



METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

November 6, 2024

Case Number: 2024-ZON-105
Property Address: 2852 East County Line Road
Location: Perry Township, Council District #24
Petitioner: Aditi Real Estate 63, LLC, by Cassandra A. Nielsen
Current Zoning: C-S
Request: Rezoning of 6.67 acres from the C-S (TOD) (FW) (FF) district to the I-1 (TOD) (FW) (FF) district to provide for a self-storage facility.
Current Land Use: Undeveloped land
Staff Recommendations: Denial.
Staff Reviewer: Kathleen Blackham, Senior Planner

PETITION HISTORY

This petition was heard by the Hearing Examiner on October 10, 2024. After a full hearing, the Hearing Examiner recommended denial of the rezoning. Subsequently, the petitioner's representative filed an appeal of the Hearing Examiner's decision. A memorandum of her recommendation is attached.

The Hearing Examiner continued this petition, at staff's request, from the September 26, 2024 hearing, to the October 10, 2024 hearing, for additional time to provide required written notice to the property owners in Johnson County.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Denial. If approved, staff would request that approval be subject to the following commitments being reduced to writing on the Commission's Exhibit "B" forms at least three days prior to the MDC hearing:

1. Final site plan and elevations shall be submitted for Administrator Approval prior to the issuance of an Improvement Location Permit (ILP).
2. A 51-foot half right-of-way shall be dedicated along the frontage of East County Line Road, as per the request of the Department of Public Works (DPW), Engineering Division. Additional easements shall not be granted to third parties within the area to be dedicated as public right-of-way prior to the acceptance of all grants of right-of-way by the DPW. The right-of-way shall be granted within 60 days of approval and prior to the issuance of an Improvement Location Permit (ILP).

3. A tree inventory, tree assessment and preservation plan prepared by a certified arborist shall be submitted for Administrator Approval prior to preliminary plat approval and prior to any site preparation activity or disturbance of the site. This plan shall, at a minimum: a) indicate proposed development; b) delineate the location of the existing trees, c) characterize the size and species of such trees, d) indicate the wooded areas to be saved by shading or some other means of indicating tree areas to be preserved and e) identify the method of preservation (e.g. provision of snow fencing or staked straw bales at the individual tree's dripline during construction activity). All trees proposed for removal shall be indicated as such.
4. The site and improved areas within the site shall be maintained in a reasonably neat and orderly manner during and after development of the site with appropriate areas and containers / receptables provided for the proper disposal of trash and other waste.

PETITION OVERVIEW

This 6.67-acre site, zoned C-S (TOD) (FW) (FF), is undeveloped and surrounded by floodway / floodplain of Pleasant Run Creek, to the north, zoned D-A (TOD) (FW) (FF); single-family dwellings to the south across East County Line Road (Johnson County); railroad right-of way to the east, zoned D-6II; and floodway / floodplain of Pleasant Run Creek to the west, zoned D-A (TOD) (FW) (FF) and C-S (TOD) (FW) (FF).

This site was included in petition 90-ZON-191 that rezoned a 12-acre site to the C-4 district to provide for an integrated commercial center with integrated building design, access, and signs.

The request would rezone the site to the I-1 (Restricted Industrial) District. "The I-1 district is designed for those industries that present the least risk to the public. In the I-1 district, uses carry on their entire operation within a completely enclosed building in such a manner that no nuisance factor is created or emitted outside the enclosed building. No storage of raw materials, manufactured products, or any other materials is permitted in the open space around the buildings. Loading and unloading berths are completely enclosed or shielded by solid screening. This district has strict controls on the intensity of land use providing protection of each industry from the encroachment of other industries. It is usually located adjacent to protected districts and may serve as a buffer between heavier industrial districts and business or protected districts."

The Comprehensive Plan recommends suburban neighborhood typology and floodway, a non-typology land use.

Floodway / Floodway Fringe

This site has a secondary zoning classification of a Floodway (FW) and Floodway Fringe (FF). The Floodway (FW) is the channel of a river or stream, and those portions of the floodplains adjoin the channels which are reasonably required to efficiently carry and discharge the peak flood flow of the base flood of any river or stream. The Floodway Fringe (FF) is the portion of the regulatory floodplain that is not required to convey the 100-year frequency flood peak discharge and lies outside of the floodway.



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The purpose of the floodway district is to guide development in areas identified as a floodway. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) exercises primary jurisdiction in the floodway district under the authority of IC 14-28-1.

The designation of the FF District is to guide development in areas subject to potential flood damage, but outside the Floodway (FW) District. Unless otherwise prohibited, all uses permitted in the primary zoning district (I-1 in this request) are permitted, subject to certain development standards of the Flood Control Secondary Zoning Districts Ordinance.

Except for a small area at the southwest corner along the railroad right-of-way, the site lies within the 100-year floodplain.

Overlays

This site is located within an overlay, specifically the Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ES) Overlay.

“Overlays are used in places where the land uses that are allowed in a typology need to be adjusted. They may be needed because an area is environmentally sensitive, near an airport, or because a certain type of development should be promoted. Overlays can add uses, remove uses, or modify the conditions that are applied to uses in a typology.”

The Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ES) Overlay is intended for areas containing high quality woodlands, wetlands, or other natural resources that should be protected. The purpose of this overlay is to prevent or mitigate potential damage to these resources caused by development. This overlay is also appropriate for areas that present an opportunity to create a new environmental asset. This overlay is not intended for the preservation of open space.

The ES overlay for this site is related to the floodway and floodway fringe.

In addition to the floodplain, the perimeter of the entire site is lined with woodlands, both of which would be negatively impacted by the proposed development.

This site is also located within a second overlay, specifically the Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

The Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) overlay is intended for areas within walking distance of a transit station. The purpose of this overlay is to promote pedestrian connectivity and a higher density than the surrounding area.

Tree Preservation / Heritage Tree Conservation

There are significant amounts of natural vegetation and trees located around the perimeter of the site. Due to their inherent ecological, aesthetic, and buffering qualities, the maximum number of these existing trees should be preserved on the site.



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All development shall be in a manner that causes the least amount of disruption to the trees.

A tree inventory, tree assessment and preservation plan prepared by a certified arborist shall be submitted for Administrator Approval prior to preliminary plat approval and prior to any site preparation activity or disturbance of the site. This plan shall, at a minimum: a) indicate proposed development, b) delineate the location of the existing trees, c) characterize the size and species of such trees, d) indicate the wooded areas to be saved by shading or some other means of indicating tree areas to be preserved and e) identify the method of preservation (e.g. provision of snow fencing or staked straw bales at the individual tree's dripline during construction activity). All trees proposed for removal shall be indicated as such.

If any of the trees are heritage trees that would be impacted, then the Ordinance requires that the Administrator, Urban Forester or Director of Public Works determine whether the tree(s) would be preserved or removed and replaced.

The Ordinance defines "heritage tree" as a tree over 18 inches Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) and one of the Heritage tree species. Heritage tree species include: Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*), Shagbark Hickory (*Carya ovata*), Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), Yellowwood (*Cladrastus kentukea*), American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), Kentucky Coffeetree (*Gymnocladus dioica*), Walnut or Butternut (*Juglans*), Tulip Poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), Sweet Gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), American Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), Eastern Cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), American Elm (*Ulmus americana*), Red Elm (*Ulmus rubra*) and any oak species (*Quercus*, all spp.)

The Ordinance also provides for replacement of heritage trees if a heritage tree is removed or dies within three years of the Improvement Location issuance date. See Exhibit B, Table 744-503-3: Replacement Trees.

Department of Public Works

The Department of Public Works, Traffic Engineering Section, has requested the dedication and conveyance of a 51-foot half right-of-way along East County Line Road. This dedication would also be consistent with the Marion County Thoroughfare Plan.

Environmental Public Nuisances

The purpose of the Revised Code of the Consolidated City and County, Sec.575 (Environmental Public Nuisances) is to protect public safety, health and welfare and enhance the environment for the people of the city by making it unlawful for property owners and occupants to allow an environmental public nuisance to exist.

All owners, occupants, or other persons in control of any private property within the city shall be required to keep the private property free from environmental nuisances.

Environmental public nuisance means:

1. Vegetation on private or governmental property that is abandoned, neglected, disregarded or not cut, mown, or otherwise removed and that has attained a height of twelve (12) inches or more;
2. Vegetation, trees or woody growth on private property that, due to its proximity to any governmental property, right-of-way or easement, interferes with the public safety or lawful use of the governmental property, right-of-way or easement or that has been allowed to become a health or safety hazard;
3. A drainage or stormwater management facility as defined in Chapter 561 of this Code on private or governmental property, which facility has not been maintained as required by that chapter; or
4. Property that has accumulated litter or waste products, unless specifically authorized under existing laws and regulations, or that has otherwise been allowed to become a health or safety hazard.

Staff would request a commitment that emphasizes the importance of maintaining the site in a neat and orderly manner at all times and provide containers and receptacles for proper disposal of trash and other waste.

Planning Analysis

As proposed, this request would not be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan recommendation of suburban neighborhood. Furthermore, the floodway land use category delineates areas that exhibit a great potential for property loss and damage from severe flooding, or for water quality degradation. No development should occur within the floodway. Nonconforming uses currently within a floodway should not be expanded or altered.

Staff believes the proposed rezoning is an example of spot zoning which is defined as the process of singling out a small parcel of land for a use classification totally different from that of the surrounding area for the benefit of the owner of such property and to the detriment of other owners. Zoning in the surrounding area is primarily commercial and residential. There is no industrial zoning district nearby.

This site is located with two overlays (Environmentally Sensitive and Transit Oriented Development). Because industrial uses are not a recommended land use in the suburban neighborhood typology or these overlays, the introduction of industrial uses would be detrimental to protecting the surrounding land uses and compromise the purpose and intent of these overlays.



Self-storage facilities are permitted in the highest intense commercial district (C-7) and all of the industrial districts (I-1 through I-4), all of which have larger side transitional setbacks. The C-7 District requires a 40-foot side transitional yard; the I-1 and I-2 Districts require a 50-foot side transitional yard; the I-3 District requires a 100-foot transitional yard; and the I-4 District requires a 150-foot side transitional yard. The required setbacks are a strong indication of the impact of this use on surrounding land uses.

The purpose of setbacks is to minimize and mitigate impact and provide a buffer between varying intensity of land uses. Setbacks, in this case, are between residential uses and high intensity commercial and industrial uses.

Staff would note that to mitigate the impact of self-storage facilities the Ordinance provides for the following use specific standards:

1. All storage shall be within enclosed buildings except in the C-7, I-3 and I-4 districts.
2. Security fencing shall not include razor wire or barbed wire within 10 feet of a front lot line or transitional yard.
3. Doors to individual storage units shall not face any abutting street frontage, or if the site is located on a corner parcel, shall not face the primary street frontage.
4. A landscape or naturally vegetated buffer at least 50 feet in width shall be provided along any lot line that abuts a protected district.
5. Exterior access to any storage units within 100 feet, measured in any direction of any dwelling district, shall be limited to the period between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.

A self-storage facility at this location would be wholly inappropriate for this site because it would introduce an intense use into an area with a much less intense commercial node / corridor and dwelling district and would be totally out of character with the existing commercial and residential uses in the immediate area.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Existing Zoning	C-S (TOD) (FW) (FF)		
Existing Land Use	Undeveloped land/ floodplain		
Comprehensive Plan	Floodway / Suburban Neighborhood		
Surrounding Context	Zoning	Land Use	
	North:	C-S (TOD) (FW) (FF) / D-A (TOD) (FW) (FF)	Floodway / Floodway Fringe
	South:	Johnson County	Single-family dwellings
	East:	D-6II	Railroad right-of-way / single-family dwelling
	West:	C-S (TOD) (FW) (FF) / DA (TOD) (FW) (FF)	Floodway
Thoroughfare Plan			
East County Line Road	Primary arterial	Existing 92-foot right-of-way and proposed 102-foot right-of-way.	

Context Area	Metro
Floodway / Floodway Fringe	Yes.
Overlay	Yes. Environmentally Sensitive / Transit Oriented Development
Wellfield Protection Area	No
Site Plan	August 21, 2024
Site Plan (Amended)	N/A
Elevations	N/A
Elevations (Amended)	N/A
Landscape Plan	N/A
Findings of Fact	N/A
Findings of Fact (Amended)	N/A
C-S/D-P Statement	N/A

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ANALYSIS

Comprehensive Plan

- The Comprehensive Plan recommends the Suburban Neighborhood typology. “The Suburban Neighborhood typology is predominantly made up of single-family housing but is interspersed with attached and multifamily housing where appropriate. This typology should be supported by a variety of neighborhood-serving businesses, institutions, and amenities. Natural Corridors and natural features such as stream corridors, wetlands, and woodlands should be treated as focal points or organizing systems for development. Streets should be well-connected, and amenities should be treated as landmarks that enhance navigability of the development. This typology generally has a residential density of 1 to 5 dwelling units per acre, but a higher density is recommended if the development is within a quarter mile of a frequent transit line, greenway, or park.”
- The floodway land use is a non-typology that is mapped outside of the typology system due to their scale or the nature of their use.

Pattern Book / Land Use Plan

The Comprehensive Plan consists of two components that include The Marion County Land Use Pattern Book (2019) and the land use map. The Pattern Book provides a land use classification system that guides the orderly development of the county and protects the character of neighborhoods while also being flexible and adaptable to allow neighborhoods to grow and change over time.

The Pattern Book serves as a policy guide as development occurs. Industrial uses are not a recommended land use for the suburban neighborhood typology. Recommended land uses in this typology include, detached housing, attached housing, multi-family housing, assisted living facilities / nursing homes, group homes, bed / breakfast, small-scale offices / retailing / personal services / professional services, small scale schools / places of worship / neighborhood-serving institutions and infrastructure / places of assembly, large scale schools / places of worship / neighborhood-serving institutions and infrastructure / places of assembly, small scale parks and community farms / gardens.

Red Line / Blue Line / Purple Line TOD Strategic Plan

- The Red Line Transit-Oriented Development Strategic Plan (2021).
- The Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) overlay is intended for areas within walking distance of a transit station. The purpose of this overlay is to promote pedestrian connectivity and a higher density than the surrounding area.
- This site is located within a ½ mile walk of a proposed transit stop located along East County Line Road and Greenwood Park Mall, with a District Center typology.
- District Center stations are located at the center of regionally significant districts with several blocks of retail or office at their core. Development opportunities include infill and redevelopment, dense residential, employment near transit stations, neighborhood retail and a focus on walkability and placemaking.
- Characteristics of the District Center typology are:
 - A dense mixed-use hub for multiple neighborhoods with tall buildings
 - Minimum of 3 stories at core with no front or side setbacks
 - Multi-family housing with a minimum of 5 units
 - Structured parking only with active first floor

Neighborhood / Area Specific Plan

- Not Applicable to the Site.

Infill Housing Guidelines

- Not Applicable to the Site.

Indy Moves

(Thoroughfare Plan, Pedestrian Plan, Bicycle Master Plan, Greenways Master Plan)

- The Marion County Thoroughfare Plan (2019) “is a long-range plan that identifies the locations classifications and different infrastructure elements of roadways within a defined area.”
- The following listed items describe the purpose, policies and tools:
 - Classify roadways based on their location, purpose in the overall network and what land use they serve.
 - Provide design guidelines for accommodating all modes (automobile, transit, pedestrians, bicycles) within the roadway.
 - Set requirements for preserving the right-of-way (ROW)
 - Identify roadways for planned expansions or new terrain roadways
 - Coordinate modal plans into a single linear network through its GIS database



ZONING HISTORY

90-Z-191; 2910 East County Line Road, requested rezoning of 12 acres, being in the D-A / FP district, to the C-4 / FP classification to provide for commercial development, **approved**.

VICINITY

70-Z-107; 8900 block of Madison Avenue (west of site), required rezoning of 6.36 acres, being in the A-2 district, to the C-4 classification to provide for office uses, **approved**.

68-V4-227; 3030 East County Line Road (north of site), requested a variance of use, setbacks, and floor area to provide for apartments, **granted**.

EXHIBITS

MEMORANDUM OF EXAMINER'S DECISION

2024-ZON-105

2852 E. County Line Road

The petition requests the rezoning of 6.67 acres from the C-S (TOD)(FW)(FF) district to the I-1 (TOD)(FW)(FF) district to provide for a self storage facility.

Your Hearing Examiner visited the unimproved site prior to the hearing and noted that it is abutted by a floodway on the west and north (Pleasant Run Creek). Residential uses are east and south of it.

The petitioner's representative explained that the self storage would be indoors, which is required by the I-S district. The representative opined that the proposed development would increase property values and the tax base, and stated that the requested I-1 district is better than the C-7 district, which also allows self storage.

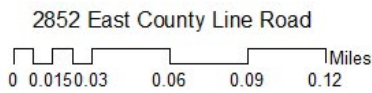
Staff stated that the Comp Plan recommendation of suburban neighborhood does not contemplate self storage, and that the proposed use would have a negative impact on the residences in the area. Staff also stated that there are no other industrial uses in the area, and suggested that the request would be spot zoning. Staff also stated that industrial uses are not recommended in the Environmentally Sensitive or Transit Oriented Development overlay districts.

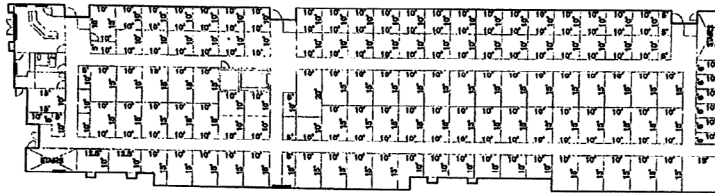
In your Hearing Examiner's opinion, the requested I-1 district is spot zoning, and would not be compatible in this area. The I-1 district, in general, and the proposed self storage, in particular, would not be appropriate in the two overlay districts that envelope this site. Denial of this petition was recommended.

For Metropolitan Development Commission Hearing on November 6, 2024

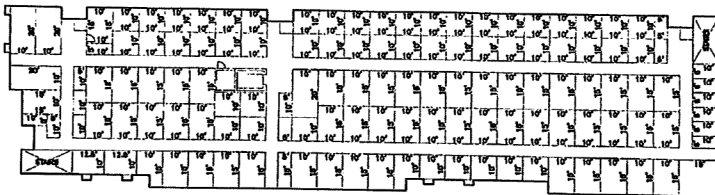


Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri-Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NOAA, Swisstopo, OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community





CLIMATE CONTROLLED STORAGE
TWO-STORY
FIRST FLOOR | 19748 S.F.



CLIMATE CONTROLLED STORAGE
TWO-STORY
SECOND FLOOR | 19748 S.F.

EXHIBIT A

Heritage Tree Conservation

Removal of any Heritage Tree is prohibited unless any of the following determinations are made before removal:

1. The Administrator or the city’s Urban Forester determines that the tree is dead, significantly and terminally diseased, a threat to public health or safety, or is of an undesirable or nuisance species.
2. The Director of the Department of Public Works determines that the tree interferes with the provision of public services or is a hazard to traffic.
3. The Administrator determines that the location of the tree is preventing development or redevelopment that cannot be physically designed to protect the tree.
4. The site from which the tree is removed is zoned D-A and the tree is harvested as timber or similar forestry product.

Table 744-503-3: Replacement Trees		
Size of tree removed or dead (inches)	Number of Trees to be planted to replace a Heritage Tree	Number of Trees to be planted to replace an existing tree
Over 36 DBH	15	10
25.5 to 36 DBH	11	8
13 to 25 DBH	8	6
10.5 to 12.5 DBH	6	4
8.5 to 10 DBH	5	4
6.5 to 8	3	2
4 to 6	2	2
2.5 to 3.5	1	1



View looking west along west County Line Road



View looking east along east County Line Road



View of site looking northeast across East County Line Road



View of site looking northeast across East County Line Road



View of site looking northeast across East County Line Road