

EXCERPTS
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
COLUMBIA CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER
701 EAST BROADWAY, COLUMBIA, MO
May 21, 2026

Case Number 135-2026

A request by Engineering Surveys and Services (agent), on behalf of Jeffrey E Smith Investment Co LC (owner), for approval to rezone 3.15-acres of property from the R-MF (Multiple-family Dwelling) district to the M-N (Mixed Use - Neighborhood) district. The subject site is located directly northeast of the intersection of Bethel St and Diego Drive, and is presently unaddressed.

MS. GEUEA JONES: May we please have a staff report?

Staff report was given by Mr. David Kunz of the Planning and Development Department. Staff recommends approval of the rezoning of the site from R-MF to M-N.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Thank you. Before we go to questions for staff, if any of my fellow Commissioners have had contact with parties to this case outside of a public hearing, or have reason to recuse themselves from this vote, please say so now.

MR. DARR: Madam Chair, I would like to recuse myself.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Thank you, Commissioner Darr. You may be recused. Please leave the room, and we'll call you back after the vote has concluded. Anyone else? Seeing none. Any questions for staff? Seeing none. We will go to public comment.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED

MS. GEUEA JONES: Is there any public comment on this case? Please come forward.

MS. THOMPSON: My name is Sarah Thompson; I work for Engineering Surveys and Services, at 1113 Fay Street, and am the representative for Jeffrey Smith in this rezoning case. I want to thank staff for preparing all of that information and going through that so quickly. And all the history of this site, it is important to note that it has existed since 2009, and that it's still vacant, so there's definitely a need for development in this area, especially since it already has all of the utilities applicable to development. I think the most important thing to prioritize in this rezoning is the infill opportunity for the City, and along with that, that it is in a high-growth priority area, and what's provided in this area and how it can benefit in service and support the neighboring communities. So I wanted to just state that this is being rezoned to help improve the marketability for the site in the future. If it -- for whatever development it is, there isn't any plan right now, but hoping that by rezoning this, it opens up the opportunity for more to benefit the community. So we're asking you for your support for this request, and appreciate your time.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Thank you. Are there any questions for this speaker? Seeing none. Thank you very much for your presentation.

MS. THOMPSON: Thank you.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Anyone else to speak on this case, please come forward. Please state your name and address for the record, and then please continue.

MS. WOODS: Anne Woods, 3711 Santiago Drive. I just live north of this area. I mean, adjacent. I look upon this. And I would just like to say we have lots of drive-throughs, and they don't go slow in our -- through our parking lots. So if this is developed in an aggressive way, there's going to be a lot of drive-throughs. And then we have semi parking on the other side as it is right now. Two semis park on Diego Drive, and I don't know if it will be more or less or whatever, but that's the situation it is right now. Thank you.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Thank you very much. Are there any questions for this speaker?

MR. WALTERS: I do, quickly.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Mr. Walters, go ahead.

MR. WALTERS: Are you saying there is more cut-through traffic on Santiago Drive. Is that -- you're saying right now you do?

MS. WOODS: No. No. The parking area -- the parking area --

MR. WALTERS: On Diego?

MS. WOODS: -- that's just north on the north perimeter -- there.

MR. WALTERS: Okay. Okay.

MS. WOODS: It's the parking lots of the apartment buildings.

MR. WALTERS: I live in this neighborhood, too, and I've seen those trucks there from time to time, and they just need to be reported. Someone just needs to report that they're illegally parking there, I think.

MS. WOODS: Oh, I thought -- I thought they were allowed to park there, that's all.

MR. WALTERS: Well, I -- for a short term, they are, I think.

MS. WOODS: Oh, okay. Yeah.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Any other questions? Seeing none. Thank you very much. Anyone else to speak on this case, please come forward.

MS. HILDEBRAND: Hello. My name is Pamela Hildebrand; I live at 3850 Bethel Street. I live in the apartments that are just to the north. And does anybody know what they plan to -- if they're going to use it for, you know, a business, or offices or -- because we would like to know, because we're the ones that are affected by it.

MS. GEUEA JONES: There -- there is no plan here. This is just saying that it could be used for it. They will have to go through building codes and all of that stuff when someone purchases it and plans to develop it. But right now, there are no specific plans.

MS. HILDEBRAND: Okay. All right. Well, as I understand it, Fairway Management or JES, Jeff Smith owns that property. And my concern is that I lived in one of his developments, and we get no service, and our place is going to heck in a handbasket. I cleaned it up. So, you know, my concern is is that it needs to be maintained whatever they build and -- because that will affect us.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Thank you. Any questions for this speaker? Seeing none. Thank you.

MS. HILDEBRAND: Thank you.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Anyone else to speak on this case, please come forward.

MS. BARBERO: My name is Cheryl Barbero, and I also live at 3850 Bethel, Apartment 201. And that is, like, right in our front yard. And my concern is -- I'm sorry.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Thank you, Mr. Zenner.

MS. BARBERO: My concern is there's a lot of, like, drainage, you know, like sewer systems in that little culvert area, that little grassy area. And I know I was talking to another lady who said it was her understanding when she moved in that it wasn't ever going to be built on, and that -- that was because of those culverts and the wastewater. Where is that wastewater going to go if somebody builds on it? There's -- you know, there's a lot of water that runs through there, and I'm wondering where it's going to go -- into our apartments? Because, like she said, they're not taken care of and if this company builds on that site, I'm kind of, you know, afraid of what else we aren't going to get done at our place. And we are all older people, we're 62 and over, and, you know, we deserve some respect. And I -- I don't think that's usually taken into account what it's going to do to the people who live right there. And, you know, we have -- we have a nice -- we have a nice apartment, but, you know, some of the stuff is falling apart. But there are cars that drive through between Bethel Street and Santiago through our parking lot. And I won't even park on the -- on that side of the -- in that side of the parking lot because I don't walk very fast, and I'm afraid that somebody is going to come racing through there and knock me down. And that is a real fear, and it is a real fear for a lot of people. My friend, Pam, she doesn't -- she doesn't walk very fast, either. So, you know, we're kind of concerned about the traffic that will going -- I mean, that's private

property, but it doesn't stop people from driving through there anyway. It didn't stop, you know, those criminals drove in there really fast thinking they were getting away, and, you know, had to abandon the car and run. So, you know, I'm just concerned about that. The traffic and the wastewater and, you know, isn't -- isn't there some, you know, ordinance that says that the sewer systems have to stay? And that's it.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Thank you, ma'am. And to answer your question, the building codes will tell them they have to do wastewater management, and that will be part of that process. Any other questions for this speaker?

MR. WALTERS: I have a --

MS. GEUEA JONES: Mr. Walters, go ahead.

MR. WALTERS: I have a question. You and the prior speaker, you live in this -- in a Jeffrey Smith development. Correct?

MS. BARBERO: Yes.

MR. WALTERS: And do you have -- you have an advocate for you in terms of -- do you have an on-site project manager that you can communicate your concerns to?

MS. BARBERO: No. We don't have any property management. We wouldn't have a property manager for a long time. There have been -- I've lived there six years, and I've had ten different managers, at least, and maybe more than that. I don't even keep track of them anymore. I don't even learn their names anymore because one of them was there for two days. One was supposed to be there and was a no call, no show. And then if we do get somebody good in, there is a really hateful manager -- middle manager who fires them. So we can't get anything -- we can't -- it took me four months to get my lease signed because there was no manager. You know, that's unacceptable.

MR. WALTERS: My point -- my point was going to be maybe a -- well, do you have any traffic calming, any traffic bumps to this area that people were speeding through?

MS. BARBERO: (No audible answer.)

MR. WALTERS: Well, perhaps, and this may be naive on my part, you could circulate a petition and get it to the management to request that, at least. I know --

MS. BARBERO: Well that's really funny. We've been trying to -- I've been trying to get an ice maker for six months.

MR. WALTERS: Well, maybe if 60 or 80 people signed a letter, maybe -- maybe they'll pay attention.

MS. BARBERO: Maybe I'll get my ice maker? All right. Thank you.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Any other questions for this speaker? Seeing none. Thank you, ma'am, for being here. Anyone else to speak on this case, please come forward. Seeing none. We will close public comment.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

MS. GEUEA JONES: Commissioner comment. Are there any Commissioner comments on this case? Commissioner Gray?

DR. GRAY: Can I ask a follow-up question of staff?

MS. GEUEA JONES: Yes. Go ahead.

DR. GRAY: In this zoning, drive-throughs are not a by-right use?

MR. KUNZ: That's correct. It's a conditional use, so there would be another public hearing that would be necessary should a drive-through facility be requested for any use that is developed on the site.

DR. GRAY: Thank you.

MR. KUNZ: Yeah. Thank you.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Any further Commissioner comments? Seeing none. Would anyone -- oh, sorry. Go ahead, Commissioner Brodsky.

MR. BRODSKY: I also have a quick question for staff. Am I reading this correctly that with the proposed M-N use, and the R-MF to the north, and I know one of them is a PUD, but will they be required to do a Level 2 screening along that entire northern edge?

MR. KUNZ: I believe it -- that's a good question. I think it's Level 3, if it is connected to a multi-family residential uses.

MR. BRODSKY: Okay.

MR. KUNZ: So I believe it would be Level 3.

MR. BRODSKY: Okay. So is that considered --

MR. KUNZ: What was that? Sorry.

MR. BRODSKY: Is that considered -- M-N is not considered mixed use?

MR. CRAIG: With the applicant use, I don't think it necessarily says mixed-use. I think it is just, like, residential commercial industrial maybe, if I'm remembering correctly. And the applicant's use, it ultimately would up -- depend on what's developed. Because if there's no residential component to it, then it wouldn't be mixed use.

MR. BRODSKY: Okay. Thank you.

MS. GEUEA JONES: If I may, Commissioner Brodsky, there's a difference between the zoning classification, named mixed use, and an actual mixed use of the property, so that -- it has to be the actual use before the screening changes. Any further questions or comments, rather, from Commissioners? Would anyone like to make a motion? Commissioner Walters?

MR. WALTERS: Yeah. Regarding Case Number 135-2026, I would -- I would make a motion to approve the request to rezone the 3.15 acre site from R-MF, to M-N.

DR. GRAY: Second.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Moved by Commissioner Walters, seconded by Commissioner Gray. Is there any discussion on the motion? Seeing none. Commissioner Brodsky, may we have a roll call?

Roll Call Vote (Voting "yes" is to recommend approval.) Voting Yes: Mr. Walters,

Mr. Brodsky, Ms. Geuea Jones, Dr. Gray, Ms. Ortiz, Mr. Stanton? The motion carries 6-0.

MR. BRODSKY: The motion carries.

MS. GEUEA JONES: Thank you. That recommendation will be forwarded to City Council. Commissioner Darr, if you can hear me, please return. And at this time, I would like to excuse Commissioner Stanton for personal reasons for the rest of the evening. Thank you. Moving on back up the agenda to our next case.