THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

City Council Staff Report

Council Meeting Date

- April 14, 2026

Subject

- Conditional Zoning Amendment Request for McCormick Field-30 Buchanan Place

Staff Resource(s)

- Stephanie Monson Dahl, Planning and Urban Design Director; Chris Collins, Assistant Director; Will Palmquist, AICP, Principal Planner

Action Requested

- Adoption of an ordinance to amend the previously approved conditional zoning for the McCormick Field property located at 30 Buchanan Pl for the purpose of making changes to the project conditions.

Background

Project Location and Contacts:

- The project site totals 8.25 acres located at 30 Buchanan Pl (PIN 9648-47-8566)
- Owner: City of Asheville

Summary of Petition:

Project Site

- The project area consists of 8.25 acres located at 30 Buchanan Pl and is identified in the Buncombe County land records as PIN 9648-47-8566.
- The site is the location of McCormick Field, a minor league baseball venue for the Asheville Tourists.
- The site is currently zoned Institutional - Conditional Zone (INST-CZ) by Ord. No. 5046 and Ord. No. 5180.
- Ord. No. 5045 adopted October 24th, 2023, established the conditional zoning for the property for the purposes of providing technical modifications to the underlying zoning for the planned expansion and renovation of McCormick Field. Ord. No. 5180 amended the conditional zoning to provide an additional technical modification for outdoor lighting standards.
- The site is designated “Parks / Open Space” on the city’s Future Land Use (FLU) Map. A

change in the FLU designation will not be required.

Overall Project Proposal

- The project is requesting an amendment to the conditional zoning in order to receive one additional technical modification regarding the maximum number and square footage of on-premise signage.
- McCormick Field is proposing, as part of its planned renovation and expansion, to install three new on-premise signs that total 292 SF, as described below. This would be an increase over the allowed signage in the Institutional (INST) district of 2 signs at 120 SF total.
- The three signs proposed consist of:
    - One internally illuminated sign located on top of the ticket entry area with a maximum square footage of 64 SF.
    - One internally illuminated sign located above the right field grandstand with a maximum square footage of 100 SF.
    - One mural sign located on the pavilion wall with a maximum square footage of 128 SF.

Technical Modifications

- In addition to technical modifications approved by ordinances. 5046 and 5180, the project is seeking one additional technical modification to development standards through the conditional zoning process, including:
    - Maximum on-premise signage of three signs at 292 SF total, instead of the 2 signs at 120 SF total maximum in UDO Article 7-13.

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:
    - **Promote Access to Well-Maintained Parks and Open Space for All** - by dedicating adequate resources to meet the maintenance demands of existing parks, including sufficient capital and operational funding consistent with best management practices and community standards for high level of service (p. 213).
    - **Enhance and Celebrate Asheville's Unique Places and Destinations** - by continuing to create accessible urban places throughout the city and ensure that downtown services, amenities, and resources are designed to serve residents as well as visitors (p. 291).
- The proposed development is compatible with the Future Land Use designations of "Parks and Open Space", which is proposed, in part, that it "includes a wide variety of different park facilities, active and passive open space, and greenways. Parks and open space are a community need and new parks, including park maintenance, will be required to serve areas of the community in an equitable fashion" (p. 346).

Compatibility Analysis:

- The proposed project is compatible with the surrounding land uses,including:
    - Memorial Stadium and Mountain Side Park, located directly east of the project site.
    - The commercial uses located throughout Asheville's South Slope, located to the west of the project site.

    - The surrounding residential neighborhoods located to the north and south of the project site.
    - The proposed signage itself is compatible within the context of the site, given the distance of the signs from a public street (between 200' and 300'), as well as the overall scale of the buildings and property (8.25 acres).

Staff Recommendation:

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

Council Vision 2036 Focus Area(s):

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

Council Priority Recovery Area(s):

- Infrastructure & Environment
- Economic Recovery

Committee(s):

- Planning & Zoning Commission - April 1, 2026 - approved 7-0 to move forward to City Council.

Fiscal Impact

- N/A

Suggested Motion

- I move to approval of the conditional zoning amendment request for the current McCormick Field property located at 30 Buchanan Pl, zoned Institutional - Conditional Zone (INST-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) dedicates adequate resources to meet the maintenance demands of existing parks, including sufficient capital and operational funding consistent with best management practices and community standards for high level of service; and, 2) continues to create accessible urban places throughout the city and ensure that downtown services, amenities, and resources are designed to serve residents as well as visitors.

Attachment(s)

- Exhibit A - Existing Zoning Map
- Exhibit B - Aerial Imagery Map
- Exhibit C - Existing Future Land Use Map
- Exhibit D - Site Plans & Elevations
- Exhibit E - Project Conditions
- Signage Drawings & Renderings
- Ordinance

- Ord. No. 5046
- Ord. No. 5180
- PZC Recommendation
- PZC Staff Report