

**AGENDA REPORT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
June 21, 2018**

SUMMARY

A request by Simon & Struempf Engineering (agent) on behalf of the North American Islamic Trust, Inc. (owner) to rezone the 1.3 acre property east of Flat Branch Park, and currently occupied by the Islamic Center of Central Missouri Mosque, so that a proposed addition to the Mosque (a new school) may be designated as a “Civic Structure” on the M-DT (Mixed-use Downtown) Regulating Plan. The Mosque is presently designated as a Civic Structure on the Regulating Plan. The subject site is zoned M-DT (Mixed Use-Downtown) and is addressed 205 S. Fifth Street (**Case #18-121**).

DISCUSSION

The North American Islamic Trust, Inc. seeks to designate a proposed school addition (“School”) to the Islamic Center of Central Missouri Mosque as a Civic Structure on the M-DT (Mixed Use- Downtown) Regulating Plan. The Mosque is presently designated as a Civic Structure. Places of worship and schools are permitted uses in the M- DT zone. While the proposed new school is an allowed use, its designation as a Civic Structure requires an amendment to the Regulating Plan which is processed in a fashion similar to a rezoning request. Should the proposed school be designated as a Civic Structure the new construction would be exempt from the M- DT zoning district Form-Based Controls. The intent of the exemption is to allow for unique architectural features and site design practices inherent to schools, government buildings, and places of worship or assembly. This request is being concurrently reviewed with a 1-lot final replat of the property to allow for redevelopment of the school over lot lines (Case #18-122).

The intent of the M- DT District is to encourage a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented district. Form is the tool by which this is accomplished, with the understanding that the function or use of buildings shall be secondary in consideration to urban design practices encouraging a vibrant downtown district. The principal regulatory sections of the M- DT District are the Regulating Plan, the Building Form Standards, and the Urban Space Standards, as presented in Section 29-4.2, M- DT Form-Based Controls of the Unified Development Code.

Building form standards are organized by street frontage location on the Regulating Plan, with unique standards inherent to the type of design appropriate for different parts of the Downtown District. Standards address façade composition, building heights, pedestrian scale considerations (setbacks and build-to lines), architectural elements, site circulation and building arrangement, open space and civic areas, and the interaction between the public realm and private spaces. The four primary area standards identified on the Regulating Plan are Urban Storefront, Urban General- West, Urban General, and Townhouse- Small Apartment.

As described by Section 29-4.2(d)(11), Civic Buildings designated on the Regulating Plan are exempt from the M- DT building form standards. All other M- DT zoning requirements and standards remain (e.g. land use, parking, signage and other standards). Non-civic uses found in the Downtown District fit within the form controls described above, but Civic Buildings have unique considerations in which the form of the building may be enhanced by allowing the function of the building to be a primary consideration in its design. Such consideration may enhance the urban fabric of the Downtown District by encouraging uniquely designed and functioning buildings serving as visual landmarks and places of community engagement. Designation as a Civic Structure requires an amendment to the Regulating Plan, which is processed as Zoning Map Amendment under the UDC. This allows for site-specific evaluation to ensure the design meets or is superior to the form standards in the UDC.

Staff has evaluated the proposed new School addition in terms of consistency with the definition of a Civic Building, the M- DT Form Standards, and the Comprehensive Plan. Overall, staff finds the use, design of the building, and site layout to meet the intent and standards for designation as a Civic Building. The design of the building has incorporated enhanced and unique architectural elements and the request for Civic Structure designation is believed to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Goals. Such findings are further supported and described below.

Civic Building Designation:

Civic Building Definition: For the purposes of form-based zoning, those buildings that house strictly civic uses or historically and culturally significant structures designated on the mixed-use downtown M-DT regulating plan. A civic structure is one in which building are customarily designed to meet the needs of assembly for civic affairs, religious worship, or education, and therefore include perimeter greenspace and characteristic building forms that are governed by civic or religious traditions (29-1.11).

The new School will eventually replace the existing school structure on the North American Islamic Center campus, expanding the space available for education and assembly, uses consistent with the Civic Building designation definition. The proposed structure will be an architectural and cultural extension of the Mosque, and includes building elements characteristic to school structures and religious traditions. As described by the applicant, the intent for the School is to follow the established Islamic architectural features inherent to the Mosque building, without overshadowing the Mosque. Architectural features continued in the design of the School include the lancet arch windows and doors, and consistency and harmony between the building materials, colors and geometric pattern of the brick veneer of the existing Mosque.

While the M- DT Form Standards require buildings be built to the required building line, the proposed School building is set back from the building line to allow for circulation (dropping off and picking up) of children. Other site and building design elements traditional to schools include a playground, and window and door placement patterns to accommodate interior corridors and classrooms with individual windows. The relationship of the school to the Mosque building on the site allows for shared parking and circulation, and co-use of amenities such as the playground and interior gym space, allowing the site to function as a campus setting. Complementary architecture and shared use of site features define campus configurations; the applicant cites Sacred Heart's Church and School Campus in the Downtown District as an analogous example of how the Mosque and School will function in the future. Analysis supports adding the School as a contributing Civic Structure on the Regulating Plan in addition to the Mosque.

Comparison with M- DT Building Form Standards:

Designation as a Civic Building allows for divergence from the M- DT Building Form Standards. To support such a designation staff conducted an analysis of the building elements which vary from what would be required under the code to ensure 1) the alternate standards are appropriate to the Civic use and its design traditions, or 2) if not tied to the Civic use's design traditions, the deviations are of a higher quality of design.

The Regulating Plan designation for the site is Urban General. While many of the provisions of the Urban General Frontage are met as described in the table provided by the applicant (attached), such as adherence to building height, size, ground story vs. second story clear heights, the elements not met by the School building are tied to its function as an educational facility. This includes not building the School to the required building line, reduced fenestration as a percentage of the building's façade, the use of the second story for classroom use.

The typical Urban General Frontage building would have large shop windows (e.g. a storefront) and would be built to the building line to allow for pedestrians to see into the place of business and for clients, shoppers, or diners to see out. This allows for the public engagement and visual liveliness inherent to a vibrant downtown. However, for the safe and practical circulation of children and to allow for interior

pathways to and from the School, the Mosque and playground, the School’s orientation away from the building line is in keeping with its function.

The use of smaller windows and a centralized door rather than a large storefront allows natural light into classrooms and controlled security in terms of access, accounting for the reduced provision of fenestration typically seen in this Frontage Area. The use of the second story for classrooms rather than commercial or residential uses is expected. Additionally, the window spacing more than meets the requirement to break up lengths of blank walls, and the open space requirements are far exceeded on the site.

Compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan:

The Comprehensive Plan’s future land use map identifies the site as being located within the “City Center” classification, which is “...Intended to be the focal point of the City of Columbia, serving as the education and government center of the community. This single district is an area of mixed uses and is built at pedestrian scale...” The proposed School addition provides an educational benefit to the community, and the two-story height of the building and the function of the site as a campus are of a pedestrian scale. Additionally, the adoption of Form-Based controls for the City Center, as accomplished by the adoption of the Regulating Plan and the M- DT district standards, is directly the result of the strategies identified in the Columbia Imagined Comprehensive Plan to encourage mixed uses and a vibrant Downtown District.

The proposed M- DT Regulating Plan amendment to designate the new School as a Civic Structure has been reviewed by staff and external agencies and found to meet the UDC requirements for a Civic Building. Furthermore, the request is will allow for architectural diversity consistent with the intent of the M- DT District, and is considered consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the amendment to designate the new School building as a Civic Building in addition to the Central Missouri Islamic Center Mosque on the M- DT Regulating Plan.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (ATTACHED)

- Locator maps
- M-DT Regulating Plan
- Supporting documentation provided by applicant

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Area (acres)	1.3 acres
Topography	Flat
Vegetation/Landscaping	Developed
Watershed/Drainage	Flat Branch
Existing structures	Multiple structures

HISTORY

Annexation date	1826
Zoning District	M- DT
Land Use Plan designation	Civic Center
Previous Subdivision/Legal Lot Status	Legal Lot

UTILITIES & SERVICES

All utilities and services provided by the City of Columbia.

ACCESS

S. Fifth Street	
Location	Along eastern edge of property
Major Roadway Plan	Local non-residential
CIP projects	N/A
Sidewalk	Required

PARKS & RECREATION

Neighborhood Parks	Flat Branch Park
Trails Plan	Adjacent to MKT Trail
Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan	N/A

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

All property owners within 185 feet and City-recognized neighborhood associations within 1,000 feet of the boundaries of the subject property were notified of a public information meeting, which was held on May 29, 2018. 13 postcards were sent.

Public information meeting recap	Number of attendees: 6 Comments/concerns: Questions regarding process and timeline
Notified neighborhood association(s)	NA
Correspondence received	None to date.

Report prepared by Rachel Bacon

Approved by Patrick Zenner