THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

STAFF REPORT

City Council Meeting Date: January 11, 2022

Subject: Conditional Zoning Request for property located at 235 Sardis Rd.

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

Action Requested: Conditionally zone a large portion of a single parcel located at 235 Sardis Rd. from Commercial Industrial (CI) to Residential Expansion - Conditional Zone (RES EXP-CZ).

Project Location and Contacts:

- The project site consists of a single parcel totalling 22.1 acres located at 235 Sardis Rd. (PIN 9627-01-8639)
- Owner: VVS Investments LLC.

Summary of Petition:

- This petition is for the purpose of constructing 297 new multi-family residential units in six buildings, along with a clubhouse, 437 surface parking spaces, sidewalk and related site improvements.
    - Phase 1 includes buildings 1-4 and the clubhouse for a total of 192 units and 263 parking spaces;
    - Phase 2 includes buildings 5 & 6 for a total of 105 units and 174 parking spaces.
- The property is currently zoned Commercial Industrial (CI) and the applicant is seeking a rezoning via conditional zoning to Residential Expansion - Conditional Zone (RES EXP-CZ) due to the number of residential units.
- Five of the six buildings are proposed to be four stories with the sixth building identified as three stories.
- The maximum height of the four story building is 52 feet and the maximum height of the three story building is 40 feet.
- The clubhouse will be one story with a maximum height of 20 feet.
- A single 0.80 acre parcel is proposed to be subdivided from the subject property and will have frontage on Sardis Rd. It is proposed that this small parcel will be excluded from the conditional rezoning.
- An adjacent parcel, located at 233 Sardis Rd. is included for the purpose of providing additional access to the property and is not included in the conditional zoning.
- Based on the Living Asheville Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) the property is currently designated Industrial/Manufacturing, which reserves land with good access to transportation systems to support the economic section for light industry and office or business incubators.
- While Industrial/Manufacturing may include opportunities for housing for workers who may live amongst or adjacent to the industry or other businesses in the area, the property is adjacent to a large single-family neighborhood designated “Residential Neighborhood”.
- A change to the FLUM is recommended.
- The maximum density in the RES EXP district is 20 units/acre - the proposed project is designed at approximately 13.4 units/acre.
- The applicant is proposing that 10% of the units (30 units total) be set aside as affordable to those earning at or below 80% AMI for a minimum period of 20 years.
- A Land Use Incentive Grant (LUIG) is <u>not</u> being requested for this project.
- Access to the property comes from Sardis Road through one of three potential access points. Two of the three access points are new driveways on Sardis Rd. while the third comes through an existing private road (Innovation Dr.) currently used by the Franklin School of Innovation, located to the west of the subject property.
- Internal private roads are also proposed connecting the two phases to Sardis Rd.
- Roads are proposed to be 25 feet wide with a 29 foot cross section.

- A three foot bike lane is proposed within the 25 foot road width, leaving 22 feet of vehicular driving surface.
- The Traffic Impact Study recommends some off-site improvements including:
    1) adding a left-turn lane along the eastbound approach of Sardis Rd. at its intersection with Innovation Drive, as well as
    2) signal timing modifications at the intersection of NC 112 and NC 191.
- The nearest transit route is approximately 1.7 miles to the east on NC191.
- RES EXP requires 10 foot wide sidewalks throughout the site.
- This project proposes sidewalks that range in width from 6-10 feet and will be seeking a modification to this requirement for some sections through the conditional zoning.
- Walking paths are also proposed on the north end of the site along the creek.
- Hominy Creek borders the property to the north, and several tributaries to Hominy Creek are found on the property.
- Tributaries are piped and/or bridged for sections, as shown on the site plan(s).
- The applicant proposes to improve the existing tributaries by revegetating the aquatic buffers with native, riparian plants.
- Open space shall be required at a rate of 15% of the total parcel (148,500 s.f.) and will include walking trails.
- The project is classified as “suburban” under the tree canopy preservation (TCP) standards with a classification of “Class C”.
- The proposed plan will comply with TCP requirements.
- The project is seeking technical modifications to development standards through the conditional zoning process including:
    - Sidewalks less than 10’ in width for some sections.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan:

- This project meets a number of key city goals in the Living Asheville Comprehensive Plan including:
    - **Encourage Responsible Growth** - by increasing the city’s housing supply and locating housing in areas close to jobs and schools (pp. 130-131, 178-180);
    - **Increase and Diversify the Housing Supply** - by providing contextually appropriate infill development that includes housing, especially affordable housing (pp. 153, 178-184).
    - **Promote Access to Well-Maintained Parks and Open Space for All** - by encouraging the preservation of green spaces and natural waterways, and by providing access to those natural areas (pp. 212-214).

Compatibility Analysis:

- Portions of Sardis Rd. continue to be dominated by industrial, light industrial/commercial uses; however, the character of the area is changing to include more service businesses, community facilities, and residential neighborhoods.
- Despite being zoned Commercial Industrial (CI) the bulk of the subject property lies between the Franklin School of Innovation, a 13.7 acre campus for grades 5-12 to the west, and a large single family residential neighborhood to the east.
- Hominy Creek is located to the north of the subject property and will include 30’ aquatic stream buffers.
- A portion of the subject property along Sardis Rd. is proposed to be subdivided and remain zoned CI to allow for future commercial development.

Council Goal(s):

- The council goal of *A Well-Planned and Livable Community* is most applicable.

Committee(s):

- Technical Review Committee (TRC) - August 2, 2021 - approved with conditions.
- Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) - December 1, 2021 - approved unanimously, 7:0.

Staff Recommendation:

- Staff recommends approval of the project, for the reasons stated above.

Suggested Motion:

- I move to approve the conditional zoning request for the property located at 235 Sardis Rd. from Commercial Industrial (CI) to Residential Expansion - Conditional Zone (RES EXP-CZ) with an amendment to the Future Land Use Map of the *Living Asheville Comprehensive Plan* from Industrial/Manufacturing to Residential Neighborhood 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) encourages responsible growth by increasing the city's housing supply in areas close to jobs and schools; 2) increases the diversity of housing in the area, including affordable housing; and, 3) promotes access to open space and preserves open areas and natural waterways.

Attachment(s)

(1) Exhibit A - Existing Zoning Map
(2) Exhibit A1 Map - Proposed Zoning Map
(3) Exhibit B - Aerial Map
(4) Exhibit C - Existing Future Land Use Map
(5) Exhibit C1 - Proposed Future Land Use Map
(6) Exhibit D - Site Plans & Building Elevations
(7) Exhibit E - Project Conditions
(8) Ordinance
(9) PZC Recommendation
(10) PZC Action Minutes
(11) TRC Report