

STAFF REPORT ON PETITION FOR ZONE MAP AMENDMENT

PLN-MAR-17-00032: FRM LAWSON, LLC

DESCRIPTION

Zone Change: From a Planned Neighborhood Residential (R-3) Zone
To a Light Industrial (I-1) Zone

Acreage: 0.71 net (1.14 gross) acres

Location: 300 Alexandria Drive

EXISTING ZONING & LAND USE

<u>Properties</u>	<u>Zoning</u>	<u>Existing Land Use</u>
Subject Property	R-3	Vacant Former UK Research Facility
To North	R-3	Single-Family Residential
To East	I-1	Light Industrial
To South	I-1	Light Industrial
To West	R-3	Kentucky Utilities Sub-Station

URBAN SERVICES REPORT

Roads – Alexandria Drive, a collector street, borders the subject property to the north. Improvements to Alexandria Drive were completed in September 2015, as part of the Citation Boulevard roadway project. A portion of the roadway was re-aligned to create a signalized intersection with Leestown Road (US 421) and Citation Boulevard, a new four-lane, minor arterial roadway in the northern portion of Fayette County. The re-alignment increased the right-of-way of Alexandria Drive along the subject property’s frontage. The subject is proposed to be incorporated into the adjacent Leestown Industrial Park to the north and east of the site; therefore, access is proposed to be restricted from Alexandria Drive for emergency vehicles only, and primary access for the proposed industrial use of the property will be from Over Drive, a local street with the industrial park.

Curb/Gutter/Sidewalks – Although Alexandria Drive was recently improved and re-aligned in 2015, no curbs, gutters or sidewalks were installed along the roadway. Curbs, gutters and sidewalks do exist within the Leestown Industrial Park, and specifically along Over Drive, which will be utilized by the subject property.

Storm Sewers – The subject property is located in the Town Branch watershed. Stormwater quality facilities will be necessary to serve the site, and should be constructed at the time of development in accordance with the Engineering Stormwater Manuals. No known flooding problems exist on the subject property or in the immediate area, although the Town Branch Creek, and its associated FEMA floodplain do exist to the southwest of the site.

Sanitary Sewers – The subject property is located in the Town Branch sewershed and is served by the Town Branch Wastewater Treatment facility, which is located about 1½ miles to the southeast of the property, inside New Circle Road near Leestown Road and Lisle Industrial Avenue. Capacity of the sanitary sewer system will need to be evaluated by the Division of Water Quality, through the Capacity Assurance Program, prior to redevelopment of the site.

Refuse – Refuse collection is provided by the Urban County Government on Thursdays in this part of the Urban Service Area.

Police – The subject site is within Police Sector 1 and is served by the West Sector Roll Call Center, which is located on Old Frankfort Pike, slightly more than one mile to the southeast of the site.

Fire/Ambulance – The nearest fire station (Station #13) is located on Leestown Road, about two miles southeast of the property. A new station is planned near the intersection of Citation Boulevard and Magnolia Spring Drive, about 1½ mile to the northeast of the site.

Utilities – Natural gas, telephone service, electric, water, streetlights, and cable service are all available to surrounding and nearby properties, and should be able to be easily extended to serve the subject site.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND PROPOSED USE

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan’s mission statement is to “provide flexible planning guidance to ensure that development of our community’s resources and infrastructure preserves our quality of life, and fosters regional planning and economic development.” The mission statement notes that this will be accomplished while protecting the environment, promoting successful, accessible neighborhoods, and preserving the unique Bluegrass landscape that has made Lexington-Fayette County the Horse Capital of the World.

The petitioner proposes to incorporate the subject property into the Leestown Industrial Park for light industrial land use. Short-term gravel vehicle storage is proposed for the adjoining large vehicle repair facility.

CASE REVIEW

The petitioner has requested a zone change from a Planned Neighborhood Residential (R-3) zone to a Light Industrial (I-1) zone for less than an acre of property, located at 300 Alexandria Drive.

The subject property is located on the south side of Alexandria Drive, adjacent to the existing Leestown Industrial Park, which is accessed from Leestown Road at its intersection with Trade Street. The site was once utilized by the University of Kentucky as a research facility, but the structure has been vacant for a number of years. The property was transferred to the petitioner (an adjoining property owner) in April 2017. Alexandria Drive is a two-lane collector street that was re-aligned in 2015 to create a signalized intersection with Citation Boulevard at Leestown Road. Industrial traffic to and from the subject site will utilize Over Drive, a local street within the existing industrial park.

The immediate area is characterized by residential neighborhoods (Marehaven, Spicewood and McConnell’s Trace Subdivisions) and agricultural land on the north side Alexandria Drive, and primarily industrial or public facility land uses on the south side of Alexandria Drive. The subject site is bordered to the immediate west by a Kentucky Utilities sub-station, and a major AT&T communications service facility is located at the southern corner of the intersection of Leestown Road and Alexandria Drive. In addition, a transmission power line, an associated tower, and a 75-foot wide easement are located on the northwestern property line of the subject site, closest to Alexandria Drive. Approximately 1,000 feet to the west of the subject property and across the Norfolk-Southern railroad line; Alexandria Drive creates the Urban Service Area boundary in this portion of the urban county.

The petitioner is requesting a Light Industrial (I-1) zone in order to utilize the site for short-term vehicle storage, accessory to the adjoining large vehicle repair facility located at 2433 Over Drive. The site is proposed to be used in conjunction with the adjoining property, but consolidation is not proposed at this time.

The petitioner contends that the existing Planned Neighborhood Residential (R-3) zone is no longer appropriate, and that the proposed Light Industrial (I-1) zone is appropriate for the subject property. The fact that an electric transmission line, tower and a 75-foot wide easement occupy appropriately one-half of the site makes the property unlikely to be developed and incompatible for residential land use. In addition, the site is bordered on three sides by industrial or public facilities land uses, and Alexandria Drive with its sufficiently wide right-of-way, creates a land use boundary between the residential subdivisions on the north side of Alexandria Drive and the subject property. The site is located within the

Urban Service Area, is currently vacant and underutilized. The site can be successfully incorporated into the adjacent parcel on Over Drive in order to support an existing business in Fayette County.

In order to buffer the proposed gravel vehicle storage area and any other future industrial use from Alexandria Drive and the nearby Marehaven residential subdivision, the staff recommends that landscape screening be installed along the northwestern property line, with the use of a 6-foot tall wall, berm or hedge.

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

1. A Planned Neighborhood Residential (R-3) zone is no longer appropriate and a Light Industrial (I-1) zone is appropriate at this location, for the following reasons:
 - a. A major electric transmission line, transmission tower and 75-foot wide easement occupy appropriately one-half of the subject property along its northwestern property boundary and closest to the existing Marehaven Subdivision. Such major public service facilities make the site generally incompatible for residential development.
 - b. Any potential residential use of the site under the existing R-3 zoning would be required to be located in close proximity to existing industrial uses within the adjacent Leestown Industrial Park. Residential development of the subject site would not be compatible with the surrounding land uses.
 - c. The subject property is bordered on three sides by industrial or public facilities land uses, which makes I-1 zoning more compatible and appropriate than the existing R-3 zone. Alexandria Drive, and its right-of-way, creates an appropriate land use boundary between the residential subdivisions on the north side of Alexandria Drive and the subject property.
 - d. The site is located within the Urban Service Area, currently vacant and considered underutilized. The site can be successfully incorporated into the adjacent parcel on Over Drive in order to support an existing business in Fayette County.
2. This recommendation is made subject to the approval and certification of PLN-MJDP-17-00090: Leestown Industrial Park, prior to forwarding a recommendation to the Urban County Council. This certification must be accomplished within two weeks of the Planning Commission's approval.
3. Under the provisions of Article 6-7 of the Zoning Ordinance, the following buffer restriction is recommended via conditional zoning on the subject property:
 - a. A fifteen-foot (15') wide landscape buffer shall be maintained along the northwestern property line. Within the landscape buffer a six-foot (6') tall hedge, wall or berm shall be established. This restriction is appropriate in order to diminish the visibility of the subject property from Alexandria Drive.