

STAFF REPORT ON PETITION FOR ZONE MAP AMENDMENT

PLN-MAR-16-00009: 1321 W. MAIN, LLC

DESCRIPTION

Zone Change: From a Neighborhood Business (B-1) zone
To a Wholesale and Warehouse Business (B-4) zone

Acreage: 0.748 net and gross acres

Location: 1315 & 1353 West Main Street (portions of)

EXISTING ZONING & LAND USE

<u>Properties</u>	<u>Zoning</u>	<u>Existing Land Use</u>
Subject Property	B-1	Vacant
To North	B-1	Offices & Accessory Parking
To East	B-4	Indoor and Outdoor Storage
To South	B-1	Offices & Retail Uses
To West	B-1	Shopping Center & Single Family

URBAN SERVICES REPORT

Roads – West Main Street/Leestown Road (US 421), is a major arterial that serves this portion of the community. It carries a large amount of traffic, as it is the primary route for the area’s industrial traffic and some large residential subdivisions such as Meadowthorpe and Masterson Station. Along the frontage of the subject properties, there is a service road that parallels West Main Street, which has two bays of off-street parking alongside of it. Access is proposed to this service road for this development. North Forbes Road has a signalized intersection with West Main Street & Leestown Road a short distance to the west of the subject property.

Curb/Gutter/Sidewalks – West Main Street does not have a curb, gutter, or sidewalks along its frontage between North Forbes Road and the subject site.

Storm Sewers – This site is within the Town Branch watershed. Some type of stormwater detention may be required, so as not to allow any increase in the rate of stormwater runoff onto surrounding properties, since the property currently has no impervious surface area. However, the subject site is less than an acre in size.

Sanitary Sewers – This property is in fairly close proximity to the Town Branch Wastewater Treatment Facility, operated by the Urban County Government. There are no known sanitary sewer problems between this location and the treatment plant.

Refuse – This area is served by the Urban County Government with collection on Thursdays. Commercial developments often contract with private companies to provide additional refuse collection, as needed.

Police – The nearest police station is the West Sector Roll Call Center, located on Old Frankfort Pike, approximately one mile to the southwest of the subject property.

Fire/Ambulance – The nearest fire station is Station #13, located on Leestown Road, one block to the west of the subject property.

Utilities – Natural gas, electric, streetlights, phone, water, and cable are all available to this area, and can be upgraded and extended to serve the proposed development.

LAND USE PLAN AND PROPOSED USE

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan no longer makes a specific land use recommendation for each and every parcel in Lexington-Fayette County, but *Chapter 1: Goals and Objectives* does recommend “supporting infill opportunities as a strategic component of growth.”

The applicant is requesting this rezoning in order to develop a self-storage warehouse facility on the subject properties.

CASE REVIEW

The petitioner has requested a zone change from a Neighborhood Business (B-1) zone to a Wholesale and Warehouse Business (B-4) zone for a site about ¾ acre in size.

The subject properties are a rectangular shaped piece of land located to the rear of 1315 and 1353 West Main Street, two narrow but deep commercial lots immediately to the east of the Meadowthorpe Shopping Center. The site is vacant and, due to several office and commercial buildings along the frontage of W. Main Street, has very little visibility from that highway, although a parking lot on the 1353 West Main Street property does allow a view into the subject site. This is really the only visibility the subject properties possess, unless one looks southward from the adjoining Stantec office property and their parking lot. Ironically, according to the applicant, a portion of the subject properties was previously utilized by Stantec's predecessor, Fuller Mossbarger Scott & May, beginning in 1977. The site is about 500 feet east of North Forbes Road, and is separated from view of that street by a commercial building.

To the north and southeast of this site are mostly professional office uses, while restaurants, convenience stores and commercial uses are situated to the west and southwest of the subject site. To the immediate east of the subject site, an engineering firm has equipment and vehicle storage use of a property that used to be adjacent to the former Haney's Tavern property, which closed years ago. That adjacent site was rezoned to B-4 about 20 years ago, and is immediately adjacent to a Light Industrial (I-1) zone where several tobacco warehouses were located along the Norfolk-Southern railroad line. Those warehouses have been removed, and the timbers of those structures have been repurposed for other new construction uses. Except for these B-4 and I-1 properties immediately east of the subject property, the predominant zone along the north side of West Main/Leestown Road is the Neighborhood Business (B-1) zone.

This zone change has been filed by the applicant to allow a small self-storage warehouse development. Storage units 10' by 10' in size are proposed, along with a small number of off-street parking spaces to accompany this use. The commercial buildings and parking lots on the front of these properties (the portion that is not part of the zone change) are not proposed for alteration.

The applicant has cited only one Goal of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan in support of their application. Specifically, that citation is that the Plan does recommend "supporting infill opportunities as a strategic component of growth." Thus, while this is a commercial infill proposal, the staff believes there is no justification that this zone change is in agreement with the 2013 Comprehensive Plan.

The bulk of the appellant's justification is that their zone change to a B-4 zone is appropriate, and B-1 is not appropriate for the subject site. Although B-1 is consistent with the majority of the zoning that exists in this vicinity, the subject site has very poor visibility, which is usually a prerequisite for a successful commercial business location. The staff agrees with the applicant that the proposed use is one of the few that would be well suited to such a poorly visible site. The applicant also cites the fact that commercial storage uses have located on the subject property continually since 1976, and on the adjoining B-4 property since 1952. The continuation of this use for such a long period of time confirms that it can be a successful use of the subject site, while other businesses that need more visibility and accessibility have not been interested in locating at the rear of other active businesses.

The staff agrees that this use and this zone change to B-4, are appropriate at this location.

The Staff Recommends: **Approval**, for the following reasons:

1. The requested Wholesale and Warehouse Business (B-4) zone is appropriate for the subject properties, for the following reasons:
 - a. The site has been used for commercial storage for an engineering firm for more than four decades. No retail, restaurant or office uses have supplanted this use during this time period.
 - b. Development of the site for self-storage warehouses will not require the highway visibility that most neighborhood-oriented commercial uses would require.
 - c. This use will provide a complimentary use to those in the established neighborhood of Meadowthorpe.
 - d. The Plan supports improvement of our community through infill development opportunities, such as that proposed.
2. The existing Neighborhood Business (B-1) zone is no longer appropriate for the subject properties since the site is so inaccessible from Leestown Road, unlike most all other commercial properties in Meadowthorpe.
3. This recommendation is made subject to approval and certification of PLN-MJDP-16-00032: Fuller, Et Al & Meadowthorpe Commercial Business Center, Unit 1, prior to forwarding a recommendation to the Urban County Council. This certification must be accomplished within two weeks of the Planning Commission's approval.