

Name: Land Use Plan Amendment – Otter Creek Planning District

Location: Southwest corner of Baseline Road and I-430

Request: Service Trades District to Commercial

Source: Joe White, White Daters

PROPOSAL / REQUEST:

Land Use Plan amendment in the Otter Creek Planning District from Service Trades District to Commercial. Service Trades District provides for a selection of office, warehousing, and industrial park activities that primarily serve other office service or industrial businesses. The district is intended to allow support services to these businesses and to provide for uses with an office component. A Planned Zoning District is required for any development not wholly office. The commercial category includes a broad range of retail and wholesale sales of products, personal and professional services, and general business activities. Commercial activities vary in type and scale, depending on the trade area that they serve. The application states the proposed use of the property is “general commercial”.

EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING:

The property is wooded and currently zoned R-2, Single Family residential and is 51.63 acres ± in size. To the south, land is zoned C-4, Open Display Commercial and OS, Open Space. To the west, the land is owned by the City of Little Rock and is zoned R-2, Single Family. The City ownership area is in the floodway. To the north, across Baseline Road, the land is zoned R-2, Single Family. Most of the land across Baseline is in the floodway. Across I-430 and to the east, the land is zoned I-2, Light Industrial District. Professional offices and Big Rock Mini golf and Fun Park recreation center are located in this area.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN AND RECENT AMENDMENTS:

May 16, 2000, multiple changes were made from Single Family (SF) to Service Trades District (STD), Park/Open Space (PK/OS) and Commercial (C) for the property subject to the application and the land immediately south and that immediately across Baseline Road to the north.

In 1995, changes were made across I-430 from Mixed Office Warehouse (MOW) to Mixed Office Institutional (MOI), Single Family (SF) to Mixed Office Commercial (MOC) and Community Shopping (CS) to Commercial (C). Categories have changed since then. Mixed Office Institutional (MOI) has become Service Trades District (STD).

MASTER STREET PLAN:

Baseline Road is shown as a Principal Arterial on the plan. The primary function of a Principal Arterial is to serve through traffic and to connect major traffic generators or activity centers within urbanized areas.

Entrances and exits should be limited to minimize negative effects of traffic and pedestrians on Baseline Rock since it is a Principal Arterial. Currently, Baseline Road is a two lane road with shoulders. A Principal Arterial full build out section will have 4-6 lanes with a median. The spans of the 430 freeway bridges over Baseline will have an effect on the eventual widening of the roadway. Portions of Baseline Road to the east on the other side of the freeway have been widened to a four lane section without a median.

BICYCLE PLAN:

Bikeway I – Bike Paths

This classification of bikeway is built separate from or alongside a road. Additional paving and right of way may be required. This is shown roughly parallel to the Fourche Creek and clips the property at the northwest corner in the area shown as PK/OS. This Bike Path is shown from Otter Creek Park (located to the southwest) to beyond the airport abutting or going through eleven parks.

Bikeway II – Bike Lane

A Class II bikeway is located on the street as either a 5' shoulder or six foot marked bike lane. Additional paving and right of way may be required. This is shown along Baseline Road from Stagecoach Road to Arch Street Pike.

PARKS:

According to the Master Parks Plan, this property abuts Terry Park, a 100+ acres park, to the immediate west. Between Otter Creek Road and Baseline Road approximately 315 acres are owned by either the City of Little Rock Parks Department or the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation.

HISTORIC DISTRICTS:

There are no city recognized historic districts that would be affected by this amendment.

ANALYSIS:

The site is located at the corner of Baseline Road and I-430 but it does not have direct access from I-430 at that point. It is undeveloped and wooded. Much of the site is in the Floodplain but not Floodway allowing for some development to

occur. It has been shown for Service Trades District for fifteen years. During this time there has been little to no development in the immediate area of the application.

With the proposed application, most of the Service Trades District (STD) area proposed for the area west of I-430 would be changed to Commercial. An area of STD would remain north of Baseline Road bounded by I-40 and the Fourche Creek Floodway – approximately 6 acres in area. In addition a small area of STD would remain west of the site to the Fourche Creek floodway. This area to the west in the floodway is City ownership (Fourche Creek). The area east is owned by the Town Center and though shown as Service Trades is zoned commercial and is part of the ‘Gateway’ commercial develop to the south of the site.

Currently the only access to the site is from Baseline Road - a Principal Arterial on the street plan. Currently, Baseline Road is a two lane road with shoulders. The spans of the I-430 freeway bridges over Baseline will have an effect on the eventual widening of the Baseline Road. Portions of it to the east on the other side of the freeway have been widened to a four lane section without a median.

The street widening was done in conjunction with an expansion of the Commercial area south of Baseline Road. Fourche Creek to the west, shown as Park/Open Space (PK/OS), will contain any commercial development from spreading to the west both on the south and north sides of the Baseline Road. There is an ample supply of STD areas to the east of this site across the freeway that has not been developed.

A large commercial area to the south has begun developing with a Base Pro Shop (open) and an Outlet Mall (opening soon) as anchors for the area. Other tracts surrounding these two larger developments have begun to develop with commercial and office uses. With the increase in commercial active and lack of interest in Service Trades a change to Commercial for the Land Use Plan would seem reasonable.

While access from the commercial develop to the south is poor currently. Via a commercial grade street to connect Bass Pro Parkway with Baseline access could be created, though such a connection is not on the Master Street Plan so it cannot be required as part of the development.

There is a large area of Service Trades District east of I-430 shown on the Plan and still undeveloped and wooded as well as several acres of Service Trades District remaining west of I-430 after the proposed change. Thus even with the change there is ample area remaining for Service Trades District development to occur in the general vicinity. With the development and continuing development

of commercial uses to the sound, providing additional land for this use would appear reasonable.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS:

Notices were sent to the following neighborhood association Southwest Little Rock United for Progress (SWLRUPS). Staff has received one comment from citizens concerning the ability of the infrastructure to support the proposed uses.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff believes the change is appropriate.

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PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

(SEPTEMBER 24, 2015)

This item was placed on the consent agenda for approval. The motion passed with a vote of 9 ayes, 0 noes, and 2 absent.