

**AGENDA REPORT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
February 22, 2024**

SUMMARY

A request by Engineering Surveys and Services (agent), on behalf of Columbia South Real Estate, LLC (owner), for approval of a PD Plan amendment to the Cherry Hill PD Plan, pertaining to Lot 3B. The proposed revisions include increasing the footprint of the building by 8,000 square feet, reducing onsite parking spaces by 21 spaces, and increasing the number of approved multi-family residential units from 10 to 24. The 0.41-acre subject site is located northeast of the intersection of Flagstone Drive and Corona Road. The case was remanded for reconsideration to the Planning Commission by City Council at the request of the applicant, due to staff's oversight in regards to a 2014 development plan amendment and misrepresentation of the existing zoning conditions on the subject lot. **(Case # 260-2023)**

DISCUSSION

The applicants are seeking approval to expand the proposed multi-family structure on Lot 3B of "The Village of Cherry Hill C-P Plan" which was approved in 1999, and amended in 2013, and 2014. The current request seeks to expand the planned building southward, replacing the parking area on the southern portion of Lot 3B as depicted on previous development plans. A proposed dumpster location at the northeast corner of the building would also require the removal of 1 parking space. These modifications will lead to a net loss of 21 parking spaces on Lot 3B; however, planned zoning allows flexibility in the provision of on-site parking which will be discussed in greater depth below. It should be further noted that parking within the Cherry Hill development was intended to be minimized and the original C-P district established a parking maximum to limit impervious areas as well as promote walkability in the development.

The approved 1999 C-P plan for Lot 3B showed a two-story building with a total gross floor area (GFA) of 7,200 square feet. The ground level of the building was intended for retail uses with 4 residential units proposed on the second floor. In 2013, a C-P amendment increased the building GFA to 10,000 square feet; however, maintained the same land use distribution (retail & residential) within the building. In 2014, another C-P amendment was approved which eliminated all retail use from the proposed building, added 6 new residential units bringing the total within the building to 10, and increased the GFA of the building to 12,500 sq. ft. spread across a 3 building levels - a terrace, a ground, and a second floor. The terrace and ground levels contained 5,000 sq.ft. each and the second floor contained 2,500 sq. ft..

At this time, the applicant seeks an expansion of the building footprint and the addition of another 14 residential units. The proposed changes would add 8,000 sq. ft. of GFA to the structure for a total of 20,500 sq. ft, and one foot of height for a maximum of 41'. The applicants are prepared to develop the property with an apartment building serving a demand for one and two-bedroom residential units. The plan indicates a mix of 12 one-bedroom units and 12 two-bedroom units requiring a total of 43 parking spaces after applying the permissible bicycle parking reduction.

The overall Cherry Hill development design scheme intended parking to be shared collectively across the entire site, encouraging users to experience the area on foot. The parking provisions initially established for the Cherry Hill anticipated more retail and office users in the numerous tenant spaces. However, as tenant spaces have changed overtime and as undeveloped parcels have been brought on-line there has been a steady increase in the number of residential units within the development. The increase in residential uses has resulted in a general reduction in required parking across the site.

As such, the existing constructed parking facilities are excessive given what was initially contemplated in 1999 when Cherry Hill was first approved.

Furthermore, the original Cherry Hill development plan did not establish variable parking requirements based on multi-family bedroom mixes. Parking calculations were based on a flat-rate requirement of 2 spaces per dwelling for residential units. Additionally, since the original development plan was approved, City parking standards have been significantly reduced reflecting a shift in values toward pedestrian-oriented development and prioritizing open/green space. The City stormwater ordinance, which placed a greater emphasis on reductions in impervious surfaces, was also approved a number of years after the Cherry Hill development plan. Given the desired “shared” nature of parking initially envisioned for the overall Cherry Hill development, the proposed reduction in on-site parking for the applicant’s future use is not viewed as problematic, and is consistent with many of the policies adopted after the approval of The Village of Cherry Hill in 1999.

The UDC now utilizes the bedroom mix to determine parking requirements in multi-family applications, requiring 1.5 spaces for each 1-bedroom unit, and 2 spaces for each 2-bedroom unit. Multi-family uses are also required to provide an additional 1 space per 5 units for guests. Given the applicants 12, one-bedroom and 12, two-bedroom unit mixture and the current UDC parking standards, a net parking requirement of 43 spaces is required. This total reflects the permitted 4 space bicycle reduction.

The applicants have indicated that 9 on-street spaces would be utilized for residents of the proposed apartments in addition to the 8 spaces retained onsite; including one accessible stall. 26 off-site spaces, across Corona Road to the southwest, are shown on the proposed PD Plan as being utilized to satisfy the remaining required parking for the proposed apartment building. An existing ATM on the west end of the central parking island within the area to be used to meet the development’s parking requirements is to be removed to accommodate 3 additional spaces in order to reach the 26 off-site spaces.

To mitigate a safety concern associated with the use of the off-site parking facility staff requested and the applicant has agreed to the installation of a crosswalk and curb ‘bump-outs’ near the southeast corner of Lot 3B to improve pedestrian safety for residents crossing Corona Road to their vehicles. Additional consideration was also given to sight distance when determining the location of the crossing, which was approved by the City Traffic Engineer.

The proposed building expansion would also require the relocation of existing utilities across the southern end of the parcel which will be completed at the expense of the developer. These relocations are accounted for on the PD plan. The associated utility easement in this area will have to be vacated prior to issuance of a building permit on the lot. This easement vacation is noted on the development plan, but will require separate approval by City Council.

Staff has reviewed this request and believes the proposal to be appropriate. Although the expanded multi-family building will likely maintain a significant demand for parking, this demand will be especially high during evening and overnight hours when residents are home and not during the normal operating hours of the business located to the north and west of the proposed new construction. The UDC promotes the use of shared parking facilities especially when the peak hours of the respective uses do not conflict, as is the case in this instance. Staff finds that the parking arrangements addressing parking impacts of the development are consistent with the UDC’s underlying intent and the minimization of excessive parking as envisioned in the original Cherry Hill C-P plan approval.

The modifications to Lot 3B resulting from the 2014 plan amendment were not identified by staff during their previous review of this request. However; much of the discussion during the October 13, 2023 public hearing centered on the removal of anticipated retail space on the subject site, resulting in the request being defeated by the Planning Commission. During discussion of the case before the City

Council on December 4, 2023, the applicants presented this information to the Council and requested that the case be remanded for reconsideration by the Planning & Zoning Commission. The applicant has since contacted representatives from nearby neighborhood associations, at the suggestion of the Planning Commission, to determine a mutually beneficial solution to many of the issues raised during the public hearing.

In response to input from the public and the Planning Commission, the applicants have revised the building elevations and finishes to better match the context. A rendering of the proposed building is attached depicting the structure within the development. A drop-off area has been added to the rear of the structure to serve the needs of residents of the building without impacting traffic on Corona Road. The ATM located on Lot 2C is to be removed for additional parking. A 6' visual screen and landscaping enhancements have been added to the south end of Lot 3B, expanding into common lot 173 immediately to the south.

To address concerns about visual impacts of the proposed structure and issues with the existing landscaping on Lot 173, the developer has privately agreed to remove diseased locust trees and install additional landscaping adjacent to the boundary of his property. These landscaping improvements are depicted on the development plan for informational purposes. Notes were also added to the development plan detailing this agreement and restricting residents of Lot 3B from parking on Corona Road, south of Flagstone Drive.

The proposed revisions have been reviewed by internal staff and external agencies and found to generally comply with the provisions of the UDC. Minor technical corrections will be required prior to the plan being forwarded to City Council for their consideration. No revision to the current statement of intent governing development within the Village of Cherry Hill is being sought since the proposed development is permissible per terms of the original approval. Staff supports approval of the development plan amendment.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the proposed major amendment to Lot 3B of The Village of Cherry Hill PD Plan, pursuant to minor technical corrections.

ATTACHMENTS

- Locator Maps
- PD Plan
- Architectural Rendering
- Approved C-P Plan (2014)
- Approved C-P Plan (2013)
- Approved C-P Plan (1999)

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Area (acres)	0.41 acres
Topography	Gently sloping SW
Vegetation/Landscaping	Graded, turf
Watershed/Drainage	Perche Creek
Existing structures	7 parking spaces on north end of parcel

HISTORY

Annexation date	1969
Zoning District	PD
Land Use Plan designation	Commercial District
Previous Subdivision/Legal Lot Status	Lot 3B, The Village of Cherry Hill

UTILITIES & SERVICES

All utilities and services are provided by the City of Columbia.

ACCESS

Corona Road	
Location	West side of parcel
Major Roadway Plan	N/A
CIP projects	None
Sidewalk	None installed, construction required

PARKS & RECREATION

Neighborhood Parks	Dublin Park
Trails Plan	Scott's Branch Trail
Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan	N/A

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

All property owners within 200 feet and City-recognized neighborhood associations within 1,000 feet of the boundaries of the subject property were notified of this pending request on January 31, 2023. 18 letters were distributed. Public hearing ad published within the Columbia Tribune on February 6, 2024. No correspondence has been received.

Notified neighborhood association(s)	Village of Cherry Hill, West Pointe
Correspondence received	None

Report prepared by Rusty Palmer

Approved by Patrick Zenner