Comprehensive Plan Amendment Application

Statement of why the proposed plan amendment is justified and in the public interest

There are three reasons why this plan amendment is justified and in the public interest: the amendment makes more usable an otherwise incompatible parcel of land; it increases the design options to create an attractive and functional development; and it allows for an increase in a critical community need – quality, affordable rental housing.

The parcel under discussion consists of 3 separate parcels sold together, which for purposes of clarity I shall call sub-parcels. 1600 Sedgefield Street is the largest sub-parcel, with PIN 0822-10-46-8973. This sub-parcel is zoned mostly RU-M, with just a small triangular corner zoned OI. The other two smaller sub-parcels, 1824 and 1820 Guess Road (PINs 0822-10-46-7874 and 0822-10-46-8718 respectively) are both zoned OI. These two small sub-parcels, however, aren't large enough to accommodate many OI uses. Together they are just 18,033 square feet – short of the 20,000 square feet plus parking required for an office building, for example. The sub-parcels are not currently supporting OI uses either. There is a vacant single family home on sub-parcel 1820, and the rest of the site is undeveloped. The conversion of this site to the RU-M zoning with a development plan supports Goal 4.3, Contextual Design, Objective 4.3.2 "Preserve the character and integrity of existing viable neighborhoods by promoting compatible urban and suburban infill."

This piece of property, comprised of all 3 sub-parcels, would better serve the public interest by supporting medium-high density residential development throughout. By zoning the entire parcel RU-M, the city will be granting the developer more freedom to design the entire site in a way that addresses community concerns and maximizes the lot's potential to carry development. With a lot that has split zoning, conditions exist on one part of the parcel, while different conditions and requirements exist on the other part. For a building that might straddle this line, these differences will restrict the building and site design options. For a two phase plan that puts one building in RU-M and the other in OI, the differences will limit the ability to design compatible, complementary developments. Both of these circumstances could be rectified by having consistent zoning on the whole parcel. This change would contribute to Goal 4.2, Design Quality, Objective 4.2.1 "Encourage designs that use resources efficiently, maximize site amenities, and preserve important features."

Finally, the submission of a Development Plan with this application allows the applicant, CASA, an increase in density to 17.5 units/acre. CASA's mission, which it executes through competitively-awarded public funds, is to create affordable housing and opportunities for successful living. Our housing serves the public need for high-quality, permanently affordable rental housing for persons with disabilities and persons of low wealth that is located in accessible and dynamic neighborhoods. In order to be the best stewards of the resources communities entrust to us, it behooves us to maximize the number of units we can build on a site. This creates more of this critical public resource, and it keeps our costs down by creating some economies of scale in terms of maintaining and managing our properties. CASA's commitment to build affordable units on this site supports Comprehensive Plan Goal 3.1, Affordability, Objective 3.1.3 "Expand affordable rental opportunities through new construction and preservation of existing rental units. Increase the supply of housing affordable to extremely low-income households by 100 dwelling units by 2015." And Goal 3.3, Subsidized Housing, Objective 3.3.1 "Prevent concentrations of subsidized housing, and locate subsidized housing in proximity to employment opportunities, service centers and transit corridors."

A legible map of the proposed plan amendment area, not to exceed 11"x17"

Attached.

A copy of the neighborhood meeting letter, mailing labels, and the sign-in sheet

Attached.

A statement of the concerns raised during the neighborhood meeting and how the application addresses them

The following concerns were raised during the community meeting. Below each is our response to items that could be addressed in this application.

- Effects on nearby businesses
  - We think this rezoning will have no effects on nearby businesses. Because of the size of the site zoned OI, it is highly unlikely that an office use would ever be developed on that piece of the parcel. The parcel, therefore, will eventually be developed into multi-family housing. The expected increase in density resulting from this rezoning – from approximately 15 units on the whole site to approximately 22, is not enough to have an impact on the businesses nearby. Several multi-family housing developments are located adjacent to this site, and we have no reason to believe that these have had any detrimental effects, so we do not expect that this development would either.
- Location and size of parking as it relates to security
  - We commit to developing as small a parking area as possible, given City of Durham requirements. We will address parking lot security for residents and neighbors through lighting and lot design.
- Location of curb cuts
  - This will be addressed during site plan review. The Development Plan shows the approximate access point on Sedgefield Street.
- Distance of the project from property management
  - This is specific to the intended owner of the property, not the site itself, and so cannot be addressed via this application.
- Noise
  - The noise expected to be generated from 22 units, phased in over several years, is minimal. That said, since the lot is currently vacant, any noise generation will be noticeable. The Development Plan shows our intention to retain much of the existing trees around the edges of the property, creating a visual buffer that will also help dampen noise.
- Disruption caused by construction
  - This concern is inevitable with any development of the site. Having met several neighbors and having their contact information should help to minimize surprises in terms of construction activities that may be particularly disruptive.

Required fees

Included.