

FILE NO.: Z-1840-D

NAME: Little Rock Racquet Club Long-form PD-O

LOCATION: Located at 1 Huntington Road

DEVELOPER:

Little Rock Racquet Club
1 Huntington Road
Little Rock, AR 72227

ENGINEER:

W. William Graham, Jr. Inc.
100 North Rodney Parham Road
Little Rock, AR 72205

AREA: 10.27 acres NUMBER OF LOTS: 1 FT. NEW STREET: 0 LF

WARD: 3 PLANNING DISTRICT: 3 – West Little Rock CENSUS TRACT: 49

CURRENT ZONING: R-4, Two-family

ALLOWED USES: Single-family & Subdivision club or social country club operated as a not for profit business

PROPOSED ZONING: PD-O, Planned Development Office

PROPOSED USE: Little Rock Racquet Club, Health studio and spa

VARIANCE/WAIVERS: None requested.

A. PROPOSAL/REQUEST/APPLICANT'S STATEMENT:

The request is a rezoning from R-4, Two-family to PD-O, Planned Development Office to allow the Little Rock Racquet Club to add parking to their existing site. The proposal is to allow an expansion of ground-level parking and addition of a single story parking deck over an existing parking lot. Approval will enable the addition of a total of 64 parking spaces, 46 on the parking deck and 18 at ground level. The applicant notes the added parking spaces will provide benefits to both the Club's membership and the neighborhood by avoiding the need for overflow parking along Huntington, Riding and Foxcroft Roads during periods of heavy use.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The Racquet Club has been in this location since the 1960's during the same time the neighborhood was developing around the Racquet Club. Entering the neighborhood on Foxcroft Road there are commercial uses located along Cantrell Road and Foxcroft Road at the Cantrell Road intersection, condominiums located on both sides of Foxcroft Road, single-family residential homes with the drive into the Racquet Club located between two (2) homes also along Foxcroft Road. The Racquet Club is bordered by single-family homes to the east, north and west. To the south is an apartment complex accessed from Cantrell Road.

C. NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS:

All property owners located within 200-feet of the site along with the Overlook Property Owners Association and the Robinwood Property Owners Association were notified of the public hearing.

D. ENGINEERING COMMENTS:

PUBLIC WORKS CONDITIONS:

1. A grading permit in accordance with Section 29-186 (c) and (d) will be required prior to any land clearing or grading activities at the site. Other than residential subdivisions, site grading and drainage plans must be submitted and approved prior to the start of construction.
2. A handicap ramp is required to be installed on Huntington Road in accordance with Section 31-175 of the Little Rock Code and the Master Street Plan. The access ramp has been constructed.
3. Provide a Sketch Grading and Drainage Plan for the additional parking areas per Section 29-186.
4. On site striping and signage plans must be designed per MUTCD standards.
5. Repair or replace any curb and gutter or sidewalk that is damaged in the public right-of-way prior to occupancy.
6. Damage to public and private property due to hauling operations or operation of construction related equipment from a nearby construction site shall be repaired by the responsible party prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
7. Prior to construction of retaining walls, an engineer's certification of design and plans must be submitted to Public Works for approval. After construction, an as-built certification is required for construction of the retaining wall.
8. Show the proposed parking wheel stops on the plan to confirm parking aisle widths and traffic flow.

E. UTILITIES AND FIRE DEPARTMENT/COUNTY PLANNING:

Little Rock Wastewater: Sewer available to this site.

Entergy: Entergy does not object to this proposal. There do not appear to be any overhead, primary voltage electrical facilities in conflict with the proposal to add parking at this location. However, there appear to be some secondary voltage wires and poles supplying private area lighting which are in conflict. These are usually fairly easy to adjust. Contact Entergy in advance to discuss future service requirements, new facilities locations and adjustments to existing facilities (if any) as this property is developed.

Centerpoint Energy: No comment received.

AT & T: No comment received.

Central Arkansas Water:

1. All Central Arkansas Water requirements in effect at the time of request for water service must be met.
2. If there are facilities that need to be adjusted and/or relocated, contact Central Arkansas Water. That work would be done at the expense of the developer.
3. Please submit plans for water facilities and/or fire protection system to Central Arkansas Water for review. Plan revisions may be required after additional review. Contact Central Arkansas Water regarding procedures for installation of water facilities and/or fire service. Approval of plans by the Arkansas Department of Health Engineering Division and the Little Rock Fire Department is required.
4. The facilities on-site will be private. When meters are planned off private lines, private facilities shall be installed to Central Arkansas Water's materials and construction specifications and installation will be inspected by an engineer, licensed to practice in the State of Arkansas. Execution of a Customer Owned Line Agreement is required.
5. Due to the nature of this facility, installation of an approved reduced pressure zone backflow preventer assembly (RPZA) is required on the domestic water service. This assembly must be installed prior to the first point of use. Central Arkansas Water requires that upon installation of the RPZA, successful tests of the assembly must be completed by a Certified Assembly Tester licensed by the State of Arkansas and approved by Central Arkansas Water. The test results must be sent to Central Arkansas Water's Cross Connection Section within ten days of installation and annually thereafter. Contact the Cross Connection Section at 501.377.1226 if you would like to discuss backflow prevention requirements for this project.

6. Fire sprinkler systems which do not contain additives such as antifreeze shall be isolated with a double detector check valve assembly. If additives are used, a reduced pressure zone back flow preventer shall be required.

Fire Department:

1. Maintain Access:
2. Fire Hydrants. Maintain fire apparatus access roads at fire hydrant locations as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 Section D103.1 Access road width with a hydrant. Where a fire hydrant is located on a fire apparatus access road, the minimum road width shall be 26 feet, exclusive of shoulders.
3. Grade. Maintain fire apparatus access roads as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 Section D103.2 Grade. Fire apparatus access roads shall not exceed 10 percent in grade except as approved by the fire chief.
4. Loading. Maintain fire apparatus access road design as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 Section D102.1 Access and loading. Facilities, buildings or portions of buildings hereafter constructed shall be accessible to fire department apparatus by way of an approved fire apparatus access road with an asphalt, concrete or other approved driving surface capable of supporting the imposed load of fire apparatus weighing at least 75,000 pounds.
5. Dead Ends. Maintain fire apparatus access roads at dead end locations as per Appendix D of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code Vol. 1 Section D103.4 Dead Ends. Dead-end fire apparatus access roads in excess of 150 feet shall be provided with width and turnaround provisions in accordance with Table D103.4. Requirements for Dead-end fire apparatus access roads.
6. Fire Hydrants. Locate Fire Hydrants as per Appendix C of the 2012 Arkansas Fire Prevention Code. Section C101 – C105, in conjunction with Central Arkansas Water (Jason Lowder 501.377.1245) and the Little Rock Fire Marshal's Office (Capt. Tony Rhodes 501.918.3757 or Capt. John Hogue 501.918.3754). Number and Distribution of Fire Hydrants as per Table C105.1.

Parks and Recreation: No comment received.

County Planning: No comment.

Rock Region Metro: The site is not located on a dedicated Rock Region Metro bus route.

F. ISSUES/TECHNICAL/DESIGN:

Building Code: Project is subject to full commercial plan review and approval prior to issuance of a building permit. For information on submittal requirements and the review process, contact a commercial plans examiner:

Curtis Richey at 501.371.4724; crichey@littlerock.gov or
Mark Alderfer at 501.371.4875; malderfer@littlerock.gov.

Planning Division: This request is located in West Little Rock Planning District. The Land Use Plan shows Public Institution (PI) for this property. This category includes public and quasi-public facilities that provide a variety of services to the community such as schools, libraries, fire stations, churches, utility substations, and hospitals. The applicant has applied for a rezoning from R-4 (Two-Family District) to Long-form PD-O (Planned Development Office) to allow for additional parking and a parking deck to be added to the existing site (Little Rock Athletic Club).

Master Street Plan: East of the property is Huntington Road and it is shown as a Local Street on the Master Street Plan. The primary function of a Local Street is to provide access to adjacent properties. Local Streets that are abutted by non-residential zoning/use or more intensive zoning than duplexes are considered as "Commercial Streets". A Collector design standard is used for Commercial Streets. 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.

Landscape:

1. Site plan must comply with the City's landscape and buffer ordinance requirements.
2. Screening requirements will need to be met for the vehicular use areas adjacent to street right-of-way. Provide screening shrubs with an average linear spacing of not less at three (3) feet within the required landscape area. Provide trees with an average linear spacing of not less than thirty (30) feet.
3. A perimeter planting strip is required along any side of a vehicular use area that abuts adjoining property or the right-of-way of any street. This strip shall be at least nine (9) feet wide. One (1) tree and three (3) shrubs or vines shall be planted for every thirty (30) linear feet of perimeter planting strip.
4. A land use buffer six (6) percent of the average width / depth of the lot will be required when an adjacent property has a dissimilar use of a more restrictive nature. The property to the east is zoned R-2, Single-family. As a component of all land use buffer requirements, opaque screening, whether a fence or other device, a minimum of six (6) feet in height shall be required upon the property line side of the buffer. A minimum of seventy (70) percent of the land use buffer

- shall be undisturbed. Easements cannot count toward fulfilling this requirement. The plantings, existing and proposed, shall be provided within the landscape ordinance of the City, Section 15-81.
5. Eight percent (8%) of the vehicular use area must be designated for green space; this green space needs to be evenly distributed throughout the parking area(s). The minimum size of an interior landscape area shall be one hundred fifty (150) square feet for developments with one hundred fifty (150) or fewer parking spaces. Interior islands must be a minimum of seven and one half (7 1/2) feet in width. Trees shall be included in the interior landscape areas at the rate of one (1) tree for every twelve (12) parking spaces.
 6. Any existing landscape or irrigation disturbed by construction shall be repaired or replaced before completion and final acceptance of the project.
 7. Note on plan any existing trees or groups of trees that are to remain. Trees selected for preservation shall have the area within the dripline fenced with protective fencing and protected from development activities. Graphically indicate the area to be protected on the plan and provide detail of the protective fencing.
 8. The City Beautiful Commission recommends preserving as many existing trees as feasible on this site. Credit toward fulfilling Landscape Ordinance requirements can be given when preserving trees of six (6) inch caliper or larger.

G. SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE COMMENT: (April 5, 2017)

The applicant was present representing the request. Staff presented an overview of the item stating there were few additional items necessary to complete the review process. Staff questioned the proposed screening mechanism of the upper level of the parking deck. Staff also questioned the proposed screening mechanism of the proposed new surface parking area. Staff questioned the days and hours of operation for the racquet club. Staff also questioned if any new signage was proposed for the development.

Public Works comments were addressed. Staff stated a grading permit was required per Section 31-175 of the Little Rock Code. Staff requested the applicant provide a sketch grading and drainage plan. Staff also requested information concerning any proposed retaining walls.

Landscaping comments were addressed. Staff stated a land use buffer was required along the perimeters which abutted residentially zoned or used property. Staff also stated a perimeter planting strip was required adjacent to the paved areas. Staff stated any existing landscape or irrigation disturbed by construction was to be repaired or replaced before completion and final acceptance of the project.

Staff noted the comments from the various other departments and agencies. Staff suggested the applicant contact the departments or agencies directly with any questions or concerns. There were no more issues for discussion. The Committee then forwarded the item to the full Commission for final action.

H. ANALYSIS:

The applicant submitted a revised site plan and cover letter addressing comments raised at the April 5, 2017, Subdivision Committee meeting. The applicant provided the proposed screening mechanism of the upper level of the parking deck. The applicant has also indicated the days and hours of operation for the racquet club are from 5 am to 10 pm Monday through Thursday, 5 am to 9 pm Friday, 7 am to 8 pm Saturday and 8 am to 8 pm Sunday.

The request is a rezoning from R-4, Two-family to PD-O, Planned Development Office to allow the Little Rock Racquet Club to add parking to their existing site. The proposal is to allow an expansion of ground-level parking and the addition of a single story parking deck over an existing parking lot. With the construction there will be a total of 64 parking spaces on the ground level and 64 spaces on the upper level of the parking deck. There are 12 spaces proposed within the new surface parking lot.

The applicant has indicated the parking structure will be constructed of brick veneer to match the existing club house and pre-cast concrete for the parapet wall. The wall height is proposed five feet six inches (5' 6"). The applicant indicates landscaping will be placed around the perimeters of the parking deck. All existing fencing is proposed to remain. Large portions of the existing buffers are also proposed to remain.

A portion of the property is covered by a Bill of Assurance (BOA). The BOA states there is to be a 35-foot green buffer strip along Huntington Road. No trees or shrubs are to be removed from the portion on Lot 118 that is to be maintained as the buffer except for normal cutting and shearing of tall grass and underbrush and said strip of Lot 118, 35-feet in width, shall be retained as an attractive green buffer strip between Huntington Road and the balance of Lot 118. The surface parking lot is located within the area designated by the BOA as the green buffer.

The BOA states Lot 118, Foxcroft Addition is to be used only as a private parking lot for automobiles for and in conjunction with, private club facilities. The BOA also states no building or structure of any type may ever be placed, erected or used on any portion of said lot. This prohibition shall not apply to any paving or to any business or structure that may be placed on said lot that is used exclusively by a public utility company in connection with the furnishing of public utility services to Foxcroft Addition. A portion of the proposed parking deck extends onto Lot 118.

Section 36-83, Guidelines for decisions of the Little Rock Code of Ordinances - In determining whether to grant a requested amendment, the board of directors may consider, among other things, the recommendations from the planning commission and the designated department of the city having planning responsibility and authority and use the provisions of the comprehensive plan, master street plan, master parks plan, and community facilities plan, as well as any other appropriately approved document created to provide the required public facilities necessary to protect the public interest. The planning commission shall consider, but shall not be bound by, the lawful provisions of a valid bill of assurance for the subdivision within which the subject property is located when determining the appropriateness of the proposed special use. No identical or substantially identical application for the redistricting of a specific parcel or parcels of land which has been denied by the board of directors may be made for a period of one (1) year.

Staff is supportive of the applicant's request for the parking deck. Staff feels the parking deck and parapet walls can be constructed in such a manner as to limit the impact of the new construction on the adjacent properties. Staff is not supportive of the applicant's request for the surface parking lot. Staff feels the parking as proposed will have a significant impact on the adjacent property owner. The applicant indicates the placement of a six (6) foot privacy fence along the edge of the parking area. Staff feels even with the fencing there will still be an impact on the adjacent home. Staff recommends denial of the application as filed.

I. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends denial of the application as filed.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

(APRIL 27, 2017)

The applicant was present. There were two (2) registered objectors present. Staff presented the item with a recommendation of approval. Staff stated the applicant had revised the site plan to address their concerns. Staff stated the request was a rezoning from R-4, Two-family to PD-O, Planned Development Office to allow the Little Rock Racquet Club to add parking to their existing site. Staff stated the proposal was to allow an expansion of ground-level parking and the addition of a single story parking deck over an existing parking lot. Staff stated with the construction there would be a total of 64 parking spaces on the ground level and 29 spaces on the upper level of the parking deck. Staff stated there were 12 spaces proposed within a new surface parking lot for employee parking only. Staff stated the plan indicated the placement of signage and a gate to ensure employee only parking. Staff stated a portion of the property was covered by a Bill of Assurance (BOA). Staff the revised plan was developed to comply with the provision of the Bill of Assurance.

Mr. Scott Schallhorn addressed the Commission on behalf of the applicant. He stated there was no intent to change the use of the property. He stated the club was used by members many of which had young children. He stated currently patrons were forced to park on City streets and traverse the hill with the children and their gear to get to the swimming pool or the other activities taking place on site. He stated there had been numerous meeting with the neighbors and the Racquet Club had revised their plan to address the neighbor's concerns. He stated by placing the parking on-site this would minimize the impact on the adjacent residents. He stated the parking deck was designed to shield the headlights of the cars and the surface parking lot would be used by employees only which would lessen the impact on the adjacent homes.

Mr. Johnathon Horton addressed the Commission in opposition of the request. He stated his home was a 3010 Foxcroft Road. He stated he had lived in the home since 2007. He stated there had been numerous meetings with the neighbors and plans had been developed that were not implemented. He stated there were other options other than the parking deck. He stated there were concerns with drainage and the construction of the new parking areas. He stated there was not a parking problem until the Racquet Club allowed cross membership between the four (4) Central Arkansas clubs. He stated the Club opened at 5:00 am and was open until 10:00 pm. He stated there were contractors working at the site after the Club closed. He stated his son was well aware of when the trash truck emptied the trash because he was awoken by the banging of the trash receptacle. He stated the Racquet Club was stated as a benefit to the neighborhood and the business plan had changed. He stated the change and the need for parking was a result of the Racquet Club opening the membership up to the entire County.

Mr. Walter McFadden addressed the Commission in opposition of the request. He questioned what could locate on the site if the office zoning was approved. Staff state the only use allowed would be a use similar to the applicant's request. He questioned if he could have a dentist office in his back yard. Staff stated no. He stated his opposition was to the use of the facility and the increase in the membership of the facility. He stated the site was developed as a tennis facility to serve the neighborhood. He stated the parking deck would take care of the current parking issues but as the membership increase by another 250 persons parking would become an issue again. He stated as the members increased the noise would also increase.

Mr. Schallhorn addressed the Commission stating the development of Lot 118 was as allowed within the Bill of Assurance. He stated the use of the property was for parking. He stated parking was being proposed. He stated the new development was compliant with the buffer requirements. He stated the site was not developed as a neighborhood pool and tennis center. He stated the business was always operated and allowed memberships for persons living outside the neighborhood. He stated the owner bought the property in 1999 and has continued to operate the business the same as the previous owner. He stated there had been a agreement between the various athletic clubs for a number of years. He stated the additional parking was an attempt to solve a problem that currently existed. He stated the parking as proposed would curb the membership. He stated the additional parking would allow a net of 39 spaces.

Commissioner Laha questioned drainage. Mr. Jim Summerland addressed the Commission stating currently the water drained across the adjacent property owner's property. He stated with the new paved area the water would no longer drain to the east but would be picked up in an inlet and drain to the driveway and to Huntington.

There was a general discussion by the Commission concerning the existing dumpster placement and the need for relocation. Mr. Schallhorn stated this was the best location on the site for the dumpster. Commissioner Bubbus requested the dumpster be relocated. Mr. Schallhorn stated there was not an area on the site which would not place the dumpster in someone's back yard. He stated if the dumpster was moved then some other property owner would be impacted. Mr. Schallhorn stated his client would continue to work with the dumpster service company to service the dumpster at an hour other than the current service hours.

A motion was made to approve the request as recommended by staff. The motion carried by vote of 8 ayes, 1 no, 0 absent and 2 recusals (Commissioners Stebbins and Dillion).