

Name: S. Van Buren Right-of-Way Abandonment

Location: S. Van Buren Street, between West 13th and 14th Streets

Owner: Catholic Diocese of Little Rock

Applicant: Cromwell Architects/Engineers

Request: To abandon the one block of South Van Buren Street right-of-way located between West 13th and West 14th Streets, adjacent to Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church.

STAFF REVIEW:

A. Public Need for This Right-of-Way:

There is no public need for this right-of-way. The pavement within the right-of-ways serves primarily as means of access to the church parking lot located on the east side of the right-of-way. S. Jackson and S. Harrison Streets, located one-block to the east and west, are improved, through streets which provide traffic connectivity for the neighborhood.

B. Master Street Plan:

There are no Master Street Plan issues associated with this block of S. Van Buren.

C. Characteristics of Right-of-Way Terrain:

The right-of-way contains a sub-standard, asphalt-paved street that serves primarily as access to the church parking lot to the east.

D. Development Potential:

The church proposes to incorporate the area of the abandoned right-of-way into a new parking lot proposed for the property on the west side of the street. A conditional use permit to allow that parking lot is a separate item on the Commission's Agenda.

E. Neighborhood and Land Use Effect:

As noted, the existing right-of-way functions as a driveway to the church parking lot. The street itself dead-ends just south of the site. The streets one block to the east and west function to provide traffic circulation through the neighborhood.

F. Neighborhood Position:

At the time of this writing, no neighborhood position had been voiced. Notice of the public hearing went to the Oak Forest, Hope, Fair Park and University District Neighborhood Associations. There were no abutting property owners, other than the church, to notify.

G. Effect on Public Services or Utilities:

All public utilities and reviewing City departments approve of the abandonment. The area of abandonment will be retained for drainage and utility easement.

H. Reversionary Rights:

The west 20 feet of the right-of-way was dedicated through the plat of Metropolitan Addition, dated April 24, 1906 and recorded on Plat Book 1, Sheet 22. The east portion of the right-of-way was subsequently dedicated by the church which is located on an unplatted parcel (E ½, NW ¼, NW ¼, NE ¼, Section 7, T-1-N, R-12-W; parcel ID No. 34L11700200). In neither case were reversionary rights noted.

I. Public Welfare and Safety Issues:

There are no issues. Good neighborhood traffic circulation will not be affected. Access to the church site for emergency services will be maintained through the proposed new driveway and parking lot.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the request to abandon the one block of S. Van Buren right-of-way located between West 13th and West 14th Streets.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

(DECEMBER 5, 2019)

The applicant was present. There were no persons present registered in support or opposition. Staff presented the item and a recommendation of approval as outlined in the "staff recommendation" above. There was no further discussion. The item was

placed on the consent agenda and approved as recommended by staff, including all staff comments and conditions. The vote was 9 ayes, 0 noes and 2 absent.