THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

STAFF REPORT

City Council Date: November 15, 2022

Subject: Conditional Zoning Request for 110 River Hills Rd

Staff Resource(s): Todd Okolichany, AICP, LEED AP ND, Planning & Urban Design Director;
Will Palmquist, AICP, Principal Planner

Action Requested: Adoption of an ordinance to conditionally zone all portions of the property located at 110 River Hills Rd from Commercial Industrial (CI) to Residential Expansion - Conditional Zone (RES EXP - CZ).

Project Location and Contacts:

- The project site totals 10.8 acres located at 110 River Hills Rd (PIN 9658-42-0239).
- Owner: Wood Ave LLC

Summary of Petition:

Project Site

- The project site consists of one property totalling 10.8 acres located at 110 River Hills Rd.
- The site is currently zoned Commercial Industrial (CI).
- Given the size of the project (over 50 residential dwelling units) a conditional zoning to the Residential Expansion (RES EXP) district is required.
- The project site is currently a wooded, vacant lot.
- The site is designated “Traditional Neighborhood” on the city’s Future Land Use (FLU) Map.
    - A change in the FLU designation will not be required.

Overall Project Proposal

- New building construction includes a 153-unit, 4/5-story multi-family building and a one-story clubhouse building.
- Other site improvements include off-street parking, new sidewalks, stormwater retention, and resident amenities such as a pool, dog park, and walking path.
- 31 units (20%) will be affordable at 80% Area Median Income (AMI) for a minimum of 20 years.
- 16 of these affordable units (half) will accept housing choice vouchers.

Site Layout and Design

- Maximum building height for multifamily buildings in the RES EXP district is 60 feet. The maximum building height of the proposed project is approximately 54 feet, as measured to the ceiling of the highest occupiable floor.
- Maximum density in the RES EXP district is 50 units/acre for this project, since at least 20% of the dwelling units are affordable at 80% AMI.
- The proposed project’s density is 14.2 units/acre.
- Front yard, rear yard and side yard setbacks of 15 feet are proposed as is required in the RES EXP district.
- Maximum impervious surface in the RES EXP district for multifamily uses is 80%. The proposed project would result in a total impervious area of 28.5%.

Landscaping and Open Space

- Landscape requirements apply, including street tree, parking lot, building impact, and property line buffers.
- The RES EXP district requires a 20 foot-wide “Type A” landscape buffer where the subject property is adjacent to any other residentially zoned property, which will be required along the southern and eastern property boundaries.
    - The project proposes an encroachment into the required landscape buffer on the eastern property boundary which effectively reduces the width of the buffer by 50% for 155 linear feet in order to accommodate the driveway aisle and parking areas.
    - The impact of the encroachment into the buffer is mitigated by the fact that the required

quantities of tree and shrub plantings will be provided and a six foot-high opaque fence is proposed along this segment of reduced landscape buffer.

- The project is classified as “urban” under the Tree Canopy Preservation standards and has a classification of “Class B”.
- The existing tree canopy is 64.7%.
- The project is required to preserve 10% of the existing tree canopy and is proposing to preserve 19.6% of the existing tree canopy.
- Open Space is required at a rate of 20% of the site as the project meets the incentive requirements for enhanced stormwater management, resulting in 2.2 acres of required open space.
- The project is providing 5.3 acres of open space.

Access, Sidewalks and Parking

- Access to the site will be provided by a new driveway on River Hills Rd.
- A total of 210 parking spaces are proposed for the new dwelling units.
- Based on the number of bedrooms and dwelling units, the minimum/maximum number of required parking spaces is 153/306 for the RES EXP district.
- The RES EXP district requires new 10 foot-wide sidewalks be constructed, both along the primary access corridor and internally throughout the site.
    - The project is proposing a new five foot-wide sidewalk with a five foot-wide planting strip along the site’s frontage on River Hills Rd.
    - The project is proposing five foot-wide sidewalks internal to the site.

Technical Modifications

- The project is seeking technical modifications to development standards through the conditional zoning process including:
    - Five foot-wide sidewalks along River Hills Rd and internal to the site instead of the required 10 foot-wide standard.
    - Encroachment into the required landscape buffer for 155 linear feet along the eastern property boundary to accommodate a driveway aisle and parking areas.
    - No bike lanes into the development.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Other Plans:

Living Asheville Comprehensive Plan (2018)

- The proposed development supports a number of goals in the Living Asheville Comprehensive Plan, including:
    - **Encourage Responsible Growth** - by providing infill development in targeted growth areas (p. 131).
    - **Increase and Diversify the Housing Supply** - by increasing the supply of housing, including affordable housing (pp. 179 & 183) in proximity to schools, transit and parks (pp. 246 & 251).
    - **Make Streets More Walkable, Comfortable and Connected** - by eliminating gaps in the city-wide sidewalk network (p. 147).
- The proposed development is compatible with the Future Land Use designation of “Traditional Neighborhood” which is proposed, in part, as “a mix of housing types such as single family with accessory dwelling units, duplexes, townhomes and multifamily apartments usually located seamlessly together” (p. 345).

Compatibility Analysis:

- The proposed multi-family residential project is compatible with the surrounding land uses, including:
    - The Ledgewood Village Apartments, located directly south of the project site.
    - Suburban commercial uses located generally to the west and north of the project site.

- Single-family houses located to the east of the project site across Wood Alley.

Council Goal(s):

- This project is most closely aligned with the council goal of *A Well-Planned and Livable Community*.

Committee(s):

- Technical Review Committee (TRC) - September 19, 2022 - approved with conditions.
- Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) - October 5, 2022 - approved (Vote 7:0) with the following condition: 1) That bicycle sharrow pavement markings be added to the entrance driveway of the development.

Staff Recommendation:

- Staff recommends approval of this rezoning request based on the reasons stated above.

Suggested Motion to Approve:

- Motion to approve the conditional zoning request for the property located at 110 River Hills Rd from Commercial Industrial (CI) to Residential Expansion - Conditional Zone (RES EXP-CZ) and find that the request is reasonable, is in the public interest, is consistent with the city's comprehensive plan and meets the development needs of the community in that the request: 1) provides infill development in targeted growth areas; 2) increases the supply of affordable housing in proximity to schools, transit and parks; and, 3) eliminates gaps in the city-wide sidewalk network.

Attachment(s)

(1) Exhibit A - Existing Zoning Map
(2) Exhibit A1 - Proposed Zoning Map
(3) Exhibit B - Aerial Imagery Map
(4) Exhibit C - Existing Future Land Use Map
(5) Exhibit D - Site Plans & Building Elevations
(6) Exhibit E - Project Conditions
(7) Ordinance
(8) PZC Recommendation
(9) PZC Draft Action Minutes (10/5/22)
(10) TRC Report & Comments