



MEMORANDUM

To: City Council Members
City Manager Steve Lutz

From: David M Betz, AICP
Director of Development

Date: April 15, 2015

Subject: Proposed Annexation at Seldom
Seen Road and Sawmill Parkway

Due to the absence of both Rocky and myself from the City Council meeting on April 21, I wanted to provide a memo outlining the proposal by Schottenstein Real Estate Group for the annexation and development of 44 acres for a mixed use development, consisting of five acres of commercial development and 39 acres of residential development. The Ordinance before City Council is for the approval of a pre-annexation agreement. The proposed development will go through the development plan review process through Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council.

Annexation

As this property is surrounded on three sides by the City of Powell, falls easily within our service area in the middle of the city and access will come off of existing City streets, it makes sense that this property be annexed to the City.

Current Zoning

The current zoning for the property within Liberty Township is PC, Planned Commercial District and PI, Planned Industrial District. These districts were established with a development plan named Seldom Seen Acres, which the Township Trustees have determined is an expired development plan. Therefore, any new development will be required to undergo review and approval of a new development plan, even if the development scheme remains the same as the original scheme, which had a mix of retail and commercial uses (including the possibility of a big box retailer) and Planned Industrial District uses such as a self-storage facility. There is an existing lattice tower type of cellular tower at the southeast corner of the site that will remain.

Current Land Use

The current land use of the proposed property is vacant. There has been some farming done recently. There are no particular interesting features to this property.

Surrounding Land Use

This site is bounded to the east by the railroad tracks, and the Wolf Commerce Office Park, to the north is the Seldom Seen Road park site and the maintenance facility and indoor recreations building on that master plan, the west and northwest are commercial uses including a large fitness facility, and to the south includes the Woods at Big Bear Farms condominiums and Beechwood Park.

Current Proposal

The current proposal will place the entire property within the PC, Planned Commercial District and will be added to the Powell Commercial TIF area. The current proposal has 5 acres of unknown commercial development on two 2-1/2 acre lots that are closest to Sawmill Parkway. There is a proposed street extension of Bunker Lane that also occurs there. To the east of Bunker Lane is proposed an "Active Adult Community" consisting of three types of leased residential unit types and a clubhouse. The three types of units are as follows:

- Building A - Four buildings consisting of 30 units each (120 total). These are 1 and 2 bedroom suites, each with a garage space for one vehicle along with some surface parking lots.
- Building B - Fifteen buildings consisting of 4 units each (60 total). These are 2 and 3 ranch homes with 2-car garages. These are typical “pinwheel” design much like other condominiums in the area (just south in Woods at Big Bear Farms).
- Building C - Sixteen buildings consisting of 8 townhomes per building (128 total). These are 2 and 3 bedroom, 2-story townhomes with 1 car garages each unit.
- Total Units - There are a total of 308 dwelling units on the residential portion of the property consisting of 32.9 acres, creating a net density of 9.36 units per acre. If one utilizes the entire property to calculate the density, the gross density is 8.12 units per acre.

Amenities are included with this plan, including a bike path connection along Sawmill Parkway and the interior public streets leading to a pathway tunnel under Seldom Seen Road leading to and from the new Seldom Seen Road Park. Although not shown of the plan, interior sidewalks are going to be included. A large clubhouse is provided for the residents, including a pool, fire pit lounge area, community garden and putting green. A small dog park is provided for the residents as well. There is a large pond at the south and southeast portion of the site that will be their storm water control.

Comprehensive Plan

The current 1995 Comprehensive Plan Map shows this property area to be utilized for Village Lot Housing (Cluster; higher than S.F. Density) and Scenic Easement. Since that time, Sawmill Parkway has been built and the land area adjacent to the parkway has been developed in a much higher density and intensity outside of Powell. Including the Golf Village plan, most of the adjacent developments were approved within Liberty Township, and some annexed into Powell like Golf Village, Lifetime Fitness and CVS. It is anticipated that the Comprehensive Plan Update we have been working on will recommend some other types of land use than the current Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning Code

The property is being proposed to be developed under the PC, Planned Commercial District. This district was chosen as there are both commercial and residential uses, the uses as proposed are permitted uses that can be chosen, and the residential uses will be leased residential units, and be commercial uses as part of the Powell Commercial TIF. According to the developer, it is anticipated that upwards to \$50 million of assessed value will be constructed with this plan.

The Planned Commercial district does allow for the uses that are proposed. The maximum number of dwelling units in any Planned District development plan cannot exceed twelve (12) units per any one acre, shall be clustered around green spaces, scenic easements, water features or provide such amenities. If proposed along a parkway, the parkway must be built. The code also requires that there should be no more than 4 dwelling units attached side by side and no more than 8 per structure. There would be divergences to these requirements requested. The Planned Residence District does allow for up to 9 du/acre. Of course, when we examine density, we examine the impacts of the proposed development on the community overall, and can lessen the density as we examine the impacts on the roadways, sewers, etc.

There are a lot of other technical zoning requirements that this concept plan cannot show as it is so conceptual of a plan. Therefore, staff cannot comment on those at this time.

General Comments

This property is very difficult to deal with. Although we can see this as a great opportunity to put in a great mixed used plan throughout all of the property, a plan such as this merits consideration. This plan provides for a transition of density from the existing Woods at Big Bear Farms condominiums trending to higher density toward the north of the property. The planned commercial properties toward Sawmill Parkway also makes sense. The internal street network seems to work appropriately, especially as the developer states that they will add interior sidewalks. The following items of concern are generally reviewed through the development plan process:

- Density – Is the proposed density reasonable for this location? As a development aimed and designed for seniors who have downsized, the impacts of density are less than a typical subdivision, young professional apartments, or other such uses.
- Traffic – A traffic study shall be completed to the satisfaction of the City and the County Engineer. Previous plans have been shown to require improvements to Sawmill Parkway and Seldom Seen Road.
- Sanitary Sewer – Is there appropriate sanitary sewer capacity available or are downstream improvements necessary. Previous plans had shown downstream improvements are necessary.
- Financial – Does this proposed development promote financial benefits to the City that outweigh negatives? Staff recommends a financial analysis be done as allowed by the zoning code.
- Parking – Staff’s initial suggestion is that there is too much parking proposed.
- Open Spaces – There is over 20% green space and recreational areas are provided for the anticipated residents.
- Pathway linkages – Are there enough pathway linkages? There is an existing path to the southeast corner in Beechwood Park that staff feels should be connected to this plan. Also, the pathway should be continued north along Sawmill Parkway to the CVS, unless Liberty Township is requiring it of the developer of the lot in front of this property. We do like the proposed tunnel to access the Seldom Seen Road park site.
- There are some layout issues we discussed with the townhomes and the senior suites buildings.
- Will the architectural quality of the buildings be enhanced at a pedestrian scale, especially the townhouses where wrap around porch details and a greater number of porches and details can enhance that portion of the development?
- The larger Senior Suites buildings at Seldom Seen Road show great detail and design.

The planning concept and community desires for “aging in place” and providing for housing for those who want to stay in Powell and move to the area after downsizing from quality single family homes makes this a unique opportunity for the City, rather than a detriment. Overall, with some massaging of the plan through the development plan process, this proposal initially has merits.