



CITY OF CONCORD
New Hampshire's Main Street™
Community Development Department

Heather Shank
City Planner

MEMORANDUM TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

From: Heather Shank, City Planner
Date: April 22, 2019
Subject: Request to re-zone 2.1 acres off of Village Street from Medium Density Residential (RM) to General Commercial (CG)

Recommendation

The Planning Board made a recommendation to City Council to approve the City's request to rezone approximately 2.1 acres off of Village Street from Medium Density Residential (RM) to General Commercial (CG).

Background

The City of Concord is requesting that Council rezone approximately 2.1 acres off of Village Street from Medium Density Residential (RM) to General Commercial (CG).

In 2015, the City entered into a purchase and sale agreement with the Penacook Community Center (PCC) for the City's former water tower lot behind 97 Village Street. PCC intended to merge the lot with 95 and 97 Village Street to allow for the construction of a new community center. The project never materialized and the City lot was never sold.

PCC has entered into an option to purchase agreement with CATCH Neighborhood Housing for 95 and 97 Village Street for the development of multifamily housing. CATCH subsequently entered into a P&S with the City to purchase its lot; however, the lot is zoned Medium Density Residential (RM), which does not permit multifamily housing. The City has agreed to seek rezoning of the lot as a condition of the sale to allow the use.

Existing Zoning/Land Use

The water tower property, while having an access off of Village Street, is predominantly land locked behind 95 and 97 Village Street, which are zoned General Commercial (CG). The CG District continues to the south nearly to the intersection with Abbott Road; most of the uses in this district are single family residential. The CG District allows multifamily housing.

Land to the north, south, and west of the subject lot is zoned RM. To the north is the Woodlawn Cemetery, to the south is a single family home subdivision, and to the west is a single family home. Staff notes that this entire area of western Penacook is a mix of single family homes and multifamily developments, consisting primarily of age restricted housing.

Compatibility with Master Plan

According to the Master Plan, land use recommendations for Penacook include encouraging multifamily and mixed use housing along CG zoned corridors. Since the access for the property is off of Village Street, and since the property is behind commercially zoned property off of Village Street, rezoning the property to CG is appropriate and consistent with the Master Plan.

The Master Plan also includes a goal for housing, which states that the City should encourage low and moderate income housing and assist non-profit organizations in creating this type of housing.

Analysis of Impacts

The most intense use permitted in the RM District is multifamily housing for the elderly. Since this use is similar in intensity to the proposed use for multifamily housing, the impacts of the zoning change in terms of transportation, natural resources, municipal services and economic development should be similar to those that could currently occur by right in the RM District. Therefore, Staff does not anticipate any adverse impacts with regard to these areas as a result of the zoning change. The rezoning will increase the tax base of the City by allowing redevelopment of three lots, including a City owned lot currently not subject to taxes.

Staff notes that abutters may have concerns with regard to the intensity of development permitted. However, as noted above, the use proposed is very similar in intensity to that which is already permitted by right in the RM District. Staff recommends that any potential abutter concerns be addressed through the site plan review process to mitigate impacts.

Staff also notes that certain other commercial uses permitted in the CG District would not be as appropriate in this location since it is immediately adjacent to single family homes to the west and south. However, the risk of this is low since the City is the property owner and can either rezone the property back to RM, or hold onto it until an equally appropriate proposal is made.

Summary

Since the use proposed is similar to what would already be permitted in the RM District, and since the access for the property is off of Village Street, and where the Master Plan supports the proposed use for Village Street, Staff is in support of the request. The Planning Board unanimously voted in favor of the rezoning at their April 17, 2019 meeting.