chicago Political Equality League, sits behind the wheel of her car as she gets ready to leave Chicago in July 1910 on the Suffrage Auto Tour, a four-day trip through 16 towns north and west of the city seeking support for women being given the vote.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

‘DuPage women have really made their voice heard over the past 100 years and before that’

1910 Suffrage Auto Tour stopped in Naperville; one small taste of what women did to get the vote

BY KARIE ANGELL LUC

Aug. 18 marks the centennial of women's suffrage becoming federal law in the United States. It was an achievement 70 years in the making, and one in which Illinois would play a memorably documented role through the daring "experiment" undertaken in July 1910 — 10 years before the 19th Amendment would be ratified but only three years before women in Illinois would be allowed to vote for president.

The Suffrage Auto Tour was helmed by Grace Wilbur Trout, newly elected president of the Chicago Political Equality League who was asked by the Illinois Equal Suffrage Association to try something new: taking their message on the road.

Using a borrowed, open-air car decorated with flags and banners, a group of women — accompanied by two Chicago Tribune reporters — traversed miles of bumpy roads between July 11 and 15, at one point being drenched in a rainstorm in McHenry.

"Their schedule was down to the minute," said Becky Simon, president of the League of Women Voters of Naperville. "The ladies took care to pack lightly."

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ELECTION 2020

Kane clerk: Applications going out to vote-by-mail

Officials expect large numbers will shun polls, avoid in-person ballots

BY GLORIA CASAS

Thanks to application forms being sent to registered voters in Illinois, the number of people opting out of going to the polls in November in favor of casting election ballots by mail could hit record numbers, officials say.

Kane County Clerk Jack Cunningham said he sent every voter this week a vote-by-mail application, giving them a voting alternative that advocates say is a safer choice than voting in person because of the coronavirus pandemic. A newly passed state law requires every county clerk in the state to do the same thing.

"We are encouraging voters to consider applying for a vote-by-mail ballot for the Nov. 3 general election, especially those who have concerns about their health due to the COVID-19 pandemic," Cunningham said. "It's not mandated. People can use their free will."

That means that even if someone applies to receive a mail-in ballot, there's no requirement they use it, officials say. Residents can always choose to go to an early voting location instead or head to their polling place on Election Day.

The law states that vote-by-mail instructions must be sent to all voters who participated in the last three elections, but many clerks are choosing to send them to all registered voters.

DuPage County is going to just that in the coming week, Chief Deputy Clerk Adam Johnson said. Even without the mailing, the clerk has already received about 17,000 vote-by-mail ballot requests, he said.

The Will County Clerk's Office sent out its application notices to 450,000 registered voters during the last week of June, Deputy Clerk Charles Pelkie said.

"The new legislation was designed to place applications for vote-by-mail ballots into the hands of virtually every registered voter," Clerk Lauren Staley Ferry said in a news release.

"My staff and I are working tirelessly to make certain that it is quick and convenient to submit these applications so that registered voters can receive their ballots through the mail. With the potential for a second wave of COVID-19 later this year, we cannot have a situation in which our citizens must choose between their health and their right to vote," she said.

Will County had 13,000 applications for mail-in ballots in the March election, with about 12,000 were returned, Pelkie said.

"The high-water mark for Will County was 30,000 vote-by-mail requests in 2016," he said, with about 27,000 were returned. "It's the most that the clerk's office has ever processed. It was the presidential election."

The county expects to exceed that high-water mark very soon, Pelkie said. "We anticipated for a large number of vote-by-mail applications. Quite frankly, we got more (requests) than we anticipated. We are hard at work processing them. We're keeping pace," he said.

Kane County has already received more than 25,000 online vote-by-mail applications, more than double the number received in the 2016 presidential election, Cunningham said. The clerk's office is anticipating a high volume of mailed-in ballots this fall.

The only problem seems to be some confusion among voters who aren't clear that it's just one of three voting options available to them, Cunningham said.

"We have received calls from voters asking about why they received the applications in the mail and what is happening with the November election," he said.

Vote-by-mail is an option for someone who might not want to vote in-person, Cunningham said. "It's a matter of choice based on their health and other factors," he said.

The deadline to fill out an application is Oct. 29, officials said.

"If people feel fairly comfortable right now, and say, 'I am not going to vote by mail' or '(I'm not going) to vote,' they have plenty of time to reevaluate and ... and make another decision later in the year," Pelkie said.

Gloria Casas is a freelance reporter for The Courier-News.