

**Planning Commissioner Comments from the April 14, 2015 Meeting
Hopson Road Self Storage, A1400010**

BUZBY – I vote to approve. I appreciate that the BPAC’s comments were addressed in a text commitment.

FREEMAN – Would like to see comprehensive plan rather than piecemeal amendments that address current design but don’t encompass district plan unintended consequences. Voted against.

GIBBS – Approved.

HARRIS – Voted for.

HUFF – I voted against the amendment because a self-storage at this particular location in the Compact Neighborhood Tier is a bad fit. The location is close to a large residential development and this type of establishment is industrial (it is after-all a warehouse) and is auto-oriented. It does nothing to enhance bicycle or pedestrian use. No one goes to a self-storage unit on foot or by bike unless they are living in the storage unit or they are that Gambian woman who just did the Paris marathon with a 20 kg water container on her head. So I believe it to be in violation of the Comprehensive Plan. There is a reason why this kind of establishment is not allowed in Commercial Neighborhood zoning. It is not neighborly.

HYMAN – Approve; plan amendment.

MILLER – I oppose this plan amendment request because the property in question is located within a compact neighborhood tier. We are now engaged in a serious re-examination of our compact neighborhood tiers in light of updated information and thinking about future transit. The property is presently zoned RR and CN and should stay that way until we can take another look at the future land use of the whole tier. Up zoning the property to permit more intense commercial uses now will only serve to reduce our options for shaping future development in the tier when we undertake the necessary review and possible creation of a design district here.

The council should note that while the developer states that his intended use of the property is for a self-storage business, there is no commitment to use the property for such use. Even if the developer were to commit to such use on this location, I would not want to have to plan the rest of a compact tier and design district around a large (400,000 sq. ft.!) storage facility. It seems wholly inconsistent with our professed philosophy for compact tiers. Imagine a self-storage facility as big as a shopping center in the Ninth Street Compact Neighborhood tier. For scale, the new Harris Teeter at Ninth Street is 54,000 sq. ft. The storage facility proposed for the property in question would be more than seven times larger. It is better to wait and deal with this area comprehensively and not piecemeal.

If the council determines to change the comprehensive plan as this developer has requested, then there is probably little reason to oppose the rezoning.

Nevertheless, for the reasons set out above, I urge the council to vote against both the plan amendment and the rezoning.

WHITLEY – This project meets the four criteria for plan amendments. I vote to approve.