



**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:** 10/19/2018  
**Subject:** Request to re-zone 70 Pembroke Road from Office Park Performance (OFP) to Opportunity Corridor Performance (OCP), and allow multifamily residential uses in the OCP District citywide.

**Recommendation**

The Planning Board made a recommendation to City Council to approve the applicant's request to rezone 70 Pembroke Road from Office Park Performance (OFP) to Opportunity Corridor Performance (OCP), and allow multifamily residential uses in the OCP District citywide.

**Request**

A request has been made by Jonathan Halle, on behalf of Raymond Bossineau, owner of property at 70 Pembroke Street, to rezone the subject property from Office Park Performance (OFP) to Opportunity Corridor Performance (OCP) to allow a mixed use residential development.

The petitioner is also requesting to amend the OCP District to allow multifamily residential uses everywhere within the district (not only on the second floor or for parcels adjacent to the Central Business Performance (CBP) District as is currently permitted).

**Background**

The 24 acre property is the site of the former Sprague Electric business. The existing single story building is approximately 115,000 square feet according to the Assessing database, and houses Community Bridges, Concord Commercial Driving School and several warehouse and light industrial uses. Approximately 12 acres of the site are disturbed with buildings and parking; the remainder of the site is wooded. The site also has brownfield issues due to the previous use, which is being managed by the previous tenant.

The property is bounded by Pembroke Road to the north, Regional Drive to the south, and Canterbury Road to the west. To the north and west are residential neighborhoods zoned Single Family Residential (RS); to the east is Concord Christian Academy, also zoned OFP; to the south is the airport, zoned Industrial (IN).

The site may potentially be developed as a mixed use pedestrian oriented development. The predominant use would be multifamily residential, with retail or office uses as compatible such as a small store or other amenities geared towards the residents. The subject property is on a bus line, close to the park and new community center, and close to retail/service amenities.

## **Analysis**

### Master Plan

According to the Master Plan, areas designated as Office Park are intended for comprehensive large scale office, research and educational facilities, accompanied by supporting uses such as lodging, health centers, and outdoor recreation. An example of this type of development is the Horseshoe Pond area, which includes a wide range of office and service uses combined with the hotel and convention center.

The Master Plan defines the Opportunity Corridor geographically to refer to areas close to the highway running parallel to the downtown corridor. The Opportunity Corridor is characterized as high density residential, office, institutional, small and mid-sized retail and governmental uses. While the applicant's property is not located within the areas identified in the Master Plan, their proposed development is most consistent with the use and redevelopment goals of the Opportunity Corridor.

Staff notes that the 2030 Master Plan places a fair amount of emphasis on the separation of uses into commercial, office, and institutional uses, locating these in the lower density, more auto-oriented areas of the City. These uses are kept separate from mixed use development, which appears to have been seen at the time as more appropriate for the historic downtown areas of the City.

However, current best planning practice attempts to maintain a vibrant mix of residential and non-residential uses in existing historic neighborhoods, while also redeveloping single use nonresidential areas after a similar mixed use pattern. This encourages the creation of pedestrian oriented centers, connecting existing neighborhoods to jobs and amenities, in communities that are currently heavily auto-oriented and somewhat disconnected. Further, the market for single use office districts has dramatically diminished, with most end users seeking mixed use campus or town center style developments. Devoting large areas of land to single use districts does not represent the highest and best use for economic or community development purposes today.

In short, while the proposal to rezone the property to OCP is not consistent with the recommendations of the Master Plan to create single use districts in specific locations, *staff believes that it is consistent with the broader goals of the Master Plan to create attractive, livable communities that provide jobs, services, and amenities within easy access for residents.*

### Zoning

The Zoning Ordinance states the intent of the Opportunity Corridor Performance District as encouraging redevelopment along the I-93 corridor, and in “other brownfield locations within the City.” Since the subject property is a brownfield site, staff believes that the zoning does allow the subject property to be rezoned to OCP, despite not being located along the I-93 corridor.

With regard to the petitioner’s request to add multifamily residential uses, staff is in favor of this change. It appears that the original intent of the OCP was to prioritize nonresidential development, except when adjacent to the CBP. This may have been in an effort to increase tax base with nonresidential development, while minimizing fiscal impacts from residential development.

However, there is a need for more housing within the City today, with vacancy currently at less than 1%. In addition, the Master Plan indicates a target population for the City of 56,000 by the year 2030, which would indicate an increase of 10,000 over the next 12 years. As such, staff believes that several types of residential development, including multifamily, would be very appropriate for the Opportunity Corridor along with other disturbed areas in the City in need of redevelopment.

Staff also notes that the changes being requested at this time are very consistent with anticipated changes to the zoning code through the update to the ordinance currently underway. The subject property is targeted for future visioning to maximize the value to the City and benefit to the community and the OFP District was intended to be dramatically revamped to allow flexibility for mixed use development or other types of development more responsive to today’s market.

### Fiscal Impact

The intent of the rezoning is to allow a greater intensity of uses on the site. This should increase the economic benefit to the City by expanding the tax base. There may also be an impact due to increased need for services related to residential development. However, the subject property is already fully served by municipal water, sewer, gas, and electricity, and has adequate access for fire, police, and emergency vehicles. In addition, the property is in close proximity to the new community center on Canterbury Street, which can more than meet the needs of additional residential units.

### Summary

It is Staff’s opinion that the applicant’s requests are consistent with the redevelopment goals of the Master Plan and the intent of the Opportunity Corridor, if not with regard to the creation of single use districts in specific locations. The Planning Board was also in favor of the changes and felt that they could lead to positive development in the community.