

**PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

Date: January 3, 2018

To: Reno City Planning Commission

Subject: **7.2. Staff Report (For Possible Action - Recommendation to City Council): Case No. LDC18-00035 (Sutro Zone Change) – A request has been made for a zoning map amendment from Multifamily Residential – 14 units per acre (MF14) to Multifamily Residential – 21 units per acre (MF21). The ±1.68 acre site consists of five parcels located on the east side of Sutro Street between Castle Way and Carville Avenue. The site has a Master Plan land use designation of Special Planning Area/Northeast Neighborhood Plan/Mixed Residential. jdb**

From: Jeff Borchardt, Associate Planner

Ward #: 3

Case No.: LDC18-00035 (Sutro Zone Change)

Applicant: Reno Housing Authority

APN Number: 008-490-20 through -24

Request: A request has been made for a zoning map amendment from Multifamily Residential – 14 units per acre (MF14) to Multifamily Residential – 21 units per acre (MF21).

Location: The ±1.68 acre site consists of five parcels located on the east side of Sutro Street between Castle Way and Carville Avenue. The site has a Master Plan land use designation of Special Planning Area/Northeast Neighborhood Plan/Mixed Residential.

Proposed Motion: Based upon non-compliance with the applicable findings, I move to recommend that City Council deny the zoning map amendment.

Background: The subject site is comprised of five parcels totaling ±1.68 acres. Four of the parcels are currently vacant. A church is currently located on the fifth parcel. The applicant is requesting to change the zoning from Multifamily Residential – 14 units per acre (MF14) to Multifamily Residential – 21 units per acre (MF21) in order to accommodate the development of supportive housing for seniors (**Exhibit A**).

Analysis:

Land Use Compatibility: Land uses immediately surrounding the site consist of single family residential located to the north and east, the Reno-Sparks Livestock Events Center located to the west, and a combination of single family and multifamily residential located to the south. Residential zoning districts are typically compatible with each other, keeping in mind comparable densities. With the exception of six land use categories, there are few differences in the allowed uses between the MF14 and MF21 zoning designations (**Exhibit B**). While the uses are compatible, the allowed density associated with the proposed MF21 density is not consistent with the allowed density on the properties immediately surrounding the site.

The subject site and the surrounding properties located to the south and east are located within the MF14 zone. A change to MF21 would create an island of the MF21 zoning district. Further, the increased density would not provide an appropriate transition to the single family neighborhood located within the SF6 zone to the north. The proposed MF21 zone is not consistent with the surrounding zoning designations and would change the character of the neighborhood. Therefore, staff cannot make **ZMA finding m**.

While the MF21 zoning would not be consistent with the existing surrounding zoning designations, a density beyond 14 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) currently exists on several properties located within the vicinity of the subject site. For example, the Carville Park Apartments have a zoning designation of MF14, but the density is ± 44 du/ac. Further, several multifamily properties in the area exceed 14 du/ac. There is a range of densities within the greater area surrounding the subject site and several locations where higher density zoning designations like Multifamily Residential – 30 units per acre (MF30) are located directly adjacent to single family zoning designations (**Exhibit C**). While there is a mix of densities throughout the greater area, the density of the properties immediately surrounding the subject site conforms to the underlying zoning. A change to MF21 would increase the density of the site and lead to a change in character of the area immediately surrounding the site. The upzoning of the property would result in a more abrupt transition to the single family properties located to the north. While the Master Plan encourages a mix of housing types and densities, it also encourages compatible densities. An abrupt transition of density that is not characteristic of the surrounding neighborhood may not be appropriate.

Zoning Map Amendment Findings: The applicant is proposing to upzone the property in order to allow for an increased number of units. This increase in allowable density will assist in supporting the future development of an affordable, supportive housing project. A maximum development scenario under the existing zoning designation would yield ± 23 units, whereas a change to MF21 would yield ± 35 units. If the future development on the site is for affordable housing, the applicant may qualify for a density bonus yielding ± 43 units with the MF21 zoning.

While this density is not consistent with the existing properties surrounding the site, it ensures the development of an adequate housing supply for the community, including the development of affordable housing (**ZMA finding l**). Further, more housing units will assist in accommodating the anticipated increase in the City's population with an infill development (**ZMA finding g**). An increase in units on an infill site close to transit rather than an increase on the fringes of the City, will assist in reducing vehicle miles traveled and ultimately assist in preserving the air quality (**ZMA finding a**).

The site is relatively flat. With the rectangular shape of the lot and the access from both Friendship Lane and Sutro Street, the site is well positioned to accommodate an increase in density without causing issues from natural disasters due to the physical characteristics of the land (**ZMA findings f, i, and j**). A change from MF14 to MF21 would also result in an increase in the allowable height from a maximum of two stories to three and from a maximum of 35 feet to 45 feet. Given that this property is located to the south of existing single story single family homes, the increased allowed height has the potential to block solar access and to potentially cast shadows on the existing single family homes. Development on the subject site, regardless of the zoning map amendment, will be required to meet all applicable residential adjacency standards, including an increased setback from the properties located to the north [Reno Municipal Code (RMC) 18.12.304 – Residential Adjacency]. Further, structures that exceed 35 feet in height are required to demonstrate that they will not cast a shadow on adjacent properties [RMC 18.12.301(c)(1) – Residential Shading]. While a development project built at the maximum allowable height would not be consistent with any of the abutting properties, code provisions currently exist to ensure that the height of the new buildings will not cast shadows on surrounding properties and will continue to support the development of alternative energy systems, such as solar (**ZMA findings c and n**).

There are no natural features located on the subject site and no open space areas are proposed. Rotary Centennial Park, Traner Swimming Pool, Sage Street Park, and Pat Baker Park are all within walking distance of the subject site. Further, a small recreation area may be required with the development of a multifamily project per code. Regardless of the zoning map amendment, the subject site will provide for recreational needs and will not impact the unreasonably impair any open space areas (**ZMA findings b and e**).

The subject property is not located near any military bases (**ZMA finding o**). Additionally, because this is a zone change, there are no buildings proposed at this time. Both the City of Reno Master Plan and the International Building Code contain provisions to encourage the use of products and materials which maximize energy efficiency in the construction of buildings (**ZMA finding d**).

Public Safety: The subject site is located within 0.6 miles (two minutes) of Fire Station No. 2. This is well within the desired response time of six minutes. All future development will be required to meet all applicable standards within the International Fire Code in effect at the time of development. Such compliance shall include, but not be limited to fire department access, fire sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, and fire hydrant placement.

The Police Department did not note any particular concerns with the zone change. There were a total of 295 calls for service in 2017. The overall calls for service in this particular area decreased from 2016, but increased from 2015. Most calls were minor in nature, but there were 13 shots fired and one robbery, which is an increase from 2016. All future development will be reviewed by the Police Department to ensure the principles in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) are applied to the design of the project. It is important to note that an increase in allowable density will bring an increase in population into this area, which could have an impact to public safety (**ZMA finding k**).

Public Improvements: The subject site is completely surrounded by developed properties. Any future project will be an infill project. All necessary utilities to serve the project are in place or can be extended to the site. As such, there will not be a need to construct significant new infrastructure, which will lead to long term maintenance by the City. More efficiently utilizing existing infrastructure is a more fiscally responsible method of development (**ZMA finding j**).

There is existing City of Reno sanitary sewer infrastructure available just north of APN 008-490-20 and along the southern boundary of APNs 008-490-21, -23 and -24, which flows east toward Montello Street. Future development, or redevelopment, of the parcels will be required to meet City of Reno standards for sewage disposal. The City is not aware of existing sewage capacity issues in this area. Water service to the project will be provided by Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA). Prior to approval of any site improvement or building permit the applicant is required to provide proof that water rights necessary to serve the project have been obtained and have plans approved to construct all necessary water infrastructure to serve the project.

At the time of a development application, the developer will be required to provide analysis and drainage mitigation per the Truckee Meadows Regional Drainage Manual. A hydrology report identifying required mitigation to detain the increase in runoff due to development will be required at the time of a development application. This hydrology report will also ensure that the drainage, surface storm water collection, and conveyance facilities conform to all applicable provisions in the Public Works Design Manual (PWDM). The site is located within FEMA zone x, which means there is minimal flood hazard. Given the flat nature of the site there is not anticipated to any landslides or other natural disasters related to the topography and drainage of the land (**ZMA finding f**).

Traffic, Access, and Circulation: A trip generation analysis was completed for the project to compare the existing and proposed zoning. A maximum development scenario for both MF14 and MF21 was used and assumed 23 units and 35 units, respectively. The applicant calculated the trip generation rates for the project using the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, 9th Edition. The table below shows the differences between the MF14 and the MF21 zones.

Zoning Designation	Average Daily Trips (ADT)	AM Peak Hour Trips (PHT)	PM Peak Hour Trips (PHT)
MF14 (23 units max)	153	12	14
MF21 (35 units max)	233	18	22

The additional 6 AM PHT and 8 PM PHT generated by the change to MF21 are negligible and are not anticipated to create any significant impacts on surrounding intersections and roadways. This level of traffic does not meet the minimum number of PHT to require additional evaluation and can be accommodated by the current roadway network.

Access to the site will be from the east side of Sutro Street, between Carville Drive and Castle Way. Future development, or redevelopment, of the parcels will be required to meet City of Reno and Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) access management and level of service standards for a moderate-access control roadway. Additionally, all sidewalks along the frontage of the property should be designed to meet ADA specifications.

With future development or redevelopment, Regional Road Impact Fees (RRIF) will be collected to address the developments proportional impact on the regional roadway network. From the existing application materials presented, there is no indication that the requested Master Plan and zoning map amendments will have any adverse effect/impact to City infrastructure facilities beyond existing use.

Sidewalk currently exists along the project frontage and will be required to be installed throughout the site, when developed. The site is located within ±200 feet of a bus stop and there is a bicycle lane along the project frontage. Therefore, the new zoning will continue to allow for a timely, orderly, and efficient arrangement of transportation, public facilities, and services, including public access and sidewalks for pedestrians, and facilities and services for bicycles (**ZMA finding h**).

Master Plan: The proposed MF21 zoning designation is consistent with the Mixed Residential land use category within the Northeast Neighborhood Plan. As proposed the project appears to be consistent with the following applicable Master Plan policies and objectives: H-9: The City should disperse housing types throughout the City, rather than concentrate similar housing types

and sizes in certain area; H-10: The City should encourage mixed-income housing; F-2: The City should strive for a four minute response time to 75% of the City.

The applicant has highlighted the proposed future use of the property as an affordable housing project, which is consistent with a number of Master Plan policies including: H-1: encourage the development of affordable housing throughout the community with incentives, modified standards, zoning regulations, waiving certain fees, and/or flexibility in administrative procedures or other regulation/procedures; Housing Plan Policy 1.1: encourage flexibility in the zoning to enable affordable housing units to be built throughout the community; and Policy 3.4: promote and encourage the development of affordable housing near services, transportation routes, schools and employment areas.

The merits of the proposed zone change should not be based on the fact that the site is proposed to be used for affordable housing. Once changed, the zoning runs with the land until such time that it is changed again. Therefore, there is the potential for the applicant to sell the property in the future to another developer not interested in constructing affordable housing.

If a new development were to maximize their development potential under the standards allowable in the MF14 zone versus the MF21 zone, the resulting development would not be consistent with the following Master Plan policies: BD-1: Development density, building mass, and architectural details should be sensitive to the context, scale, and texture of surrounding development patterns and structures; BD-2: Building design should respect the character of a residential area; BD-5: Multifamily infill developments in predominantly single family residential neighborhoods should be designed so that they appear to be single family homes; SD-7: Abrupt changes in residential density should be discouraged.

Northeast Neighborhood Plan: The plan was developed after numerous neighborhood meetings, with input from the Ward 3 NAB. The area features a diverse blend of single family, multifamily and commercial land uses, with a range of architectural styles. The potential for future changes from increasing development pressures is a neighborhood concern. Neighborhood residents expressed a strong preference for the preservation of existing land use densities in the single family residential districts.

Other Reviewing Bodies: None

Neighborhood Advisory Board: This project was reviewed by the Ward 3 Neighborhood Advisory Board on December 5, 2017. The NAB had positive comments on the application during the meeting. No comment forms were submitted.

AREA DESCRIPTION			
	LAND USE	MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION	ZONING
NORTH	Single Family Residential	Special Planning Area/Northeast Neighborhood Plan/Single Family Residential	SF6
SOUTH	Single Family and Multifamily Residential	Special Planning Area/Northeast Neighborhood Plan/Mixed Residential	MF14
EAST	Single Family Residential	Special Planning Area/Northeast Neighborhood Plan/Mixed Residential	MF14
WEST	Reno-Sparks Livestock Events Center	Special Planning Area/University of Nevada Regional Center/Recreation	MU/UNRC/REC

Legal Requirements:

NRS 278.250(2) Zoning Map Amendment - General

FINDINGS:

Zoning Map Amendment: General zoning map amendment requirements. In order to approve any zoning map amendment, the Planning Commission and City Council shall find that the zoning is in accordance with the Master Plan for land use and be designed, as applicable:

- a. To preserve the quality of air and water resources.
- b. To promote the conservation of open space and the protection of other natural and scenic resources from unreasonable impairment.
- c. To consider existing views and access to solar resources by studying the height of new buildings which will cast shadows on surrounding residential and commercial developments.
- d. To reduce the consumption of energy by encouraging the use of products and materials which maximize energy efficiency in the construction of buildings.

- e. To provide for recreational needs.
- f. To protect life and property in areas subject to floods, landslides and other natural disasters.
- g. To conform to the adopted population plan, if required by NRS 278.170.
- h. To develop a timely, orderly and efficient arrangement of transportation and public facilities and services, including public access and sidewalks for pedestrians, and facilities and services for bicycles.
- i. To ensure that the development on land is commensurate with the character of the physical limitations of the land.
- j. To take into account the immediate and long-range financial impact of the application of particular land to particular kinds of development, and the relative suitability of the land for development.
- k. To promote health and the general welfare.
- l. To ensure the development of an adequate supply of housing for the community, including the development of affordable housing.
- m. To ensure the protection of existing neighborhoods and communities, including the protection of rural preservation neighborhoods.
- n. To promote systems which use solar or wind energy.
- o. To foster the coordination and compatibility of land uses with any military installation in the city, county or region, taking into account the location, purpose and stated mission of the military installation.

Attachments:

- Display Maps (PDF)
- Exhibit A - Existing & Proposed Zoning (PDF)
- Exhibit B - Land Use Table (PDF)
- Exhibit C - Multifamily Near Single Family (PDF)