The Avant-Garde Staff Report

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City of Topeka, KS
Staff Reports

These are the reports a professional planner prepares that digest a particular development proposal or permit request; assess site conditions; relate the proposal to the comprehensive plan, subplans, and functional plans; and make a recommendation, all against the backdrop of local government policies and development code criteria.

(Meck and Morris, 2004)
What one word do you think of when you hear “staff report”?
What one word do you think of when you hear "staff report"?
Sample of Municipalities for which Staff Reports were Analyzed (n=94)

- Municipality for which staff report analyzed

Map created by Zach Tusinger, June 2, 2015
The Sample

- Staff reports from 94 cities
  - Simple, rezonings
- 41 states
- Population range: 2,501 to 8,274,527
  - Mean 192,719; median 68,722
- Page numbers: 1 to 71
  - Mean 9.38; median 5

Johnson, B. J., & Lyles, W. (2016). The Unexamined Staff Report: Results From an Evaluation of a National Sample. *Journal of the American Planning Association*
Style and Substance

Style over Substance

Substance over Style

Traditional - Rational

Modern - Communicative
Findings

- 79% referenced the comprehensive plan
  - 39% specific goals and objectives
- 80% gave recommendation
  - 40% gave clear justification
- 45% site map of parcel
  - 9% reference map of parcel in the city
- 80% used page numbers
  - 24% bullet points
  - 5% photographs

Only 1% used sidebars

Lots of technical writing for lay audiences.
CITY of BEAVERTON
4755 S.W. Griffith Drive, P.O. Box 4755, Beaverton, OR 97076 General Information (503) 526-2222 V/TDD

STAFF REPORT

HEARING DATE: June 16, 2010
TO: Planning Commission
STAFF: Kenneth Rencher, Associate Planner
PROPOSAL: Murray Village Quasi-Judicial Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment and Annexation-Related Discretionary Zoning Map Amendment
CASE FILE #: CPA2010-0001 and ZMA2010-0001
LOCATION: Tax Map: 1S109BB Lots: 01500 and 01800
Northeast corner of SW Murray Blvd. and SW Jenkins Rd.
SUMMARY: This is the second segment of a City initiated proposal to amend the City’s Comprehensive Plan Map and Zoning Map to apply city designations to property recently annexed into the City. The City is proposing to apply the land use and zoning that most closely match the interim Washington County designations in terms of allowed uses, density, and building standards. No new development is proposed as a part of this application. Future development of the site will be reviewed separately.

The property is approximately 18.46 acres in size. The proposed Comprehensive Plan designation is Station Community. The proposed zoning is Station Community – High Density Residential (SC-HDR). The interim land use designations currently in place are Washington County Transit Oriented and Washington County Residential. The interim zoning designations are Washington County Transit Oriented: Residential, 18-24 units per acre (TO:R18-24) and Washington County R-9.

Note: The original notice included three taxlots. The first segment was changed previously and applied only to taxlot 01400. This second segment applies to the remaining two taxlots.

APPLICANT: City of Beaverton
PO Box 4755
Beaverton, OR 97076
DECISION CRITERIA: CPA2010-0001: Section 1.5.1 of the Comprehensive Plan (Quasi-Judicial Amendments)
ZMA2010-0001: Section 40.97.15.3.C of the Development Code
RECOMMENDATION: Approval of CPA2010-0001 and ZMA2010-0001 (Murray Village Annexation-Related CPA/ZMA).
Planning Department Memorandum

DATE: September 3, 2009
AGENDA ITEM: 1

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Tabitha Perry, Principal Planner
PRESENTED BY: Bill Luttrell, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: REZONING APPLICATION ZON09-04: LOOP 101 – CAMELBACK ROAD - 9802 WEST CAMELBACK ROAD

REQUEST: Rezone from A-1 (Agricultural) to PAD (Planned Area Development).

APPLICANT/OWNER: City of Glendale.

REQUIRED ACTION: The Planning Commission must conduct a public hearing and determine if this request is in the best long-term interest of the neighborhood and consistent with the General Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: The Planning Commission should recommend approval subject to the one stipulation.

PROPOSED MOTION: Move to recommend approval of ZON09-04 subject to the one stipulation contained in the staff report.

SUMMARY: This request will amend the zoning and approve a PAD to accommodate a mixed-use development on 1.35 acres.

PREVIOUS ACTION: On August 6, 2009, the Planning Commission initiated this request.
PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

MEETING DATE: June 11, 2008
ITEM NO. ____ GOAL: Coordinate Planning to Balance Infrastructure

SUBJECT

Indian River Plaza
5-ZN-2008

REQUEST

Request to consider the following:

1. Approval to rezone an approximate 8.6-acre parcel (Indian River Plaza) from Neighborhood Commercial District (C-1) to Central Business District (C-2) located on the southwest corner of East Thomas Road and North Hayden Road.

Key Items for Consideration:
• The request is consistent with the General Plan’s land use designation.

Related Policies, References:
17-UP-2008 and 18-UP-2008

OWNER

Indian River Plaza, LLC
480-368-0111

APPLICANT CONTACT

Perry Bolsiier
480-990-1114

LOCATION

2820 North Hayden Road

BACKGROUND

Zoning.
The Indian River Plaza retail center is currently zoned Neighborhood Commercial District (C-1) that allows retail, service, office and restaurant uses. The proposed Central Business District (C-2) zoning district allows for a variety of commercial use that include: bars, retail, office and service uses.

General Plan.
The General Plan Land Use Element designates the property as Commercial. This category includes uses that provide a variety of goods and services to serve the community and regional needs, and may include residential and office uses.

Context.
Located south and west of the southwest corner of the intersection of North Hayden Road and East Thomas Road, the site is surrounded by commercial, multi-family residential, and the Indian Bend Wash.
### Existing Conditions Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning</th>
<th>Interim Washington County TO:R18-24 and R-9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Current Development** | Vacant with no development currently proposed  
(Site was formerly a mobile home park) |
| **Site Size** | Approximately 18.46 acres |
| **NAC** | Five Oaks/Triple Creek NAC |

**Comprehensive Plan**

- **Land Use:** Interim Washington County Transit Oriented
- **Street Functional Classification Plan:** SW Murray Blvd. and SW Jenkins Rd. are each classified as an Arterial.
- **Street Improvement Master Plan:** The Transportation System Plan Street Improvement Master Plan identifies SW Jenkins Rd. for future expansion to 5 lanes. (SW Murray Blvd. is already at 5 lanes.)
- **Pedestrian & Bicycle Master Plan and Action Plans:** The Pedestrian & Bicycle Master Plans identify existing and proposed pedestrian and bicycle facilities along both streets

| **Surrounding Uses** | Zoning:  
North: *Washington County R-5*  
*(italics indicate outside City limits)* | Uses:  
North: Detached Housing |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South: <em>Campus Industrial CI and Wash. Co. Industrial IND</em></td>
<td>South: TVF&amp;R Fire Station and Maxim Integrated Products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>East: <em>Interim Washington County TO:R18-24</em></td>
<td>East: Vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West: <em>Washington County TO:EMP</em></td>
<td>West: Nike</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CITY OF CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA
PLANNING COMMISSION
AGENDA CHECKLIST

MEETING DATE: 9 September 2009
BLOCK: A-1  LOT: 10
FIRST HEARING: X
ITEM NO: DS 09-68
CONTINUED FROM: N/A
OWNER: Leonard & Peggy Riggs
STREAMLINING DEADLINE: 10/30/2009

SUBJECT:
Consideration of Design Study and Coastal Development Permit applications for alterations to an existing residence located in the Single Family Residential (R-1), Beach and Riparian Overlay and Park Overlay Districts.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:
Exempt (Class 3 – New Construction)

LOCATION:
Scenic 8 SE of 8th

ZONING:
R-1, BR, PO

ISSUES:
1. Does the proposed design comply with the Residential Design Objectives (CMC 17.10.1) and the Residential Design Guidelines?

OPTIONS:
1. Approve the application as submitted.
2. Approve the application with special conditions.
3. Continue the application with a request for changes.
4. Deny the application.

RECOMMENDATION:
Option #2 (Approve the application with special conditions.)

ATTACHMENTS:
1. Staff Report dated 9 September 2009.
3. Project Plans.

STAFF CONTACT: Marc Wiener, Assistant Planner


**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIOR CASES</th>
<th>Case Number &amp; Date of Approval</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annexation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoning Map Amendment</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sketch Plan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Plan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Subdivision Plan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Subdivision Plan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Site Plan</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Stand Delineation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoning Board of Appeals Cases</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archeological Assessment</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</table>

**DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Lot Area</td>
<td>Approximately 17,000 square feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Zoning</td>
<td>Downtown Residential (DR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number &amp; Type of Units</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roadway Dedication</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space (HOA)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Land Dedication</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</table>

**ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS**

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disturbed Lot Area</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impervious Surface Ratio</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floodplain on Site</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disturbed Floodplain</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nontidal Wetlands on Site</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disturbed Wetlands</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDE Permit Required</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FACILITIES AND SERVICE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road Name</th>
<th>Comprehensive Plan Classification</th>
<th>ROW</th>
<th>Access Provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winchester Street</td>
<td>Local Road</td>
<td>40’</td>
<td>Existing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where in the city?
Roundtable L.L.C. has applied to rezone approximately 3.2 acres of property located at the southwest corner of Camelot and Westwoods Drives from RP-3, Planned One-family Cluster District and CP-2, Planned General Business District to C-0, Non-retail Business District. The proposal is to develop offices on the property (Exhibits B and C). The applicant has submitted conceptual drawings showing how the site could be developed with access off of Westwoods Drive via a bridge, office buildings resembling homes along Camelot, and parking hidden internal to the site.

The area to be rezoned consists of two tracts. The larger one is Tract B of “Camelot Lots 157-190” subdivision consisting of 2.5 acres zoned RP-3. The other is an unplatted tract zoned CP-2, originally part of the Seaport development, approximately 0.6 acres located east of Tract B and adjacent to Westwoods Drive.

**HISTORY**

The Camelot plans from the 1970’s (Exhibit D) included apartments, townhomes and single-family homes for the area around Clayview Drive. These plans show the property under consideration as clustered single-family homes with shared parking zoned RP-3.

A preliminary plat for 11.7 acres south of Kings Ridge on Camelot was approved in 1984 (P&Z Case No. 84-154PP) (Exhibit E) and it was rezoned from RP-3 to R-1C, Standard Single-family Residential District in April of 1984 (P&Z Case No. 84-168). The final plat was approved in May of 1984 (P&Z Case No. 84-177FP). Part of the property under consideration along with the property now occupied by Saxon Medical Inc. on
We need to think differently.

- Can staff reports be “avant-garde”?
The Here and Now

PAST

1976

Elite

Separate facts & analysis
Use standard format
Facts with minimum of narrative

Future

This Staff Report is "Not a Staff Report"

STREET

Payson, UT
Phoenix, AZ
Virginia Beach, VA
Rock Hill, SC
Bowling Green, KY
Liberty, MO
Hamilton Co, TN
West Haven, CT Agenda
Hattiesburg, MS

Florence, MS Application Form
Some inspiration . . .
MOBILE STAFF REPORT

TRANSPARENT POINTS OF VIEW
MOOD BOARD
HAUNTED BY THE GHOSTS OF OUR OWN MAKING - STAFF REPORTS -

VALUES - EFFICIENT - IDEALS - RATIONAL

VISION - EASY - QUICK - LASTING - THOUGHTFUL
An avant-garde staff report - -
What does a mobile make us think of?
A Mobile Staff Report

• Let’s take a look -
Tested out – Avant-garde Staff Reports

- Videos short and long
- An e-book
- A “Fancy” newsletter
- Minimalist
- Game board
- Collage
Tested with Planning Commissions

- Mainland Planning Commission and the Islands Planning Commission for Glynn County, Georgia (pop. 85,292)
- San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission in California (multiple cities and counties impacting the Bay)
- Planning and Zoning Commission for the City of Liberty, Missouri (31,779 pop)
- Planning Commission for the City of Calistoga, California (5,322 pop)
- Planning Commission, City of Hutchinson, Kansas (40,623 pop)
- Topeka Planning Commission, City of Topeka, Kansas (125,904 pop)
- Planning Commission, City of Lindon, Utah (10,970 pop)
- City Council, City of Stayton, Oregon (8,245).
Findings So Far

• It is what it is.
• **Using art. . . “I think it helped you!”**
• What happened behind the scenes?
• What’s the thought process?
• It depends.
• Hearing from the public.
• There are benefits to just asking.
My own thinking - -

Organizing Frameworks

1) "The Wheel"
2) "The Pyramid"
3) Time
4) Facts / Analysis

Timeline

past present future

Facts / Analysis

Traditional

SR

- text
- tables
- checklists
- maps
- photos
- bullet points
- boxes/diagrams

Mobile Design

PLACE

past (what was)

present (what is)

N

W & E

S

Plan A

(Plan B)

(proposal)

N

W & E

S

"The Wheel"
Site Planning and Community Design for Great Neighborhoods by Frederick D. Jarvis

Figure 1.1 Qualities of Desirable Places to Live

Source: LDR International, Inc.
Sustainability Prism
5th Edition “Urban Land Use Planning”

Livability

Equity

Economy

Ecology
My own thinking - -

Organizing Frameworks

1) "The Wheel"
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Timeline
past present future

Facts/Analysis
Traditional SR E W N
- text
- tables
- checklists
- maps
- photos
- bullet points
- boxes/diagrams

Mobile Design

"The Wheel"

PLACE
past (what was) W E S
present (what is) W E S

Plan A
- Vision
N W E S

Plan B
- Proposal
N W E S
Collage Design

The Wheel

City President

DATE 2027

The Plan

Present Map

North

Proposal

Map

W S E

Checklist

reg infrastructure

QR code: "the file"

Public input

Comments: see "the file"

Options

Continue

Approve/conditions/have

Recall Notes

Where next?
A Mobile Staff Report

- Let’s take a look -
So that was how my thinking was influenced by this process – how about Topeka?
Topeka, Kansas

- **Our Staff Report Evolution**
  - “Legal” - facts and analysis mixed (read)
  - “Decision Maker” - facts and analysis separate (read better)
  - “Influencer” – add video (read, see, hear)

- **Left Brain/Right Brain Together**

- **Asynchronous meetings**
  - People Speaks
  - Story Maps (ESRI)

- **Who is this for?**
  - PC – engaged citizenry
  - Citizens – modern times/reflect demographics
  - Staff – tell a story
Findings So Far

- It is what it is.
- Using art. . . “I think it helped you!”
- What happened behind the scenes?
- What’s the thought process?
- It depends.
- Hearing from the public.
- There are benefits to just asking.
Thank you!
Spencer Museum of Art’s Integrated Arts Research Initiative (IARI) funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Research Assistants Savannah Wakefield and Mary Morrison & all those Planning Commissioners and Planners

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