

FILE NO.: A-347 and Z-9806

NAME: Blue Stem Annexation and I-3, Heavy Industrial Zoning

LOCATION: 7103 Zeuber Road, west of Fourche Dam Pike and Thibault Road.

OWNER/AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Stephen Giles, Esq
200 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 2300
Little Rock, AR 72201

AREA: 32.7

WARD: NA

PLANNING DISTRICT: 26

CENSUS TRACT: 40.07

CURRENT ZONING: Not Zoned

BACKGROUND:

- This request is a voluntary '100-percent owner' annexation.
- The site is contiguous on its west boundary.
- The Arkansas GIS Office confirmed the request meets all the requirements of Section 14-40-101 in a letter dated May 10, 2023.
- The County Judge's Order was filed on May 16, 2023.

A. PROPOSAL/REQUEST/APPLICANT'S STATEMENT:

The request is to annex 32.7 plus or minus acres into the City of Little Rock. The applicant wishes to obtain city services to allow for the development of the land for industrial uses.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The property is located on the south side of Zeuber Road, west of Fourche Dam Pike and Thibault Road. The property is not currently zoned. An industrial warehouse is under construction. The western boundary is 962 feet and is adjacent to the current city limits.

On the south side of Zeuber Road, the tract west of the property is the Amazon distribution warehouse which is in the City and is zoned I-3, Heavy Industrial.

Adjacent to the requested annexation area on the east is agricultural land, beyond which are several trucking warehouses, all outside of the City and not zoned. South of the site is undeveloped agricultural uses, all not zoned and outside of the City. North of the application area, across Zeuber Road is outside of the City and is unzoned. Current uses are undeveloped agricultural to the west, to the east is a trucking warehouse. The area to the east between the trucking warehouse and Thibault Road was annexed to the City in 2022 (Ord. 22166) and is zoned I-3, Heavy Industrial. This area is currently undeveloped agricultural land.

This site is in the Fourche Island Drainage District, a levee system protected area. It is also within the Little Rock Port's future planned Industrial Park.

C. NEIGHBORHOOD NOTIFICATIONS:

Neighborhood Association contacts are notified of all items on the Planning Commission agenda via a single notice prior to the Commission's hearing.

D. ENGINEERING COMMENTS:

Engineering Division, Planning & Development Department: No comment received.

Public Works Department: No comment received.

F. BUILDING CODES/LANDSCAPE

Building Code: No comment received.

Landscape: No comment received.

E. UTILITIES/FIRE DEPARTMENT/PARKS/COUNTY PLANNING:

Little Rock Water Reclamation Authority: No comment received.

Entergy: No comment received.

Summit Utilities: Summit Utilities indicated they provided service to the Blue Stem property earlier this year. So long as there are no changes to existing right of way on the property, they do not have any comments on or concerns with this annexation.

AT & T: No comment received.

Central Arkansas Water: CAW has no issues or concerns with this proposal.

Fire Department: No comment received.

Police Department: The Little Rock Police Department has no issues or concerns with this proposal.

Parks and Recreation: No comment received.

County Planning: No comment received.

G. TRANSPORTATION/PLANNING:

Rock Region Metro: No comment received.

Planning Division:

The Land Use Plan Map shows this site in a large area of Industrial (I). The Industrial (I) category encompasses a wide variety of manufacturing, warehousing research and development, processing, and industry related office and service activities. Industrial development typically occurs on an individual tract basis rather than according to an overall development plan. The Land Use Plan shows Industrial (I) in all directions from the annexation area. The Little Rock Port intends to develop an industrial Park on the land in this area.

There have been no Land Use Plan Map amendments in the vicinity over the last decade.

Master Street Plan:

The *Master Street Plan Map* shows Zeuber Road as a Collector. The primary function of a Collector Road is to provide a connection from Local Streets to Arterials or activity centers with the secondary function of providing access to adjoining property. It has been constructed to 'Industrial Street' design standards with shoulders and open ditches.

Bicycle Plan:

The *Master Bike Plan Map* shows a proposed Class III Bicycle Route along Zeuber Road, Class III Bicycle Routes are designated with only signage for bicycle use. The street is currently marked with bike lanes on the shoulders (a class II Bike Route).

Historic Preservation Plan:

There are no existing historic sites on, or in proximity to, this land.

H. ANALYSIS:

The area requesting annexation is contiguous with the City limits along its western boundary. The land to the west was annexed by the City in 2021 with Ordinance

22034 (A-340 Amazon Zeuber Annexation). Approximately 1500 linear feet of Zeuber Road on the north boundary are included in this annexation. The annexation area has been farmland since at least the 1960's. It currently has an industrial warehouse under construction.

The entire region, in the City and outside the city, is within a levee protected area (Fourche Island Protection District). The area has a general slope from north to south. The land falls off about two feet in 1800 feet northwest to southeast. There is a drainage to the east with about four feet of drop.

The Land Use Plan Map shows the annexation area as Industrial (I). The Industrial (I) category encompasses a wide variety of manufacturing, warehousing research and development, processing, and industry related office and service activities. Industrial development typically occurs on an individual tract basis rather than according to an overall development plan. The Land Use Plan shows Industrial (I) in all directions from the annexation area. Most of this land is either agricultural in use or wooded.

The land to the north, east, and south is currently not zoned and outside of the City. To the east along Zeuber Road at the intersection of Fourche Dam Pike/Thibault Road are several trucking and warehouse developments outside the City limits. The land to the west is the Amazon warehouse and is zoned I-3. The I-3 zoning covers a large area north to beyond I-440, east to the Arkansas River, then south along the river to the City limits. This area is developing with industrial, manufacturing, and warehouse uses as part of the Port Industrial Park. The rural land to the south of the requested annex area is shown on the Future Land Use Map as Industrial (I) and is planned to be part of the Port Industrial Park. This area is shown to encompass land west to Fourche Bayou, follow the Bayou south to approximately Harper Road and then west to the David D Terry Park.

The applicant has requested the land be zoned I-3 Heavy Industrial District (Z-9806) as part of their annexation request. The land immediately north and east, and generally to the south is outside the City and is not currently zoned. The Little Rock Port has also acquired land beyond this annexation to the south with the intention of future industrial development of the surrounding area. The land to the north is zoned I-3, Heavy Industrial District. It is partially developed with manufacturing and warehouse uses as part of the Port Industrial Park. The owners of the annexation area land agree with the City that industrial development of their land is the most appropriate use.

This will add approximately 1500 linear feet of Zeuber Road to the City to be maintained by Public Works. Public Works has not commented at the time of this writing. The industrial use will not require City Solid Waste services. Solid Waste has not commented at the time of this writing.

The applicant has provided the City with a letter from the Arkansas GIS Office (AGIO) confirming the request meets all the requirements of Section 14-40-101 (May 10, 2023). This confirms that the area requesting annexation is contiguous to the City of Little Rock and all requirements of Arkansas Law have been fulfilled to apply for annexation.

This request is following the '100% Owner' annexation process. The Pulaski County Judge's Order was signed and filed on May 16, 2023. The Judge's Order sets the exact boundaries of the annexation which by custom includes all adjacent rights-of-way.

The nearest Central Arkansas Water facility is a 16" line in the southern right-of-way of Zeuber Road. The nearest Little Rock Water Reclamation facility is a 30" force wastewater line in the southern right-of-way of Zeuber Road. Actual connection to water and wastewater services will be at the cost of the developer. The connection to these utilities will need to be coordinated with the respective utility providers.

The closest fire station is Station #4, 7500 Lindsey Road which is approximately 1.8 miles from the annexation area via the current street system. The next closest is Station #13, 1105 E Roosevelt Road which is approximately 4.6 miles from the annexation area via the current street system. The fire department did not respond to a request for comment on this annexation. The Little Rock Police Department stated the current patrol district for this area is 6304 acres. An increase of 32 acres would increase the patrol area by 0.51 percent. The Police Department did not have any issues with this annexation.

I. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The Staff recommends approval of annexation and zoning to I-3 Heavy Industrial.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

(JULY 13, 2023)

The item was placed on the consent agenda for approval. By a vote of 9 for, 0 against, 1 absent, and 1 vacancy the consent agenda was approved.