

Owner: Heights Real Estate  
Applicant: Ernest J. Peters  
Location: 8216 Cantrell Road  
Area: 0.53 Acre  
Request: Rezone from R-2 to C-3  
Purpose: Parking lot  
Existing Use: Vacant

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SURROUNDING LAND USE AND ZONING

North – Undeveloped property and single family residences; zoned R-2

South – Office development and Reservoir Park; zoned POD and PR

East – Mixed commercial, office and residential development; zoned C-3, MF-18, O-2 and PRD

West – Single family residences; zoned R-2

A. PUBLIC WORKS COMMENTS:

1. Cantrell Road is classified on the Master Street Plan as a principal arterial. Dedication of right-of-way to 55 feet from centerline will be required.
2. An additional driveway or curb cut on Cantrell Road will not be permitted due to left turn conflicts with the existing driveway on the south side of Cantrell Road.

B. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT:

The site is located on a Rock Region Metro bus route #25 (Highway 10 Express Route).

C. PUBLIC NOTIFICATION:

All owners of property located within 200 feet of the site and the Robinwood and Kingwood Neighborhood Associations were notified of the public hearing.

D. LAND USE ELEMENT:

Planning Division:

This request is located in the West Little Rock Planning District. The Land Use Plan shows Commercial (C) and Residential Low (RL). 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 Residential Low category provides for single family homes at densities not to exceed 6 units per acre. Such residential development is typically characterized by conventional single family homes, but may include patio or garden homes and cluster homes, provided that the density remain less than 6 units per acre. The applicant has applied for a rezoning R-2 (Single Family District) to C-3 (General Commercial District) to develop a parking lot on the currently vacant property to serve existing Cantrell Heights Shopping Center. Since the property is on the boundary between the Residential Low Density (RL) and Commercial (C) land uses and the proposal is an expansion of an existing use rather than introduction of a new use, staff is not requiring a Land Use change with this request.

Master Street Plan:

South side of the property is Cantrell Road and it is a Principal Arterial on the master street plan. The primary function of a Principal Arterial Street is to serve through traffic and to connect major traffic generator or activity centers within an urbanized area. Entrances and exits should be limited to minimize negative effects of traffic and pedestrians on Cantrell Road since it is a Principal Arterial. This street may require dedication of right-of-way and may require street improvements for entrances and exits to the site.

BICYCLE PLAN:

There are no bike routes shown in the immediate vicinity.

E. STAFF ANALYSIS:

Heights Real Estate Company, owner of the 0.53 acre property located at 8216 Cantrell Road, is requesting to rezone the property from "R-2" Single Family District to "C-3" General Commercial District. The property is located on the north

side of Cantrell Road, west of Andover Court. The rezoning is proposed in order to allow expansion of the existing parking area to serve Cantrell Heights Shopping Center, located immediately to the east.

The property is current undeveloped. The south portion of the property is grass covered. The north portion is partially tree covered. The property slopes downward from front to back (south to north).

The properties to the north and west are zoned R-2, with single family residences located immediately to the west and further to the north. An office development and the entry to Reservoir Park are located across Cantrell Road to the south. The reservoir is located to the southwest. A mixture of commercial, residential (multi-family) and office uses and zoning is located to the east and southeast.

The City's Future Land Use Plan designates this property as Residential Low Density (RL) and Commercial (C). The requested rezoning to C-3 will not require an amendment to the plan.

Staff does not support the requested C-3 rezoning. Staff feels the commercial zoning is not appropriate for the subject property. A west boundary line for commercial zoning and development was established a number of years ago. Staff feels that it is appropriate for this boundary line to remain in place. The POD development across Cantrell Road to the south was an in-fill/transitional development between the commercial zoning and the reservoir. Staff believes that extending the existing commercial line further to the west could have an adverse impact on the single family properties immediately to the west and the general area.

F. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends denial of the requested C-3 rezoning.

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PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

(APRIL 21, 2016)

Ernie Peters was present, representing the application. There were several objectors present. Staff presented the application with a recommendation of denial.

Ernie Peters addressed the Commission in support of the application. He provided graphics of a proposed parking lot for the property. He explained that the proposed C-3 zoning was only for a parking expansion. He offered the following condition to be placed on the proposed C-3 zoning:

- The proposed C-3 zoning will only be for the development of a parking lot expansion to serve the Cantrell Heights Shopping Center.

Tre Kitchens, of the Ridge neighborhood, addressed the Commission in opposition. He noted that City staff did not support the proposed rezoning, and that the immediate neighbors were also opposed. He expressed concerns with drainage and the topography of the property. He explained that the rear parking area for the Cantrell Heights Shopping Center was not fully utilized.

Barb Vogt also spoke in opposition. She stated that the proposed C-3 zoning would adversely impact nearby residential areas. She expressed concern with commercial zoning extending further west of the shopping center. She noted concerns with traffic, noise, trash and light, in addition to the site's topography.

Buff Blass also spoke in opposition. She discussed the previous rezoning attempt for the subject property. She noted that ample parking existed for the Cantrell Heights Shopping Center. She provided photos of the property to the Commission and discussed.

Jason Ghidotti also spoke in opposition. He stated that he represented the Foxcroft POA. He expressed the same concerns as Mr. Kitchens and Ms. Vogt.

Ruth Bell also spoke in opposition. She explained that the west commercial zoning line had been long established.

Mr. Peters noted that if the parking lot were developed all code requirements, including drainage and landscaping would be complied with. He noted that the owners of the subject property also owned the three (3) residences immediately to the west. He further discussed the proposed parking lot use of the property.

Commissioner Laha noted that he thought more parking was needed for the Cantrell Heights Shopping Center. This issue was further discussed.

Commissioner Bubbus asked about the distance between the subject property and the Foxcroft neighborhood. Mr. Peters noted that there was 300 feet between the subject property and the Foxcroft neighborhood, and 750 feet from the subject property to the entrance of the Ridge neighborhood. Commissioner Bubbus noted concern with development further west of the shopping center. This issue was further discussed.

Commissioner May noted that he could not support the rezoning. Vice-Chair Berry also noted that he could not support the rezoning and explained.

There as a motion to approve the requested C-3 rezoning, as amended by the applicant by adding the following condition:

- The proposed C-3 zoning will only be for the development of a parking lot expansion to serve the Cantrell Heights Shopping Center.

The motion failed by a vote of 2 ayes, 9 nays and 0 absent. The application was denied.