

FILE NO.: Z-8738-A

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NAME: Little Rock Salsa Short-form PCD

LOCATION: 614 President Clinton Avenue

DEVELOPER:

Little Rock Salsa  
614 President Clinton Avenue  
Little Rock, AR 72201

SURVEYOR:

Tyler Surveying  
240 Skyline Drive, Suite 3000  
Conway, AR 72032

AREA: 0.16 acres NUMBER OF LOTS: 1 FT. NEW STREET: 0 LF

WARD: 1 PLANNING DISTRICT: 5 – Downtown CENSUS TRACT: 44

CURRENT ZONING: UU, Urban Use District

ALLOWED USES: Uses as allowed in the Residential, Office, Commercial and Industrial zoning districts – all indoor uses

PROPOSED ZONING: PCD

PROPOSED USE: Add private club as an allowable use

VARIANCE/WAIVERS: None requested.

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A. PROPOSAL/REQUEST/APPLICANT'S STATEMENT:

The applicant is requesting a rezoning of the site from UU, Urban Use District to PCD, Planned Commercial Development District, to allow the use of the existing building for the hosting of ballroom and Latin dance classes and socials. Little Rock Salsa promotes community hospitality between members and guests through sponsoring dance classes, including Salsa/Latin/Tango/Cha Cha/Bachata with dances after instruction. Little Rock Salsa has been operating for over 6-years through partnerships with difference venues. Previous partners include Vieux Carre, Union Bistro, Rev Room, Browning's, Arkansas Arts Center and Juanita's. Little Rock Salsa Company most successful partnership was with Juanita's in the

River Market location from 2013 to 2015. The company feels there is a need for a dedicated space that can host the events they promote for the benefit of their members, followers and the community in general.

Previously, the upstairs space at 614 President Clinton Avenue, was used primarily as a concert venue. It is Little Rock Salsa's intention to convert the space into a ballroom using the dance floor that is already in place for professional dancing and make it the primary focus of the facility. The downstairs space will be operated independently as a restaurant that will serve Argentinian/International food. Little Rock Salsa and the operators of the restaurant will work together to create a space not seen in Arkansas before where a unique type of food and entertainment will be available under one roof. The applicant feels this is a singular opportunity to promote diversity and to enrich the Little Rock Cultural scene and the River Market in particular.

In addition, the applicant has a history of using dancing for the benefit of the community. The applicant has donated salsa lessons and entrance to the ballroom and Latin nights for organizations such as ACANSA, PARK, Rotaract Club of Little Rock and Ballet of Arkansas and has hosted a successful salsa fundraiser after the Haiti earthquake. A dedicated space will offer Little Rock Salsa Company the stability that any business requires in order to realize its full intention and to allow it to find innovative new ways in which to benefit the community through dance.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The building is located in the River Market District with the Arkansas River to the north and President Clinton Avenue to the south. The site was former occupied by a restaurant. Also located in this general area are restaurants, hotels, the Museum of Discovery and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Witt Stephens Jr. Central Arkansas Nature Center.

C. NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS:

All property owners located within 200-feet of the site, the Downtown Neighborhood Association and the River Market Neighborhood Association were notified of the public hearing.

D. ENGINEERING COMMENTS:

PUBLIC WORKS CONDITIONS:

No comment.

E. UTILITIES AND FIRE DEPARTMENT/COUNTY PLANNING:

Little Rock Wastewater: Sewer available to this site.

Entergy: Entergy does not object to this proposal. Service is already being provided to this structure. Contact Entergy in advance to discuss any changes to electrical service requirements, or adjustments to existing facilities (if any) as this project proceeds.

Centerpoint Energy: No comment received.

AT & T: No comment received.

Central Arkansas Water: No objection. All Central Arkansas Water requirements in effect at the time of request for water service must be met.

Fire Department: No comment.

Parks and Recreation: No comment received.

County Planning: No comment.

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

F. ISSUES/TECHNICAL/DESIGN:

Building Code: Project is a change in occupancy and is therefore subject to current building code requirements. Review and approval is required by Building Codes Division before occupancy takes place. For information on submittal requirements and the review process, contact a commercial plans examiner: Curtis Richey at 501.371.4724; [crichey@littlerock.gov](mailto:crichey@littlerock.gov) or Mark Alderfer at 501.371.4875; [malderfer@littlerock.gov](mailto:malderfer@littlerock.gov).

Planning Division: This request is located in Downtown Planning District. The Land Use Plan shows Mixed Use Urban (MXU) for this property. The Mixed Use Urban category provides for a mix of residential, office and commercial uses not only in the same block but also within the same structure. This category is intended for older "urban" areas to allow dissimilar uses to exist, which support each other to create a vital area. Development should reinforce the urban fabric creating a 24-hour activity area. The applicant has applied for a revision of PCD (Planned Commercial District) to add a private club as an allowable use retaining the UU (Urban Use District). The request is within the River Market Design Overlay District.

Master Street Plan: To the south of the property is President Clinton Avenue and it is a Local Street, to the east of the property is I-30 and it is a Freeway on the Master Street Plan. The primary function of Local Streets 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. These streets 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: No comment.

G. SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE COMMENT: (October 12, 2016)

The applicant was present representing the request. Staff presented an overview of the item stating there were additional items necessary to complete the review process. Staff stated the request was for a private club based on the definition of the ABC's rules and regulations. Staff stated the applicant was not providing food service and was proposing the sale of liquor which required a private club license from the State. Staff stated there were few outstanding technical issues associated with the request. Staff stated signage was to comply with the River Market Design Overlay District requirements.

Public Works noted there were no comments or required improvements based on the proposed use of the building.

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 provided additional information concerning the request as raised at the October 12, 2016, Subdivision Committee meeting. The applicant is requesting to rezone the site from UU, Urban Use District to PCD, Planned Commercial Development to allow the use of the "top" floor of the building as a private club. (The lower level will be leased by a separate entity and will be operated as a restaurant.) The applicant is requesting from the Arkansas State Alcohol Beverage and Control Commission (ABC) approval of a liquor license. The ABC issues permits for restaurant or for private club activities. The applicant is proposing the sale of alcohol without the sale of food thus the need for a private club permit from the State. The City recognizes zoning for this type activity based on the State issued permit. A cover charge will be charged to each person desiring to enter the business. The applicant will also maintain the business with a membership log as required by the State licensing board.

The Zoning Ordinance defines the separation requirements for private clubs. The separation requirements are determined by the Planning Commission so as not to

adversely impact the neighborhood. Private club review by the Commission should consider the following requirement:

- a. A private club shall not be located within seven hundred fifty (750) feet of the following:
  - i. A church or other religious facility.
  - ii. A sexually-oriented business as defined by Chapter 17 of the Code of Ordinances.
  - iii. A public or private elementary, secondary or postsecondary school, a day care center or any facility that operates programs for children or youth.
  - iv. Any single-family or multifamily residential use, except a hotel or motel, or a residential use that is within a unified development that contains both the private club and the residential use.
- b. For the purposes of subsection (a), measurement shall be made in a straight line, without regard to intervening structures or objects, from the nearest portion of a building or structure proposed for occupancy as a private club to the nearest property line of any use listed in subsection (a).

The site is located within 750-feet of multi-family housing and the Clinton School of Public Service.

The applicant has indicated the business will be open daily until 2:00 am. The applicant states in the beginning the business will operate primarily on Friday evenings but the request is for the allowance of additional days for operation should the business decide to grow and expand.

Staff is supportive of the applicant's request. The applicant is seeking approval to add a private club as an allowable use for this site. The company, Little Rock Salsa Company, intends to use the upper floor of the existing building to offer salsa dancing and also offer the sale of liquor without food service. Staff is supportive of this applicant but would request the transfer of the business or ownership the approval be reviewed via a revision to the PCD zoning for any new owner.

I. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the request subject to compliance with the comments and conditions as outlined in paragraphs D, E and F of the agenda staff report.

Staff recommends should there be a transfer of the business or ownership the approval must be reviewed via a revision to the PCD zoning.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

(NOVEMBER 3, 2016)

The applicant was present. There were no registered objectors present. Staff presented the item with a recommendation of approval of the request subject to compliance with the comments and conditions as outlined in paragraphs D, E and F of the agenda staff report. Staff presented a recommendation should there be a transfer of the business or ownership the approval was to be reviewed via a revision to the PCD zoning. There was no further discussion. The item was placed on the consent agenda and approved as recommended by staff by a vote of 8 ayes, 0 noes, 2 absent and 1 open position.