

Agenda Report

TO: City Council

DATE: June 18, 2001

FROM: City Manager

SUBJECT: Proposed General Plan Amendment and Zone Change for Property Located at 2685 East Washington Boulevard

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council following a public hearing:

1. Approve the Initial Environmental Study and Negative Declaration (Attachment 1);
2. Approve the De Minimis Impact Finding on the State Fish and Wildlife Habitat (Attachment 2);
3. Adopt the findings that the zone change from OS (Open Space) to CL (Limited Commercial) and General Plan Amendment from Open Space to Neighborhood Commercial is consistent with the goals and objectives of the General Plan and the purposes of Title 17;
4. Approve the General Plan Amendment from Open Space to Neighborhood Commercial. (Attachment 3), and adopt the resolution contained in Attachment 4;
5. Approve the Zone Change from OS (Open Space) to CL (Limited Commercial) (Attachment 5), and direct the City Attorney to prepare an Ordinance; and
6. Direct the City Clerk to file a Notice of Determination (Attachment 6) and the Certificate of Fee Exemption for the California Department of Fish and Game, with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission reviewed the proposal at their meeting on May 9, 2001. The Commission asked about the possibility of residential development on the site. Staff stated that while unlikely, the CL zoning district does allow residential development at

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32 units / net acre. The Commission also asked why it was zoned Open Space to be begin with. Staff responded that it appears to have been zoned Open Space because of its operational connection to the Eaton Canyon flood control basin. After a short discussion with the applicants' representative about their intent, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the General Plan amendment and zone change. No one spoke favor or in opposition.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this proposal is to change the General Plan and zoning designations for the property located at 2685 E. Washington Boulevard within Council District 4 from Open Space to Neighborhood Commercial and CL (Limited Commercial), respectively. These actions would allow the applicant, Crown City Medical Group, to propose the development of a medical office building on the site.

The proposed designations would not result in a loss of open space for public use and are compatible with the existing commercial/retail uses adjacent to the property.

BACKGROUND:

In September of 1951 the Eaton Canyon flood control basin, including the property at 2685 E. Washington Blvd., was annexed from the County of Los Angeles into the City of Pasadena. According to the City of Pasadena Official Zone Maps (August 1956), the property, along with the Eaton Canyon Wash, were zoned R-1 20,000 (One-Family Residence Zone & Parks, 20,000 square foot minimum lot size). As a part of the Zoning Code revision of 1985, the property was zoned as Open Space along with the flood control basin.

In the early 1980's the County designated the property as surplus and sold it at auction to the Crown City Medical Group. The Crown City Medical Group is the current owner of the property, as well as several adjacent properties in the County.

ANALYSIS:

The property is irregularly shaped and is approximately 18,300 square feet, or 0.42 acres, in size. When it was a part of the flood control operation the house on the property was the living quarters of the caretakers of the Eaton Canyon Dam. The house is approximately 2,500 square feet in size and has been vacant since before the current owners acquired the property in the early 1980s.

General Plan Analysis

The property is currently designated as Open Space by the General Plan, as is the Eaton Canyon flood control basin to the east. The area to the west is commercial/retail within Los Angeles County.

Objective 2 (Open Space) of the General Plan is intended to preserve and acquire open space in the City to enhance the quality of life. However, the property has not been used as Open Space as defined by the General Plan. The Open Space designation is intended, "...for a variety of active and public recreational facilities and for City-owned open space facilities". The property has never been dedicated parkland for any type of passive or active recreational use and, while part of the flood control operation, the property and the basin were not publicly accessible. Therefore, changing its land use designation and zoning from open space to commercial would not result in a loss of open space for public use.

The proposed amendment to the General Plan Land Use Diagram from Open Space to Neighborhood Commercial will permit service and retail businesses which provide for the convenience shopping and retail needs of nearby residential areas. These businesses are limited commercial activities that are compatible with the scale of the immediate area and do not create significant adverse impacts on the adjacent residential areas. The General Plan designation also permits residential development of a density up to 32 units per acre.

Zoning Analysis

The current zoning designation for 2685 E. Washington Blvd. and the area to the east is Open Space, which permits open space and minor utilities only. The area to the west is within Los Angeles County and is zoned C-1, which allows commercial/retail uses and is comparable to the proposed CL zoning.

Commercial uses permitted under the proposed zoning designation would include businesses serving the daily needs of the nearby residential areas such as: food sales, restaurants, retail sales, maintenance and repair services, personal services as well as banks and professional offices.

The proposed zoning would also allow multifamily housing to be developed at a density of up to 32 dwelling units per acre and other residential related uses such as family day care homes, residential care, etc. If the property is used for multifamily housing, 13 units could be developed on the entire site.

FINDINGS

This General Plan Amendment and zone change would allow for the orderly development of a site that has remained underutilized for over 20 years.

These changes would be consistent with:

1. Policies 1.6 and 20.7 (Neighborhood Commercial) of the General Plan, in that they would encourage the establishment of commercial uses within walking distance of residential areas.

2. The purpose of the Zoning Code by implementing the objectives and policies of the General Plan, fostering convenient, harmonious, and workable relationships among land uses, and providing sites for businesses serving the daily needs of nearby residential areas.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

A neighborhood meeting was held on April 18, 2001. Property owners within 300 feet of the property were mailed a notice of the meeting and notices were posted within the same radius. No residents attended this meeting.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

An Initial Environmental Study was prepared for the project proposal in conformance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Attachment 1). It was found that the proposal would not have a significant effect on the environment and that a Negative Declaration would be prepared. The staff report recommends the City Council approve the Initial Environmental Study and direct the City Clerk to file a Notice of Determination with the Los Angeles County Recorder.

FISCAL IMPACT

There will not be an immediate fiscal impact as a result of this General Plan Amendment and zone change. However, permitting fees will be collected from any future development proposed on the site to cover costs incurred from staff time required for project review.

Respectfully submitted,



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