Council Communication

Department: Community Development CASE # ZC-19-003 Property Owner: City of Council Bluffs Applicant: Community Development Department	Ordinance No. _____	City Council: 08/26/19 Public Hearing: 09/09/19 Planning Commission: 08/13/2019

Subject/Title

Request: Rezone property legally described as being all of Blocks 7 and 8, Bryant and Clark's Subdivision and the vacated South 33rd Street right-of-way in between said blocks; and all of Block 6, Ferry's Addition; along with all vacated alleys adjacent to said subdivision blocks, from R-3/Low Density Multi-family Residential District to MCR/Mixed Commercial Residential District.

Location: Between 1st Avenue and 2nd Avenue from South 32nd Street to South 34th Street.

Background

The Community Development Department is proposing to rezone city-owned property legally described above from R-3/Low Density Multi-Family Residential District to MCR/Mixed Commercial District, which is a new commercial zoning district that is being considered by City Council concurrent with this request (see Case #ZT-19-005). The subject property is comprised of 5.53 acres of land and was acquired by the City of Council Bluffs from Bunge Corp. in 2012. Between the years 2013-2014, the City of Council Bluffs demolished the former Bunge grain elevator facilities and associated site infrastructure for future redevelopment purposes. In 2015, the City Council adopted the West Broadway Corridor Plan, which included a residential redevelopment concept for the subject property (see Attachment A). The Community Development Department is proposing to rezone the property from R-3 to MCR in order to implement the vision of the West Broadway Corridor Plan while allowing a higher value, higher density development with the possibility of mixed-use.

Land Use and Zoning

In 2016, the City Council rezoned the subject property from I-1/Light Industrial District and C-2/ Commercial District to R-3/Low Density Multi-Family Residential District (see Case #ZC-16-002, Ordinance No. 6720) so that it could be redeveloped with a variety of housing typologies as shown in the West Broadway Corridor Plan. Surrounding zoning in the general vicinity of the request includes C-2/ Commercial District to the north, east, and west, along with R-2/Two-Family Residential and R-3/Low Density Multi-Family Residential to the south (see Attachment B). Additionally, the property is partially located within the West Broadway Corridor Design Overlay.

Surrounding land uses in the general vicinity of the request include:

- North: City-owned vacant land, Arby's, Burger King, T S Bank, Romantix, and commercial storage;
- East: City-owned vacant land, single-family dwellings, and an automobile repair/sales business;
- South: Single-family residential dwellings and an eight unit apartment building; and
- West: City-owned vacant land, a contractor shop, and commercial/retail establishments.

The future land use plan of the Bluffs Tomorrow: 2030 Plan designates the subject property as Multi-Family/Mixed Use (see Case #CP-19-001, Resolution No. 19-45). The proposed MCR District is consistent with the Bluffs Tomorrow: 2030 Plan.

All property owners within 200 feet of the subject property were notified of the proposed rezoning. No one has indicated any opposition to the proposed rezoning request as of the date of this report.

All City Departments and local utilities were notified of the proposed rezoning. The following comments were received:

- Black Hills Energy stated they have no concerns for the proposed request.
- Council Bluffs Water Works stated they have no comments for the proposed request.
- Council Bluffs Fire Department stated they have no comments for the proposed request.
- Council Bluffs Public Works Department stated they have no concerns for the request and confirmed utilities (sanitary and storm sewers) are located adjacent to this site to support future redevelopment.

The following attachments are included with the case staff report:
Attachment A: West Broadway Corridor Plan redevelopment concept
Attachment B: Location/zoning map
Attachment C: Conceptual R-3 District density design
Attachment D: Conceptual MCR District density design

Discussion

1. The MCR/Mixed Commercial Residential District is intended to encourage an urban pattern of development characterized as "mixed-use" in order to promote human interaction, pleasing aesthetics, economic resiliency, efficient land use, and maximization of resources. The MCR district also supports and encourages a variety of transportation options for multiple modes of transportation. The MCR district is applicable to areas of the City where higher density residential and commercial uses are appropriate and where municipal utility infrastructure is readily available or can be extended by a project.

2. The subject property is located within an area of the City commonly referred to as the 'West Broadway Corridor" which is the primary east/west commercial corridor that connects Downtown Council Bluffs with Downtown Omaha. The adopted West Broadway Corridor Plan shows properties within it being redeveloped with a variety of commercial, residential, and mixed commercial residential land uses. The MCR District will allow for high-density residential uses and/or mixed commercial residential uses to be developed in a manner that is consistent with the West Broadway Corridor Plan.

3. The subject property directly abuts 1st Avenue, which is currently an unimproved 66 foot-wide right-of-way that extends from South 36th Street to Downtown Council Bluffs. The West Broadway Corridor Plan identified 1st Avenue as being a multi-modal transportation corridor that is capable of supporting public transit, pedestrian sidewalks, a bike trail, and stormwater management. The Community Development Department and the Furthering Interconnections, Revitalization, Streetscapes, Transportation, and Aesthetics for a Vibrant Economy (FIRST AVE) Advisory Committee are working with consultants on the design of the 1st Avenue trail. Once the final design is complete it's anticipated that the segment of 1st Avenue that abuts the subject property will be constructed as part of the future development project at this location and will provide residents direct access to different transportation modes.

4. Adequate utilities are available within the adjacent right-of-ways to support new development.

5. The subject property is zoned R-3 District and contains 5.53 acres of undeveloped land. Based on the site development standards of the R-3 District the subject property is allowed a maximum of 121 multi-family dwelling units, which calculates to 20 units/per acre (see Attachment C). The MCR District requires a minimum of 40 dwellings units per acre, which can come from a variety of housing typologies including multi-family apartment buildings, mixed commercial/residential structures, and/or townhomes that have at least four attached units (see Attachment D). Based on the size of the property and the above stated MCR District density calculation, the subject property must be developed with a minimum of 221 dwellings units. The increased density allows developers to maximize their return on investment while at the same time provide more housing opportunities in the West End. It also allows the City to capture a larger amount of property taxes on the same acreage and grow population in an area that has existing utilities, public transportation, employment, commercial/retail establishments, schools, and other supportive services.

6. The City is preparing to release a Request for Proposals to develop the subject property and the land located at the southeast corner of the intersection of West Broadway and South 34th Street with commercial and residential uses. The selected proposal must adopt a development plan that addresses all of the standards of the MCR District, and will be subject to review by the City Planning Commission and approval by City Council.

Recommendation

The Community Development Department recommends approval to rezone property legally described as being all of Blocks 7 and 8, Bryant and Clark's Subdivision and the vacated South 33rd Street right-of-way in between said blocks; and all of Block 6, Ferry's Addition; along with all vacated alleys adjacent to said subdivision blocks, from R-3/Low Density Multi-Family Residential District to MCR/Mixed Commercial Residential District, based on reasons stated above.

Public Hearing

Staff speaker for the request:
1. Christopher Gibbons, Planning Coordinator, City of Council Bluffs, 209 Pearl Street, Council Bluffs, IA 51503

Speakers against: None

Planning Commission Recommendation

The Planning Commission recommends approval to rezone property legally described as being all of Blocks 7 and 8, Bryant and Clark's Subdivision and the vacated South 33rd Street right-of-way in between said blocks; and all of Block 6, Ferry's Addition; along with all vacated alleys adjacent to said subdivision blocks, from R-3/Low Density Multi-Family Residential District to MCR/Mixed Commercial Residential District, as per staff recommendation.

VOTE: AYE 7 NAY 0 ABSTAIN 0 ABSENT 4 VACANT 0 Motion: Carried

Attachments

Attachment A: West Broadway Corridor Plan redevelopment concept

Attachment B: Location/zoning map
Attachment C: Conceptual R-3 District density design
Attachment D: Conceptual MCR District density design

Prepared by: Christopher Gibbons, Planning Coordinator