THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

**STAFF REPORT**

**City Council Date:** October 11, 2022

**Subject:** Conditional Zoning Request for 100, 54 & 99999 (x3) Woodland Drive

**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 five properties located at 100, 54 & 99999 (x3) Woodland Dr from Residential Multi-Family Medium Density (RM-8) to Residential Expansion - Conditional Zone (RES EXP - CZ).

**Project Location and Contacts:**

- The project site totals 9.12 acres located at Woodland Dr (PINs 9628-44-0165, 9628-43-2859, 9628-43-1782, 9628-33-8790, and 9628-33-8499).
- Owner: Birch Circle Associates LLC

**Summary of Petition**:

Project Site

- The project site consists of five parcels totalling 9.12 acres located at Woodland Dr.
- The site is currently zoned Residential Multi-Family Medium Density (RM-8).
- Given the size of the project (over 50 residential dwelling units), a conditional zoning to the Residential Expansion (RES EXP) district is required.
- The site is designated “Residential 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 72 dwelling units located across 10 groups of two-story, attached townhomes.
- The proposed development represents a type of “missing middle” housing not often found in the community. The development represents a form of housing at medium densities between the scale of single-family houses and large apartment buildings.
- The project proposes to subdivide the site into individual parcels for each townhouse.
- Other site improvements include a new roadway, off-street parking, sidewalks, a gravel walking path, and a community area and proposed playground.
- 5% of the units (4 units) will be designated affordable to those earning at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI) for a minimum of 20 years.
- 50% of those affordable units (2 units) will accept HACA Housing Choice vouchers.

Site Layout and Design

- Maximum building height for single-family buildings in the RES EXP district is 40 feet.
- The maximum building height of the proposed project is 30 feet.
- Maximum density in the RES EXP district is 20 units/acre.
- The proposed project’s density is 7.9 units/acre.
- Front yard, rear yard, and side yard setbacks of 15 feet, 15 feet, and 6 feet, respectively, are required for single-family development in the RES EXP district.
- Maximum impervious surface in the RES EXP district for single-family uses is 50%.
- The proposed project would result in a total impervious area of 39.95%.

Landscaping and Open Space

- Landscape requirements apply, including street tree, parking lot, building impact, property line and retaining wall screening.
- The RES EXP district requires a 30 foot-wide “Type B” landscape buffer where the subject property is adjacent to any other residentially zoned property, which will be required along the western and northern property border, as well as the northern half of the eastern property border.

    - The project is proposing a 20 foot-wide “Type A” buffer instead, as well as a reduction in the required buffer due to the presence of an MSD easement and the project's roadway entrance.
- The project is classified as “suburban” under the Tree Canopy Preservation standards and has a classification of “Class C”.
- The existing canopy coverage (2018) ranges between 6% to 66%.
- The project proposes preserving 14.9% of tree canopy, the remaining 0.1% will be accommodated on-site.
- Open space is required at a rate of 20% of the total site, resulting in a required 1.82 acres of open space, with at least one 7,200 square foot area that provides park or plaza-type features.
- The project is proposing a total of 3.1 acres of open space.

Access, Sidewalks and Parking

- Access to the site will be provided by a new roadway and extension of Woodland Dr.
- A total of 177 parking spaces are proposed, 72 of which would be located at a rate of one garage space per townhome, 72 of which would be located at a rate of one driveway space per townhome, and 37 additional surface parking spaces.
- Based on the number of bedrooms and dwelling units, the minimum/maximum number of required parking spaces is 124/194 for the RES EXP district.
- The townhomes are accessed by a mix of shared driveways and individual driveways.
- The RES EXP district requires new five foot-wide sidewalks be constructed for single-family projects, 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 north side of Woodland Dr.
    - The project is proposing five foot-wide sidewalks internal to the site.
- The project proposes a 25 foot-wide cross connectivity easement to the parcel to the south, limited to future redevelopment of that parcel for residential use only.

Technical Modifications

- The project is seeking technical modifications to development standards through the conditional zoning process including:
    - A 20-foot wide “Type A” landscape buffer where the project is adjacent to residential zoning districts instead of the required 30-foot wide “Type B” landscape buffer.
    - Reduction of 210 linear feet of Type A landscape buffer due to the presence of an MSD easement and the project’s roadway.
    - No bike lanes into the development, though bike sharrow pavement markings will be installed on Woodland Drive.

**Comprehensive Plan Consistency:**

- The proposed development supports a number of goals in the Living Asheville Comprehensive Plan including:
    - **Encourage Responsible Growth** - by prioritizing greater densities of development overall, throughout the city as appropriate (p. 131).
    - **Increase and Diversify the Housing Supply** - by increasing the housing supply in existing residential neighborhoods at greater densities and diversity in building types (p. 179).
    - **Celebrate the Unique Identity of Neighborhoods Through Creative Placemaking** - by providing contextually appropriate infill development and a variety of housing types (p. 153).
- The proposed development is compatible with the Future Land Use designation of “Residential Neighborhood” which is proposed, in part, that “residential neighborhoods can benefit from having more housing diversity such as accessory apartments, duplexes and other types of smallscale infill housing” (p. 346).

**Compatibility Analysis:**

- The proposed townhouse residential project is compatible with the surrounding land uses, including:
    - Single-family residential dwellings to the north and west.
    - Light industrial and commercial uses to the east and south.

**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) - June 6, 2022 - approved with conditions.
- Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) - July 6, 2022 - continued to 8/3 PZC meeting.
- Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) - August 3, 2022 - continued to 9/7 PZC meeting.
- Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) - September 21, 2022 - no recommendation given, motion to approve failed with a tie vote (2-2).

**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 properties located at 100, 54, and 99999 Woodland Dr from Residential Multi-Family Medium Density (RM-8) 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) prioritizes greater densities of development overall, throughout the city as appropriate; 2) increases the housing supply in existing residential neighborhoods at greater densities and diversity in building types; and, 3) provides contextually appropriate infill development and a variety of housing types.

**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 Draft Action Minutes (9/21/22)
(9) TRC Report & Comments