

## Store plan gets chilly reception

Written by MARK JAEGER

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### Commission questions if Kwik Trip buildings are best use of key crossing

Preliminary plans for a convenience store and car wash at a key business-district intersection got a decidedly chilly reception last week from the Village of Saukville Plan Commission.

Officials from Kwik Trip Inc. and a representative of Ansay Development Group, which owns the property, appeared before the commission for a conceptual review of a proposal for the northwest corner of the Highway 33 intersection with I-43.

The La Crosse-based company presented plans to build a brick-faced, 5,600-square-foot convenience store and gas station on the site, fronted by a 2,800-square-foot car wash.

According to the preliminary plans, service islands capable of offering approximately a dozen gas pumps would be located west of the store.

The project would be on the southern portion of the parcel, leaving approximately three acres to the north for future development.

The commission was not asked to take any action on the plan, but Village President Barb Dickmann, who chairs the panel, said she hoped Kwik Trip officials got the message that the proposal does not meet village expectations for the location.

"I understand that Kwik Trip is a wonderful company that treats its employees very well and is committed to 'green' buildings, but the job of this commission is to look out for the best interest of the community," Dickmann said following the meeting.

She said she questions how the project would affect existing businesses, especially the two nearby gas station/convenience stores and two full grocery stores.

Dickmann said she was also bothered by the site plan, which places the car wash closest to Green Bay Street — the village's key commercial thoroughfare — and exposes motorists on I-43 to the plain-looking rear of the store building.

"The plan also calls for diesel fuel pumps, which means possibly redesigning the intersection to accommodate semis," Dickmann said.

If that is necessary, she said the developer and not the village would be responsible for the cost of the needed improvements for the extension of Foster Drive. The Ansay Group has already commissioned a traffic-impact analysis for the intersection.

As the entrance to Foster Commons, the village's designated entertainment district, Dickmann said officials have high hopes for the future use of the site.

"I fully believe in the free-enterprise system and all that implies, but we're envisioning something

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like a hotel or a motel at this location," she said.

Before the plan can advance, Village Public Works Director Roy Wilhelm said conditional-use hearings would be required because of fill work needed in the 100-year flood fringe area and for the gas station as the primary use of the site.

Dickmann said the village has received no indication from Kwik Trip whether they plan to return with revised plans.