

# SUPPLEMENTAL STAFF REPORT ON PETITION FOR ZONE MAP AMENDMENT PLN-MAR-25-00001: D&J REALTY, INC.



## STAFF REVIEW

In the period following the February Subdivision and Zoning Committee meetings, the applicant submitted a revised justification letter for their rezoning request that provided additional discussion of the Comprehensive Plan, as well as responded to staff's comments from the initial report.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

The revised letter of justification provides information on the Goals, Objectives, and Policies of the Imagine Lexington 2045 Comprehensive Plan that the applicant opines are being met with this request. The applicant states that the development is sensitive to the surrounding context, as it is in keeping with the existing industrial development within the Blue Sky area, as well as the light industrial uses north of the site that are called for within Area #4 of the Urban Growth Master Plan (UGMP)(Design Policy #4). The applicant states that the proposal will work to ensure an effective transportation system, as the property is located within close proximity to both Athens Boonesboro Road, as well as Interstate-75, which are higher capacity roadways that are suited to accommodate larger vehicles and higher traffic intensity (Theme D, Goal #1). The applicant states that they will not utilize continually operated night lighting, thereby reducing light pollution to protect dark skies (Protection Policy #10). The applicant states that the existing street trees along the Canebrake Road frontage are in poor condition, and will be replaced with this request (Theme D, Support Policy #10).

Staff agrees that these goals, objectives, and policies that have been identified by the applicant can be met with this request. Additionally, staff finds that by developing a vacant parcel of land within the Urban Service Area, the proposal supports goals relating to redevelopment and strategic growth (Theme A, Goal #2.a; Theme E Goal #1.d). With the incorporation of the required internal sidewalk, the project's pedestrian connections will be appropriate for the context of the surrounding area, which envisions pedestrian and multi-modal facilities connecting UGMP areas #4 and #5 (Theme D, Connectivity Policies #1 & 2).

## DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

The revised plan also addresses several of the Development Criteria previously identified by staff as requiring further clarification.

*D-PL7-1 Stakeholders should be consulted to discuss site opportunities and constraints prior to submitting an application.*

In the supplemental letter of justification the applicant describes the conversations that they have had with the surrounding property owners. The applicant indicates that none of the individuals opposed the request.

*A-DS4-1: A plan for a connected multi-modal network to adjacent neighborhoods, greenspaces, developments and complementary uses should be provided; C-LI8-1: Development should enhance a well-connected and activated public realm.*

Under the proposed plan, the request provides new sidewalk connections along the property's roadway frontage, but does not provide any connectivity from the use to the right-of-way. The applicant opines that these connections are not necessary, as the site will be secured and not generally open to the public. However, these internal sidewalk connections are a Zoning Ordinance requirement, and will need to be provided in order for the preliminary development plan to be certified and the rezoning request to proceed to the Urban County Council.

*B-SU4-1: Development should minimize and/or mitigate impervious surfaces.*

In the initial staff report, staff noted that additional information on the purpose of the vehicular use areas was needed, and noted that landscaping is required adjoining the VUA. The applicant has clarified that these will

be temporary loading areas and circulation areas for the recreational vehicles, and is not proposing any formal parking areas. The applicant acknowledges in the supplemental letter of justification that they will meet the required canopy and landscaping requirements. As with the sidewalk requirement, required screening and interior landscaping calculations will need to be provided in order for the plan to be certified and the zone change request proceed.

**STAFF RECOMMENDS: APPROVAL, FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:**



1. The proposed Light Industrial (I-1) zone is in agreement with the 2045 Comprehensive Plan's Goals and Objectives, for the following reasons:
  - a. By developing a vacant parcel of land within the Urban Service Area, the proposal supports goals relating to redevelopment and strategic growth (Theme A, Goal #2.a; Theme E Goal #1.d).
  - b. The proposed rezoning locates an industrial use within close proximity to arterial roadways and Interstate-75, contributing to an effective transportation system (Theme D, Goal #1).
2. The proposed Light Industrial (I-1) zone is in agreement with the Policies of the 2045 Comprehensive Plan for the following reasons:
  - a. The proposed light industrial use is in keeping with the industrialized context of the Blue Sky area, and will be consistent with additional industrial/flexible space called for north of the property within Area #4 of the Urban Growth Master Plan (Design Policy #4).
  - b. With the incorporation of the required internal sidewalk, the project's pedestrian connections will be appropriate for the context of the surrounding area (Theme D, Connectivity Policies #1 & 2).
  - c. The request will not utilize continually operated night lighting, thereby reducing light pollution and protecting dark skies (Protection Policy #10).
3. The proposed Light Industrial (I-1) zone is in agreement with the 2024 Urban Growth Master Plan, an adopted element of the Comprehensive Plan, for the following reasons:
  - a. The master plan recommends the property for Industrial/Flex Space uses, which is consistent with the applicant's requested zone and use.
  - b. The plan will continue the existing pedestrian network to the north, towards the areas anticipated for future growth and development within Area #4, providing for future pedestrian connectivity.
4. The justification and corollary development plan are in agreement with the Development Criteria of the Imagine Lexington 2045 Comprehensive Plan, for the following reasons:
  - a. The proposed rezoning meets the criteria for Land Use, as the request is establishing a new industrial use adjacent to existing industrial uses (C-L19-1), and increases the utilization of land within the Blue Sky Activity Center (C-PS3-1).
  - b. The proposed rezoning meets the criteria for Transportation, Connectivity, and Walkability, as the development proposes new street trees to screen the use and define the road frontage (A-DS5-2), and extends the sidewalk network north along Canebrake Drive (A-DS4-1).
  - c. The proposed rezoning meets the criteria for Environment, as the request does not impact any environmentally significant areas (B-PR2-1), and is proposing limited lighting of the site (B-PR10-1).
  - d. The proposed rezoning meets the criteria for Site Design, as the development is not proposing any on-site permanent parking (C-PS10-2), and will be required to extend the sidewalk network along the road frontage, as well as internally to the site.
  - e. There are no applicable criteria within Building Form for this development.
5. This recommendation is made subject to approval and certification of PLN-MJDP-24-00086: COVEY RIDGE DEVELOPMENT LOT 4 (AMD) prior to forwarding a recommendation to the Urban County Council. This certification must be accomplished within two weeks of the Planning Commission's approval.