

Subject: Rezoning (Second District)
Author: Katie Dunnigan, Zoning Manager
Department: Development Services
Meeting Date: September 19, 2023
Item Description: **T&T Exley Properties** requests to **rezone** 1,051 acres from **PD-MU** to **PD-MU**, to allow for the amendment of a Planned Development. Located off of Highway 21. [Map# 466D Parcels# 1,6,9,11]

Summary Recommendation

Staff has reviewed the application, and recommends **approval** of the request to **rezone** 1,051 acres from **PD-MU** to **PD-MU**, to allow for the amendment of a Planned Development, with conditions.

Executive Summary/Background

- The request for rezoning to the PD-MU zoning district is found in Appendix C, Article V-Uses Permitted in Districts, Section 15.
- The original PD-MU document, approved in 2008, designates multi-family housing to serve as a transition between industrial and residential use and provide diversity of housing to the County. The multi-family portion included the following details:
 - Up to 1,350 units
 - A 30' buffer, 15' to be vegetative, between multi-family and surrounding residential properties.
- The applicant proposes to amend the PD document to:
 - Remove the multi-family component completely.
 - To be replaced with an additional +/- 2,000,000 square feet of industrial development, shown to be spread across 3 warehouses equaling approximately 1,000,000 square feet.
 - Account for the 24.5 acres in use as a Verizon tower site. This is designated as "Highway Commercial/Industrial"
- The requested amendment of the PD document will increase buffering between development and neighboring residential use, as well as decrease traffic trips per day by an approximate 50% (10,160 for 1350 multi-family uses, 5,000 for warehouse use).
- The change to the PD document was submitted for a DRI which was completed on May 10, 2023. Comments on the project were from City of Savannah: "Effingham County should coordinate with City of Savannah since it does utilize City of Savannah water through a municipal water supply agreement"
- On June 8, 2023, a town hall type meeting was held with the intent to inform surrounding property owners of current approval/proposed changes. The consensus presented by the public indicated that warehousing would be preferable to multi-family housing. The following were some of the concerns raised by residents with regards to adjacent industrial use:
 - Light/noise pollution
 - Burden to roads
 - Proximity of development to property lines
 - Appearance from residential properties
 - Destruction of natural habitat
 - The potential for a future rail spur

- In response to these concerns, Staff is recommending additional conditions to approval.
- Residents spoke to reiterate concerns at the June 13, 2023 Planning Board meeting.
- At the June 13, 2023 Planning Board meeting, Alan Zipperer made a motion to approve, with the following conditions:
 - No rail spur shall be permitted.
 - Any planned trailer storage as a use must be approved as a conditional use.
 - Berms used to buffer from neighboring residential properties shall be a minimum of 25' high.
- And the additional stipulations that:
 - The berm be constructed in a manner that it hides structures from line of sight of adjacent residential properties.
 - The minimum buffer shall be 115'
- The motion was seconded by Brad Smith, and carried 4-0, Ryan Thompson having recused himself from this item.
- At the July 18, 2023 Board of Commissioners, the applicant made a request to table the hearing to allow time to produce a “more refined” sketch plan.
- Commissioner Roger Burdette made a motion to table the item until the August 15, 2023 Board of Commissioners meeting.
- The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jamie DeLoach, and carried unanimously.
- At the August 15, 2023 Board of Commissioners meeting, Commissioner Roger Burdette made a motion to table until the September 19, 2023 Board of Commissioners meeting.
- The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jamie DeLoach, and carried unanimously.
- The applicant has met with Staff and submitted an amended PD document which addresses and/or exceeds all previous conditions suggested by Staff. In addition, the applicant has also submitted to address buffering to include:
 - A 150' buffer between Exley North parcels and adjacent residential properties to be constructed as follows:
 - 35' undisturbed buffer against residential property lines in question
 - 10' reserved for
 - Installation of drainage, fencing, and berm
 - Necessary and reasonable access to construct and perform maintenance and repair on the above listed
 - 115' of a 25' high (minimum) landscaped and irrigated berm
 - Berms shall begin construction in tangent with correlating LDA activity and be completed prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for their corresponding building.
 - Buildings 450' or greater from the residential property lines requiring berms shall be exempt from berm requirements.

Alternatives

1. **Approve** the request to **rezone** 1,051 acres from **PD-MU** to **PD-MU**.
2. **Deny** the request to **rezone** 1,051 acres from **PD-MU** to **PD-MU**.

Recommended Alternative: 1

Other Alternatives: 2

Department Review: Development Services

FUNDING: N/A

Attachments:

1. Rezoning application and checklist
2. Ownership certificate/authorization
3. Plat
4. Aerial photograph
5. Deed